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WEEKLY —  
**Current**  
Affairs



## NATIONAL NEWS

### ANRF is developing an AI-powered platform, SARAL AI

- **Full Form & Purpose:** The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) has developed SARAL AI (Simplified and Automated Research Amplification and Learning), an AI-powered platform designed to demystify complex scientific research and patents for the general public.
- **Multilingual Outreach:** To ensure nationwide accessibility, the platform converts technical publications into simplified formats—including podcasts, short videos, posters, and social media content—available in 18 Indian languages.
- **National Impact:** Launched under the vision of Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh, SARAL AI aims to bridge the gap between academia and society by making high-impact research outcomes in sectors like agriculture, healthcare, and climate resilience understandable to common citizens and policymakers.

### Ministry of Labour & Employment signs MoUs with Porter & Gigin Technologies

- **Strategic Partnership:** On April 13, 2026, the Ministry of Labour & Employment signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) with Porter (logistics provider) and Gigin Technologies to integrate their job listings with the National Career Service (NCS) portal.
- **Job Creation Targets:** Under this collaboration, Porter aims to create over 30 lakh (3 million) opportunities by 2030, while Gigin Technologies is expected to generate 2–3 lakh verified jobs annually using AI-driven matching.
- **Focus on Skills:** Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya emphasized that the partnership will bridge the skill gap by offering short-duration training and soft-skills courses, ensuring jobseekers are industry-ready for the gig and logistics sectors.

### MoHFW Launches ICMR App For Community Health Officers

- **Clinical Decision Support & Triage:** The app functions as a "job-aid," providing structured, step-by-step clinical workflows for patient assessment. It features a color-coded triage system to help CHOs make quick, life-saving decisions.
- **Standardization of Care:** It aligns with the 12 Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC) service packages, ensuring that patients in rural and underserved areas receive standardized, evidence-based treatment and pre-referral stabilization protocols.
- **Digital Integration:** The platform integrates with national digital health systems, supporting Electronic Health Records (EHR), teleconsultation, and real-time patient registration.

### Reliance Foundation & C-DAC Launch e-SafeHER Program

- **Training One Million "Cyber Sakhis":** The primary goal is to empower one million rural women over the next three years (by 2029). These women will be trained as Cyber Sakhis (Cyber Friends), acting as peer educators and local resource persons to promote safe online practices within their communities.
- **Targeted Grassroots Delivery:** The program leverages the extensive network of Women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs) for on-ground implementation. It focuses on women who are increasingly using digital platforms for financial transactions, online livelihoods, and accessing essential government services.
- **Phased Rollout & Multilingual Support:** Anchored under the government's Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA) framework, the initiative will start its rollout in Madhya Pradesh and Odisha before scaling nationally.

### **VP C. P. Radhakrishnan Releases Updated Constitution of India in Sindhi Language**

- **Promoting Linguistic Inclusion:** The release aims to make the fundamental law of the land accessible to the Sindhi-speaking community, honoring the language's status as one of the 22 languages listed in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution.
- **Commemorating Ambedkar Jayanti:** The launch was strategically timed to coincide with the 135th birth anniversary of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, paying tribute to the "Architect of the Indian Constitution" by expanding its reach to diverse linguistic groups.
- **Digital and Physical Availability:** To ensure maximum impact, the Vice President announced that the Sindhi version would be made available both in braille and digital formats, ensuring that Sindhi-speaking citizens, including those with visual impairments, can understand their constitutional rights and duties.

### **CARI Bengaluru Becomes First CCRAS Institute to Achieve ISO 15189:2022 Accreditation**

- **Pioneering Achievement:** CARI Bengaluru is officially the first institute under the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) to receive this prestigious global accreditation for its clinical laboratory.
- **Scope of Excellence:** The accreditation specifically covers the departments of Biochemistry and Haematology. It validates over 50 test parameters (such as HbA1c, thyroid profiles, and kidney function tests) as meeting international quality and safety standards.
- **Bridging Systems:** This certification marks the transformation of the facility into a Centre of Excellence, integrating high-end diagnostic precision with traditional Ayurvedic care to enhance evidence-based research and patient trust.

### **Punjab Assembly Passes Guru Granth Sahib Satkar Bill**

- **Stringent Penalties:** The Bill introduces life imprisonment as the maximum punishment for sacrilege. It mandates a minimum of 10 years imprisonment and a fine ranging from ₹5 lakh to ₹25 lakh for those convicted of criminal conspiracy to commit sacrilege with the intent to disturb communal harmony.
- **Expanded Scope:** For the first time, the definition of sacrilege has been expanded to include digital and electronic means.
- **Administrative Safeguards:** The Bill mandates that investigations be conducted by an officer not below the rank of DSP. It also grants the SGPC exclusive control over the printing and distribution of Saroops, requiring a centralized register with unique identification numbers for each copy.

