

Current Affairs

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Vaibhav Sooryavanshi received Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar



1. Vaibhav Sooryavanshi received Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar

- **Recognition in the Sports Category:** Vaibhav was selected for his extraordinary contributions and record-breaking performances in the field of cricket, specifically within the sports category of the PMRBP.
- **A "World Record" Week:** The award comes just days after he made global headlines by becoming the youngest centurion in List A history. He smashed 190 runs off 84 balls for Bihar against Arunachal Pradesh, reaching his century in just 36 balls.
- **Breaking Legendary Records:** During the same match that solidified his award nomination, he broke AB de Villiers' long-standing record for the fastest 150 in List A cricket, reaching the milestone in only 59 balls (surpassing de Villiers' 64 balls).
- **IPL & Youth Cricket Impact:** The award also acknowledges his impact as the youngest player ever to be bought in an IPL auction (by Rajasthan Royals for ₹ 1.1 crore) and his record-breaking 35-ball century for the Royals in the 2025 season.
- **Symbol of Youth Excellence:** At just 14, he has already debuted in the Ranji Trophy (at age 12) and established himself as a mainstay in the India Under-19 squad. President Murmu highlighted him as a "name to remember" in the competitive world of Indian cricket.



2. Russia Plans Lunar Nuclear Power Plant Deployment by 2036

- **Joint Russia-China Collaboration:** The plant is a cornerstone of the International Lunar Research Station (ILRS), a joint project between Russia and China. It is designed to provide a stable, long-term energy source for a permanent scientific base, moving away from one-time "hit-and-run" missions.
- **Nuclear-Powered Infrastructure:** While occasionally referred to generally as a "power plant," the project involves Rosatom (Russia's nuclear agency) and the Kurchatov Institute. Nuclear energy is considered essential for the Moon because solar power is unreliable during the 14-day lunar nights and in the shadowed regions of the South Pole.
- **Supporting Lunar "Workhorses":** The primary purpose of the facility is to provide autonomous electricity for lunar rovers, scientific observatories, and habitat infrastructure. It aims to allow robotic and human systems to operate without interruption for years at a time.
- **Contract with Lavochkin Association:** Roscosmos has officially signed a contract with the Lavochkin Association, the aerospace company famous for its history with Soviet-era lunar and Venus missions, to lead the engineering and construction of the deployment system.
- **Geopolitical Space Race:** This announcement is seen as a direct response to NASA's Artemis program, which aims to put a reactor on the Moon by 2030. For Russia, it is a critical step in reasserting its status as a top-tier space power following the failure of the Luna-25 mission in 2023.



3. Mumbai Ranks 5th in World's Best Food Cities 2025–26

- **Global Recognition for Street Food:** Mumbai's high ranking is primarily attributed to its legendary street food culture. Iconic dishes such as VadaPav (rated 4.5), PavBhaji, Bhelpuri, and RagdaPattice were highlighted as the soul of the city's culinary identity.
- **Only Indian City in the Top 10:** While several Indian cities made the top 100, Mumbai was the only one to break into the elite top 10. It outshone other domestic food capitals like Delhi (48th), Amritsar (53rd), and Hyderabad (54th).
- **Consistent Excellence:** This marks the second consecutive year that Mumbai has secured the 5th spot in the TasteAtlas rankings, proving that its food scene is not just a trend but a consistently world-class experience.
- **Beating Global Giants:** Mumbai successfully "leapfrogged" famous international food destinations. In the 2025–26 list, it sits above Genoa (6th),



Paris (7th), Vienna (8th), Rome (9th), and Lima (10th). The top four spots were swept by Italian cities: Naples, Milan, Bologna, and Florence.