**Footnotes:** Punjab's Governor: Gulab Chand Kataria, CM: Bhagwant Mann, Capital: Chandigarh

### Meghalaya Recognises Khasi and Garo as Official Languages

- **The Decision:** On April 16, 2026, the Meghalaya Cabinet approved the Meghalaya Official Languages Ordinance, 2026, officially designating Khasi and Garo as the state's official languages alongside English.
- **Key Legal Changes:** This ordinance repeals the outdated 2005 State Language Act and paves the way for amendments to the 1980 Legislature Act, allowing MLAs to debate in their native tongues and enabling the use of these languages in government recruitment exams.
- **Strategic Objective:** Chief Minister Conrad K. Sangma stated that granting state-level official status is a crucial step to strengthen Meghalaya's long-standing demand to include Khasi and Garo in the Eighth Schedule of the Indian Constitution.

**Footnotes:** Meghalaya's Capital: Shillong, Governor: Chandrashekhar H. Vijayashankar, CM: Conrad Sangma

### Odisha & NCCR Sign MoU under Indo-Norway Initiative

- **The Partnership:** On April 16, 2026, the Odisha Government signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR) to implement a Marine Spatial Plan (MSP), a first-of-its-kind state-level initiative in India.
- **Blue Economy Focus:** Part of the Indo-Norway Integrated Ocean Management initiative, the project aims to balance economic growth in sectors like fisheries, tourism, and ports with environmental conservation along Odisha's 480 km coastline.
- **Strategic Expansion:** Following pilot phases in Puducherry and Lakshadweep, Odisha is the first major state to adopt this framework. It serves as a key pillar for the state's "Vision 2036" (centenary of statehood) and the national "Viksit Bharat 2047" goals.

**Footnotes:** NCCR's Director: Dr. R.S. Kankara, HQ: Chennai, Estd: 2011

**Footnotes:** Odisha's Capital: Bhubaneswar, Governor: Kambhampati Hari Babu, CM: Mohan Charan Majhi

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Iraqi Parliament Elects Nizar Amedi As New President

- **Election Victory:** On April 11, 2026, the Iraqi Parliament elected Nizar Amedi in a second round of voting where he secured 227 votes out of 249 lawmakers present. He defeated his main opponent, Muthanna Amin, and succeeded Abdul Latif Rashid in the largely ceremonial but strategically vital role.
- **Political Background:** Amedi is a 58-year-old veteran politician from the Patriotic Union of Kurdistan (PUK). He is a mechanical engineer by training and previously served as Iraq's Minister of Environment (2022–2024) before resigning to head the PUK's political office in Baghdad.
- **Path to Government Formation:** His election is a constitutional prerequisite for appointing a Prime Minister. Under Iraq's power-sharing system (muhasasah), Amedi now has 15 days to task the largest parliamentary bloc—the Shiite Coordination Framework—with forming a new government and naming a Prime Minister.

**Footnotes:** Iraq's Previous President: Abdul Latif Rashid, **Capital:** Baghdad, **Currency:** Iraqi Dinar

### Israel appoints Roman Gofman as Mossad Chief

- **Official Appointment:** On April 12, 2026, the Israeli government officially approved Major General Roman Gofman as the next Director of the Mossad, Israel's external intelligence agency.
- **Succession Details:** Gofman, who currently serves as Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's military secretary, is scheduled to assume office on June 2, 2026, for a five-year term, succeeding the outgoing chief David Barnea.
- **Career Profile:** Born in Belarus, Gofman is a veteran military officer who gained recognition for his bravery during the October 7, 2023 attacks, where he was seriously wounded while fighting militants in Sderot; notably, he is the first career military officer in decades to lead Mossad without a prior background in the intelligence agency.

### India tech ranks 4th globally with \$11.7 billion

- **Global Standing:** According to the Tracxn India Tech Annual Funding Report 2026, India ranked as the 4th most funded country globally in the technology sector, trailing only the US, UK, and China.
- **Funding Value:** Indian tech startups raised \$11.7 billion in FY 2025-26. While this was an 18% decline from the previous year (\$14.3 billion), it marked a 20% increase compared to FY 2023-24 (\$9.7 billion).
- **Top Performing Sectors:** Enterprise Applications led the funding with \$3.6 billion, followed by FinTech and Retail, which both secured \$2.4 billion. Notably, the year saw a 52% surge in IPOs, with 47 tech companies going public.

### First Life-Size Statue of Swami Vivekananda Unveiled in Seattle

- **Historic First:** On April 11, 2026, the first-ever life-size bronze statue of Swami Vivekananda in the United States was unveiled at Westlake Square in downtown Seattle. It is the first such monument to be hosted by a city government in the US.
- **Cultural Diplomacy:** The statue was gifted by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR) to the City of Seattle as part of India's cultural diplomacy initiatives. The unveiling ceremony coincided with the celebration of ICCR Day.
- **Key Dignitaries & Artist:** The monument was jointly unveiled by Seattle Mayor Katie Wilson and the Consul General of India in Seattle, Prakash Gupta. The statue was sculpted by the renowned Indian artist Naresh Kumar Kumawat.

### UK overtakes India as the world's Fifth-largest economy

- **Ranking Shift:** The United Kingdom (\$4.26 trillion) has officially overtaken India (\$4.15 trillion) to reclaim the spot of the world's 5th largest economy in nominal GDP terms. India currently sits in 6th place globally.
- **Primary Drivers:** This "demotion" is attributed to two key factors: a significant statistical revision of India's GDP base year, which lowered nominal estimates by about 4%, and a roughly 11% depreciation of the Rupee against the US Dollar in FY26.
- **Outlook for Recovery:** Economists view this setback as temporary; India remains the fastest-growing major economy and is projected to overtake both the UK and Japan to reach the 4th spot by 2027 and the 3rd spot by 2031.

**Footnotes:** UK's Prime Minister: Keir Starmer, Capital: London

### China Emerged India's Top Trade Partner in FY26

- **Total Trade Volume:** Bilateral trade between India and China reached a record \$124.5 billion in FY26, edging past the \$119.8 billion recorded with the United States. This shift is primarily driven by India's massive demand for industrial inputs and electronic components.
- **Widening Trade Deficit:** While trade volume increased, India's trade deficit with China remains a concern, crossing \$90 billion this year. India's imports from China grew by 9%, largely consisting of telecom equipment, machinery, and active pharmaceutical ingredients (APIs).
- **Strategic Import Dependency:** Despite the "China Plus One" strategy and "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiatives, India's manufacturing sector continues to rely heavily on Chinese intermediate goods to fuel its own export growth in sectors like mobile phones and renewable energy (solar modules).

**Footnotes:** China's President: Xi Jinping, Capital: Beijing

## DEFENCE NEWS

### India-Egypt Joint Special Forces Exercise 'Cyclone-IV' Begins

- **Edition and Venue:** The 4th edition of the exercise, known as Cyclone-IV, is being conducted from April 9 to 17, 2026, at Anshas, Egypt. This exercise is conducted annually on a rotational basis between the two nations.
- **Participating Contingent:** The Indian Army has deployed a specialized contingent of 25 personnel from its elite Special Forces units to train alongside their Egyptian counterparts.
- **Operational Focus:** The training emphasizes joint mission planning and tactical operations specifically designed for desert and semi-desert terrain, aimed at enhancing interoperability in unconventional warfare and counter-terrorism scenarios.

### Australia appointed Susan Coyle as its first-ever female Army Chief

- **Historic First:** Announced in April 2026, Lieutenant General Susan Coyle will become the first-ever female Chief of Army in the Australian Army's 125-year history. She is also the first woman to lead any service branch of the ADF.
- **Extensive Military Career:** She joined the military in 1987 and has served for nearly 40 years. Her career includes senior command roles in major operations across Afghanistan, the Solomon Islands, East Timor, and the Middle East, where she was the first woman to command Joint Task Force 633.
- **Strategic Leadership:** Prior to this appointment, she served as the Chief of Joint Capabilities, overseeing critical domains like space and cyber warfare. She will officially assume her new role in July 2026, succeeding Lieutenant General Simon Stuart.

## BANKING NEWS

### UCO Bank appoints Rajeev Gupta as Chief Risk Officer

- **Appointment Details:** Kolkata-based public sector lender UCO Bank has appointed Rajeev Gupta as its new Chief Risk Officer (CRO), with the appointment taking effect on April 14, 2026.
- **Succession:** Gupta, previously a General Manager within the bank, succeeds Shashi Kant Kumar, who has been reassigned to a new role as the Zonal Head in Mumbai.
- **Experience & Profile:** With over 29 years of experience in domestic and international banking, Gupta's background spans risk management, treasury, and core banking; he holds an MBA in Finance and is a Certified Associate of the Indian Institute of Bankers (CAIIB).