4. IIT Delhi Introduces AI Agent AILA for Smart and Autonomous Lab Research

- **From Writing to "Doing" Science:** Unlike standard AI models (like ChatGPT) that primarily assist with data analysis or drafting reports, AILA is an active agent that can physically control laboratory equipment, design experimental sequences, and execute them from start to finish without human intervention.
- **Mastery of Complex Instruments:** AILA has successfully automated the operation of the Atomic Force Microscope (AFM). This is a highly sensitive and intricate tool used in materials science that typically takes human researchers years to master. AILA can adjust its parameters, such as force and resolution, in real time based on live feedback.
- **Massive Efficiency Gains:** The AI agent has reduced the time required for high-resolution imaging and parameter optimization from an entire day (approx. 24 hours) to just 7–10 minutes. This allows researchers to focus on high-level hypothesis building rather than repetitive manual calibration.
- **Real-World Adaptability Challenges:** The researchers noted a "textbook vs. traffic" gap. While AI can easily answer scientific questions (textbook knowledge), AILA was specifically developed to handle the "traffic" of a real lab—unexpected noise, equipment fluctuations, and shifting environmental conditions that require quick, autonomous decision-making.
- **Democratizing Research:** Published in Nature Communications, this project aligns with India's AI for Science initiative. By automating specialized tasks, IIT Delhi aims to democratize access to advanced research, allowing smaller institutions without specialized personnel to conduct cutting-edge materials science.



5. India Commissions Its First Home-Grown Water-Soluble Fertilizer Pilot Plant

- **Breakthrough in Indigenous Technology:** Developed after seven years of research by Rajib Chakraborty (President of the Soluble Fertilizer Industry Association) and supported by the Ministry of Mines, this is the first time India has created its own process for WSF. Historically, India has relied entirely on "borrowed" or licensed technologies from abroad.
- **Drastic Reduction in Import Dependency:** Currently, India imports nearly 95% of its specialty fertilizers, with 80% coming directly from China. This plant



aims to flip that script, moving India from an import-heavy buyer to a potential global exporter of specialty fertilizers.

- **"Universal" Production Process:** Unlike conventional methods that require different specialized technologies for each type of fertilizer, this homegrown breakthrough uses a single-process platform capable of manufacturing almost all types of water-soluble fertilizers, making it highly versatile and cost-effective.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** The plant is recognized as a project of national importance because it is a zero-effluent and emission-free facility. This eco-friendly design addresses the high pollution levels usually associated with chemical fertilizer production.

6. Josh Tongue Becomes First England Bowler This Century to Take Five-Wicket Haul

- **Breaking a 27-Year Drought:** Josh Tongue became the first England bowler in the 21st century to take a five-wicket haul in a Test match at the MCG. The last English bowlers to achieve this feat at the venue were Darren Gough and Dean Headley back in 1998.
- **Dominating the Top Order:** Tongue's figures of 5/45 were fueled by a devastating opening spell where he dismantled Australia's world-class middle order, dismissing both Steve Smith (9) and Marnus Labuschagne (6) in quick succession.
- **Historical Impact on the Match:** His performance was the centerpiece of a chaotic opening day where 20 wickets fell—the most on day one of a Test in Australia since 1951. Tongue's wickets were instrumental in bowling Australia out for just 152 in only 45.2 overs.
- **The "Smith Slayer":** With his dismissal of Steve Smith at the MCG, Tongue has now dismissed the Australian legend three times in as many meetings, maintaining an incredible average of just 11.66 against him.
- **A Career Resurgence:** This milestone marks a triumphant return for the 28-year-old pacer, who missed the entire 2024 season due to a pectoral injury. It is his third career five-wicket haul, following his debut fiver against Ireland and a standout performance against India earlier in 2025.



7. Alpine SG Pipers Wins Tech Mahindra Global Chess League 2025 Title

- **Dominant 2-0 Finals Sweep:** The Alpine SG Pipers won the championship by defeating the Triveni Continental Kings in both rapid matches of the final (4–2 and 4.5–1.5). This was a major upset, as the Kings had entered the final as heavy



favorites after leading the round-robin stage by a massive 9-point margin.