**Footnotes:** UCO Bank's MD & CEO: Ashwani Kumar, HQ: Kolkata, Estd: 1943

### CSB Launches 'SMART SAVE ACCOUNT', its 1st Retail Offering

- **First Retail Launch:** This marks CSB Bank's first retail product offering following the successful upgrade of its Core Banking Platform. It is available in Savings, Current, and NRO variants.
- **Auto-Sweep Facility:** The account features an automated "auto-sweep" mechanism that transfers surplus funds into Fixed Deposits (FDs) in multiples of ₹25,000 once the balance reaches ₹75,000, ensuring higher returns on idle money.
- **Key Benefits:** It offers up to 7% interest on 13-month sweep-in deposits with no lock-in period (ensuring anytime liquidity) and includes a complimentary RuPay Platinum debit card.

**Footnotes:** CSB's MD & CEO: Pralay Mondal, HQ: Kerala, Estd: 1920

### **Bank of Baroda Launches Feature Phone Banking Service via JioPhone Devices**

- **Launch of "bob World Lite":** Bank of Baroda introduced "bob World Lite", a lightweight, low-bandwidth version of its mobile banking app. It is specifically designed to work on the JioPhone Prima 4G and other JioPhone devices, utilizing physical keypad navigation.
- **Inclusive Interoperability:** Unlike standard banking apps, this service is open to everyone. Users who are not Bank of Baroda customers can also use the app via a simple self-onboarding process to perform digital transactions, making it an "industry-first" in terms of accessibility.
- **Key Digital Features:** Despite being on a feature phone, the app supports high-end functions including UPI-enabled Scan & Pay, money transfers, mobile recharges, and bill payments. It aims to reduce reliance on physical branches for the millions of users in rural and semi-urban India.

**Footnotes:** BOB's MD & CEO: Debadatta Chand, HQ: Alkapuri, Estd: 1908

### **Bank of Maharashtra appoints Sushanta Kumar Mohanty as Executive Director**

- **The Appointment:** Shri Sushanta Kumar Mohanty officially assumed charge as the Executive Director (ED) of the Bank of Maharashtra on April 15, 2026, following a notification from the Department of Financial Services.
- **Tenure & Background:** He has been appointed for a period of three years. Prior to this role, he served as the Chief General Manager at Bank of Baroda, where he led Treasury and Global Markets.
- **Experience:** An industry veteran with over 30 years of experience, Mohanty has expertise in International Banking, Forex Management, and Treasury Operations, including a significant posting in New York, USA.

**Footnotes:** BOM's MD & CEO: Nidhu Saxena, HQ: Maharashtra, Estd: 1935

### **LIC Launches 'MyLIC' & 'Super Sales Saathi' Mobile App**

- **Dual-Targeted Solutions:** The apps create a "dual-engine" digital model; MyLIC is designed for the 260 million policyholders for self-service, while Super Sales Saathi is a dedicated tool for agents and intermediaries to enhance their sales productivity and customer engagement.
- **Powered by DIVE:** Both applications are delivered through LIC's DIVE (Digital Innovation & Value Enhancement) platform, which aims to transform the insurer from a service utility into a strategic, technology-first distribution ecosystem.
- **Advanced Features:** Key capabilities include real-time benefit tracking, paperless policy loans, and online policy revival for customers, alongside AI-driven nudges, digital sales kits, and performance dashboards for agents.

**Footnotes: LIC's MD & CEO: R. Doraiswamy, HQ: Mumbai, Estd: 1956**

## SPORTS NEWS

### Jannik Sinner beats Carlos Alcaraz to win Monte-Carlo Masters 2026

- **Title & Ranking:** Italy's Jannik Sinner defeated Spain's Carlos Alcaraz in straight sets (7-6, 6-3) to win his first-ever clay-court ATP Masters 1000 title. With this win, Sinner reclaimed the World No. 1 ranking.
- **Historic Achievement:** Sinner became only the second man in history (after Novak Djokovic in 2015) to win the "Sunshine Double" (Indian Wells and Miami) and the Monte-Carlo Masters in the same season.
- **Winning Streak:** This victory marked Sinner's fourth consecutive ATP Masters 1000 title (following Paris 2025, Indian Wells 2026, and Miami 2026), making him only the third player to achieve this feat alongside Rafael Nadal and Novak Djokovic.

### Sawan Barwal Breaks 48-Year-Old Indian Marathon Record

- **Historical Feat:** On April 12, 2026, Indian long-**distance** runner Sawan Barwal broke the longest-standing record in Indian athletics—the men's marathon national record—which had been held by Shivnath Singh since 1978.
- **The Record Time:** Making his competitive marathon debut at the NN Marathon Rotterdam in the Netherlands, Barwal clocked a time of 2:11:58, surpassing the previous record of 2:12:00 by just 0.42 seconds.
- **Background & Achievement:** Barwal, an Armyman from Himachal Pradesh, finished 20th in the elite race; with this record broken, PT Usha's 1984 400m hurdles mark now becomes India's longest-standing athletics record.

### Sujeet & Abhimanyu Grab Gold At Asian Wrestling Championships 2026

- **Historic Gold Medals:** On April 11, 2026, Indian freestyle wrestlers Sujeet Kalkal (65kg) and Abhimanyu Mandwal (70kg) secured India's first two gold medals at the Senior Asian Wrestling Championships held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan.

- **Sujeet's Dominance:** Sujeet defeated Uzbekistan's Umidjon Jalolov 8-1 in the 65kg final, becoming the first Indian to win gold in this weight category since Bajrang Punia in 2019.
- **Abhimanyu's Comeback:** Abhimanyu, a CISF head constable from Haryana, staged a remarkable comeback from a 0-2 deficit to defeat Mongolia's Tulga Tumur Ochir 5-3 in the 70kg final, marking a major breakthrough in his international career.

### Indian Athletics Series 4th Leg Held in Ranchi

- **Key Asian Games Qualifications:** Vithya Ramraj (Women's 400m hurdles) and Sarvesh Kushare (Men's high jump) both secured gold and surpassed the Asian Games qualifying standards. Ramraj clocked 57.02 seconds, while Kushare cleared a height of 2.19m.
- **Standout Field Performances:** Odisha's national indoor champion, Sarun Payasingh, clinched gold in the men's long jump with an effort of 7.46m. In the women's section, Asian Games medalist Ancy Sojan won the long jump with a leap of 6.45m, narrowly missing the qualification mark by just 3cm.
- **Dominance in Sprints:** Odisha's Mousumi Roy emerged as the fastest woman of the meet, completing a "sprint double" by winning both the 100m (11.83s) and 200m (24.79s).

### Mitchell & Deepti named Wisden's Leading Cricketers in World for 2025

- **Deepti Sharma's Historic Recognition:** Deepti was honored as the Leading Women's Cricketer in the World after a stellar performance that led India to its first-ever ODI World Cup title.
- **Mitchell Starc's Test Dominance:** Starc was named the Leading Men's Cricketer in the World for his lethal bowling in 2025. He claimed 55 wickets in 11 Tests at an average of 17.32, which included spearheading Australia's 4-1 Ashes victory.
- **Indian Dominance in Wisden Honours:** Indian players secured seven of the nine main prizes this year. Notably, Shubman Gill, Ravindra Jadeja, Rishabh Pant, and Mohammed Siraj were named among the "Five Cricketers of the Year."

### R Vaishali Wins Women's Candidates Tournament 2026

- **World Championship Challenger:** By winning the 2026 Women's Candidates Tournament in Cyprus, Vaishali has officially earned the right to challenge the reigning champion, Ju Wenjun, for the Women's World Chess Championship title later this year.
- **Decisive Final Round:** She secured the title outright with 8.5/14 points after defeating Kateryna Lagno in the final round. She finished half a point ahead of her closest rival, Bibisara Assaubayeva, avoiding the need for a playoff.

- **Historic "Underdog" Victory:** Vaishali entered the tournament as the lowest-rated player in the field. Her victory mirrors the "fairytale" success of her brother, Praggnanandhaa, and D Gukesh, further cementing India's dominance in global chess.

### India Wins 17 Medals At Asian Wrestling C'ships

- **Final Medal Tally:** India finished the championships with a total of 17 medals, consisting of 4 Gold, 3 Silver, and 10 Bronze. This haul marks a strong showing for the Indian squad on the continental stage.
- **Dominance in Women's Wrestling:** The women's team was the standout performer, clinching 9 of the 17 medals. This included 3 of India's 4 total gold medals, with top honors going to athletes in the 53kg, 57kg, and 72kg categories.
- **Olympic Momentum:** These championships served as a critical benchmark for the athletes ahead of upcoming international qualifiers. The podium finishes by both seasoned veterans and rising youngsters have significantly boosted India's ranking and seeding for the 2026 global season.

### Melie Kerr Wins ICC Women's Player of the Month for March 2026

- **Record-Breaking Bowling:** Kerr's March was defined by a historic ODI series against Zimbabwe, where she claimed 16 wickets in just three matches. This included a career-best and New Zealand record of 7/34, the best-ever bowling figures by a White Fern in the format.
- **All-Round Consistency:** In addition to her bowling, she was a force with the bat, scoring 276 runs in the T20I series against South Africa and 140 runs in the ODIs against Zimbabwe. She also extended her world-record streak to 11 consecutive scores of 30+ in T20 Internationals.
- **Leadership & Global Ranking:** Having recently taken over the captaincy from Sophie Devine, Kerr led New Zealand to series wins over both Zimbabwe and South Africa. Her performances propelled her to the No. 1 spot in the ICC Women's T20I All-Rounder rankings, and this marks her third time winning the Player of the Month award.