- **AnishGiri's MVP Performance:** Dutch Grandmaster AnishGiri was the standout star of the finals. He secured two crucial victories against Wei Yi, earning him the Player of the Final award. His ability to convert under high pressure was instrumental in the Pipers' sweep.
- **Dramatic "Icon Board" Finish:** In a tense second match, Pipers' Icon player FabianoCaruana defeated the tournament's leading scorer AlirezaFirouzja after Firouzja lost on time in a winning position. While Firouzja was named the Male Player of the Tournament, Caruana's victory sealed the Pipers' coronation.
- **The "HouYifan" Factor:** Legend HouYifan was named the Female Player of the Tournament. Her incredible late-season run—winning four consecutive games in the final days—was what allowed the Pipers to even reach the final, edging out Ganges Grandmasters by just a single "Game Point."

8. Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami Unveils 'MeriYojana' Welfare Schemes Portal

- **Unified Digital Hub:** The portal (hosted via myscheme.gov.in) serves as a single, user-centric platform that integrates information on over 400 welfare schemes from 55 different departments, covering both State and Central Government initiatives.
- **Three-Tiered Handbook Series:** Along with the portal, the CM unveiled three distinct editions of the "MeriYojana" handbook: one dedicated to Central Government schemes, one for State Government schemes, and a general edition. These books provide simplified, step-by-step guides in Hindi for rural residents.
- **Eligibility-First Approach:** A standout feature of the portal is its ability to help citizens "discover" benefits. By entering basic demographic details, the system automatically filters and identifies which specific schemes an individual is eligible for, reducing the need for middle-men.
- **Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Focus:** The launch emphasized the government's transition toward 100% transparency. By using the portal, eligible beneficiaries can ensure their details are correctly linked for Direct Benefit Transfers, specifically for social welfare pensions and scholarships.



9. Rashtra Prerna Sthal Inaugurated in Lucknow to Honour AtalBihari Vajpayee

- **Honoring Three Iconic Leaders:** While the site celebrates the legacy of AtalBihari Vajpayee, it also honors two other towering figures of Indian nationalism: Dr.Syama Prasad Mookerjee and PanditDeendayalUpadhyaya. The memorial



serves as a tribute to their contributions to India's political thought and nation-building.

- **Massive Bronze Statues:** The complex features three imposing 65-foot-tall bronze statues of Vajpayee, Mookerjee, and Upadhyaya. These are among the tallest statues in Lucknow, with each weighing approximately 42 tonnes and situated on platforms surrounded by water bodies.
- **Lotus-Shaped Museum:** A key highlight is the state-of-the-art, lotus-shaped museum covering nearly 98,000 square feet. It houses five galleries and 12 "interpretation walls" that use immersive digital displays to showcase the lives, struggles, and ideologies of the three leaders.
- **Landfill Transformation:** The project is a major environmental milestone; it was built on 65 acres of land that previously served as a massive garbage dump. Over 30 acres of landfill were cleared and reclaimed using the Miyawaki technique to plant approximately 50,000 trees, turning a former wasteland into a green lung for the city.

10. World War II Veteran Ira "Ike" Schab passed away

- **Witness to History at Pearl Harbor:** At age 21, Schab was a sailor and tuba player in the band aboard the USS Dobbin. During the surprise Japanese attack on December 7, 1941, he witnessed the capsizing of the USS Utah and joined a "daisy chain" of sailors to feed ammunition to anti-aircraft guns.
- **One of the Final Few:** With Schab's passing, it is estimated that only about a dozen survivors of the Pearl Harbor attack remain alive. For decades, he rarely spoke of the event, but in his later years, he became a dedicated advocate for "honoring the guys who didn't make it."
- **Contribution to the Space Race:** After the war, Schab transitioned from military service to a distinguished career in science. He studied aerospace engineering and worked as an electrical engineer for General Dynamics, where he contributed to the Apollo spaceflight program, helping to send the first humans to the moon.
- **Lifelong Dedication to Commemoration:** Despite his advanced age, Schab made regular pilgrimages to Hawaii for the annual Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day. In 2023, at age 103, he spent weeks training to build the physical strength to stand and salute during the ceremony.



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