### Shubhankar Sharma won Inaugural Boulders Classic 2026

- **The Victory:** Indian golfer Shubhankar Sharma clinched the title at the first-ever Boulders Classic in April 2026, held at the Blackwood National Golf Club.
- **Performance:** Sharma secured the win with a clinical final-round performance, finishing at 14-under-par. He held off a strong challenge from South African golfer Thriston Lawrence to claim the trophy.
- **Significance:** This win marks a major milestone in Sharma's 2026 season, further **solidifying** his position as India's top-ranked golfer and providing a significant boost to his Official World Golf Ranking (OWGR) ahead of the year's upcoming Majors.

### Gautam Adani Overtakes Mukesh Ambani to Become Asia's Richest Person

- **The Rank Shift:** On April 17, 2026, Gautam Adani reclaimed the title of Asia's Richest Person, surpassing Mukesh Ambani. According to the Bloomberg Billionaires Index, Adani's net worth reached \$92.6 billion, placing him 19th globally, while Ambani moved to 20th with \$90.8 billion.
- **Driving Factors:** Adani's wealth surged by \$8.1 billion year-to-date, fueled by a robust rally in Adani Group stocks (such as Adani Power and Adani Ports). In contrast, Mukesh Ambani's wealth saw a year-to-date decline of approximately \$16.9 billion due to market volatility in the retail and petrochemical sectors.
- **Wider Context:** This marks a continued "see-saw" battle for the top spot between the two Indian tycoons. Globally, Elon Musk remains the world's richest individual with a net worth of \$656 billion, followed by Google co-founder Larry Page.

### India's Sonam Maskar Finishes Fifth in 10m Air Rifle at ISSF World Cup

- **Final Standings:** Sonam Maskar finished in 5th place in the Women's 10m Air Rifle event, demonstrating her consistency among the world's elite shooters.
- **Qualification Prowess:** She entered the final in a strong position after shooting a score of 631.2 in the qualification round, which placed her 4th among a field of over 60 international competitors.
- **Rising Star:** This performance follows her breakthrough silver medal at the Cairo World Cup earlier in her career, solidifying her status as a key medal prospect for India leading up to the 2026 Asian Games.

## AWARD NEWS

### A. K. Tripathi Conferred CIDC Vishwakarma Achievement Award 2026

- **Award Recognition:** Shri A. K. Tripathi, Executive Director (Projects) at GAIL (India) Limited, was honored with the CIDC Vishwakarma Achievement Award (Public Officer) at the 17th edition of the awards held in New Delhi in April 2026.
- **Key Contributions:** The award recognizes his leadership in advancing India's energy infrastructure, including the execution of over 3,300 km of pipeline projects since 2023 and a record 1,612 km commissioned in the 2025–26 financial year.
- **Institutional Significance:** Established by the Construction Industry Development Council (CIDC), these awards celebrate organizations and individuals who contribute significantly to nation-building and engineering excellence in the Indian construction and infrastructure sectors.

### HUDCO CMD Sanjay Kulshrestha Conferred with CIDC Vishwakarma Award 2026

- **Award Category:** Sanjay Kulshrestha, the Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of HUDCO, was conferred with the Achievement Award for Public Officer (Government & Public Sector) at the 17th CIDC Vishwakarma Awards 2026.
- **Recognized Excellence:** The award, presented by the Construction Industry Development Council (CIDC), recognizes his leadership in sustainable urban development, affordable housing, and strengthening public sector housing finance.
- **National Alignment:** The honor highlights HUDCO's contribution to nation-building initiatives and its alignment with India's long-term vision of Viksit Bharat 2047 through urban infrastructure financing.

**Footnotes:** HUDCO's CMD: Sanjay Kulshrestha, HQ: New Delhi, Estd: 1970

### **Sayani Gupta Honoured with Harvard South Asian Person of the Year Award 2026**

- **The Recognition:** Indian actress and producer Sayani Gupta has been named the "South Asian Person of the Year" 2026 by the Harvard University South Asian Association (SAA).
- **Significance:** The award honors her influential role in cinema and storytelling, specifically her commitment to authentic representation and challenging traditional South Asian stereotypes on a global platform.
- **Context of Honor:** She joins an elite list of previous recipients, including Vikas Khanna (2025) and Avantika Vandanapu (2024); the ceremony coincides with the premiere of her directorial debut film, Aasmani.

### **ONGC Wins Global Safety Award for Corporate HSE Excellence**

- **The Award:** Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has been honored with the Global Safety Award (Platinum Category) for Corporate HSE (Health, Safety, and Environment) Excellence by the Energy and Environment Foundation (EEF) in April 2026.
- **Triple Recognition:** This marks ONGC's third consecutive Platinum recognition during the 2025–26 period, underscoring its consistent global leadership in safety standards and environmental stewardship.
- **Presented By:** The award was presented by Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State for Science & Technology and Earth Sciences, recognizing the company's "Safety-First" culture and its robust systems for mitigating operational risks in high-stakes energy production.

**Footnotes:** ONGC's Chairman & CEO: Arun Kumar Singh, HQ: New Delhi, Estd: 1956

## **APPOINTMENT & PERSON IN NEWS**

### **FICCI Names Anant Swarup as Secretary General**

- **Distinguished Career Background:** Anant Swarup is a 1992-batch Indian Railway Personnel Service (IRPS) officer with over 30 years of experience. He has held high-level

government positions, including Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce and Director General of Trade Remedies (DGTR), where he managed over 200 investigations.

- **Global Trade Expertise:** He brings extensive international experience, having served as India's First Secretary at the World Trade Organization (WTO) in Geneva. He played a pivotal role in negotiating key Free Trade Agreements (FTAs) with the UK, UAE, Mauritius, and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA).
- **Leadership Continuity:** Taking charge effective April 14, 2026, Swarup succeeds Shailesh Pathak. His appointment is designed to strengthen FICCI's senior leadership at a critical time for Indian industry, while Jyoti Vij will continue in her role as Director General to ensure operational continuity.

### **Sunil Bajpai became Principal Chief Income Tax Commissioner for Tamil Nadu & Puducherry**

- **Distinguished IRS Profile:** Sunil Bajpai is a 1990-batch officer of the Indian Revenue Service (IRS). Before this elevation, he was serving as the Chief Commissioner of Income Tax-5 in Mumbai.
- **Strong Technical & Academic Credentials:** He brings a high level of academic expertise to the role, holding a B.Tech from IIT Kanpur, an M.Tech from IIT Delhi, a PGDM from IIM Lucknow, and an LL.B. degree.
- **Strategic Administrative Experience:** His career includes significant roles such as Additional Director in the Directorate of Systems and Director at the National Security Council Secretariat (NSCS). His appointment was part of a major April 2026 reshuffle by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) involving 18 senior IRS officers.

### **Samrat Choudhary Sworn In as The New CM Of Bihar**

- **First BJP Chief Minister of Bihar:** His appointment is a landmark event as he becomes the first leader from the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) to hold the office of Chief Minister in Bihar. This transition occurred after Nitish Kumar resigned from the post to move to the Rajya Sabha, ending his two-decade tenure.
- **Political Background & Legacy:** Choudhary comes from a prominent political family; he is the son of veteran leader Shakuni Choudhary. Before becoming CM, he served as the Deputy Chief Minister and the President of the Bihar BJP state unit. His political career began in 1999, and he has previously held ministerial portfolios in RJD and JD(U) led governments.
- **Strategic Social Representation:** A prominent OBC leader from the Kushwaha (Koeri) community, his elevation is seen as a strategic move to consolidate the "Luv-Kush" (Kurmi-Koeri) vote bank. He was unanimously elected as the leader of the NDA Legislative Party before taking his oath at the Raj Bhavan.

**Footnotes:** Bihar's Previous CM: Nitish Kumar, Governor: Arif Mohammad Khan, Capital: Patna

### **Sunish S, IFA in President's Secretariat, appointed as Director in Department of Revenue**

- **New Appointment:** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the appointment of Sunish S as Director in the Department of Revenue (Ministry of Finance). His tenure is set until January 10, 2028.
- **Background:** He is a 2010-batch officer of the Indian Defence Accounts Service (IDAS). Before this appointment, he was serving as the Internal Financial Advisor (IFA) in the President's Secretariat.
- **Career Trajectory:** Sunish S began his central deputation in January 2021 as a Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Home Affairs before moving to the President's Secretariat in early 2023. His new role is part of the Central Staffing Scheme (CSS).

### **Infosys appoints Tennis Star Carlos Alcaraz as Global Brand Ambassador**

- **Elite Athlete Partnership:** Carlos Alcaraz, a seven-time Grand Slam champion and the youngest athlete to ever reach World No. 1, joins Infosys as its newest global face, joining other tennis legends like Rafael Nadal and Iga Świątek on the brand's roster.
- **AI-Powered Performance:** As part of this "AI-first" collaboration, Infosys will leverage its Topaz platform (generative AI) to create a personalized performance application for Alcaraz and his team, providing data-driven match analytics and strategic insights to enhance his game.
- **Social Impact Focus:** Beyond the court, the partnership includes a "tech-for-good" initiative where Infosys will collaborate with the Carlos Alcaraz Foundation to use technology to improve social equity and accessibility in communities worldwide.

### **Harivansh Narayan Singh gets re-elected as Deputy Chairman of Rajya Sabha**

- **Third Consecutive Term:** A veteran journalist and politician, Harivansh Narayan Singh has served in this role since 2018. His re-election for a third term is a testament to the consensus and trust he has built across the Upper House.
- **Historic First for Nominated Members:** He has made history by becoming the first nominated member to be elected as the Deputy Chairman. He was nominated to the Rajya Sabha by President Droupadi Murmu earlier in April 2026, following the end of his previous term as a JD(U) representative.
- **Unopposed Election:** His candidacy was supported by a motion moved by the Leader of the House, J.P. Nadda. Despite recent political debates regarding parliamentary vacancies, the opposition did not field a candidate, leading to his unopposed victory during the special session of Parliament.

## Vikash Kumar appointed as Superintendent of Police in NIA

- **The Appointment:** Shri Vikash Kumar, a 2020-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, was officially inducted as the Superintendent of Police (SP) in the National Investigation Agency (NIA) on April 16, 2026.
- **Cadre & Deputation:** He belongs to the Chhattisgarh cadre and has been appointed to the central agency on a deputation basis to fill an existing vacancy.
- **Official Directive:** The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) issued the approval, directing the Chhattisgarh government to relieve the officer immediately to join his new assignment at the NIA headquarters in New Delhi.

**Footnotes:** NIA's DG: Rakesh Aggarwal, HQ: New Delhi, Estd: 2009

## OBITUARY NEWS

### Asha Bhosle: The sound of Bollywood dies aged 92

- **Demise & Honours:** Legendary playback singer Asha Bhosle passed away on April 12, 2026, at the age of 92 in Mumbai due to multi-organ failure. She was cremated with full state honours at Shivaji Park on April 13.
- **Guinness World Record:** In 2011, she was officially recognized by the Guinness World Records as the most recorded artist in music history. Her career spanned over eight decades, during which she recorded over 11,000 songs in more than 20 Indian and foreign languages.
- **Major Awards:** A recipient of the Dadasaheb Phalke Award (2000) and the Padma Vibhushan (2008), she won two National Film Awards and was the first Indian singer to be nominated for a Grammy Award (1997).

### India's Oldest Test Cricketer CD Gopinath Dies

- **Historic Milestone:** On April 9, 2026, Chingleput Dorey Raj "CD" Gopinath passed away in Chennai at the age of 96; he was the last surviving member of the Indian team that recorded the country's first-ever Test victory (against England in 1952).
- **Career Highlights:** Gopinath played 8 Tests between 1951 and 1960, debuting with a memorable 50\* and 42 against England; at the domestic level, he captained Madras (now Tamil Nadu) and led them to their first-ever Ranji Trophy title in 1954-55.
- **Leadership Roles:** Beyond his playing days, he served as the Chairman of the National Selection Committee and was the manager of the Indian team during the

famous 1979 tour of England; following his demise, 95-year-old Chandrakant Patankar is now India's oldest living Test cricketer.

### **First American Everest Climber Jim Whittaker Dies**

- **Historic 1963 Everest Ascent:** On May 1, 1963, Whittaker made history as the first American to summit Mount Everest via the South Col route alongside Sherpa Nawang Gombu.
- **Business and Environmental Leadership:** Whittaker was the first full-time employee and later the CEO of REI (Recreational Equipment, Inc.), transforming it from a small local co-op into a national retail giant.
- **Connection to the Kennedys:** Following his Everest feat, he became a close personal friend of Robert F. Kennedy. In 1965, he led RFK on the first ascent of Mount Kennedy in Canada (named in honor of JFK).

### **Mahavir Chakra awardee, Kargil hero, Colonel Sonam Wangchuk passed away**

- **Kargil War Heroism:** During the 1999 Kargil War, then-Major Wangchuk led a daring mission to capture the Chorbat La ridge in the Batalik sector. Operating at an altitude of nearly 18,000 feet in glaciated terrain, his team successfully evicted enemy forces, securing one of the first major victories of Operation Vijay.
- **Maha Vir Chakra Recipient:** In recognition of his exceptional bravery and leadership under fire, he was awarded the Maha Vir Chakra (MVC), India's second-highest wartime gallantry award. His actions were so significant that two forward posts in the Batalik sector were later named 'Sonam 1' and 'Sonam 2' in his honor.
- **Legacy of Service:** Colonel Wangchuk passed away on April 10, 2026, at the age of 61. Beyond his Kargil heroics, he had a distinguished 30-year career that included service in the Assam Regiment and the Ladakh Scouts.