



Current Affairs

09 May, 2025



Graham Arnold appointed as
Iraq's New Football Coach



1. Graham Arnold Appointed as Iraq's New Football Coach

Graham Arnold, former head coach of Australia's national football team, is set to be officially appointed as the new head coach of Iraq's national team this weekend, according to the Iraqi Football Association (IFA). Arnold, who led Australia to the round of 16 at the 2022 World Cup, will replace Spaniard Jesus Casas, who was dismissed in March following a 2-1 defeat to Palestine.



That loss left Iraq in third place in their group for the 2026 World Cup qualifiers, just outside the automatic qualification spots. Arnold will bring a full technical staff of seven coaches, including a notable assistant with English Premier League experience.

Foot notes:

- **Appointment and Objective:** Graham Arnold has been appointed as the new coach of Iraq's national team, aiming to guide the team through the 2026 World Cup qualifiers.
- **Experience:** Arnold brings extensive experience, having previously coached Australia's national team, leading them to the Round of 16 at the 2022 World Cup.
- **Contract Details:** His contract will reportedly run through the 2027 AFC Asian Cup, with a monthly salary structure and potential termination if Iraq fails to qualify for the World Cup.
- **Upcoming Challenges:** Arnold's first tests will be crucial World Cup qualifiers against South Korea and Jordan, scheduled for June.

- **Team's Potential:** Arnold believes Iraq has the quality to compete on the global stage and is motivated to help realize that potential.

2. GRSE delivers first anti-submarine warfare shallow water craft to navy

Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) has delivered the Indian Navy's first Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC), INS Arnala, marking a significant milestone in India's naval modernization efforts. Designed and built indigenously, INS Arnala is the lead ship in a series of eight vessels aimed at enhancing the Navy's capabilities in coastal defense and anti-submarine operations. Measuring 77.6 meters in length and equipped with advanced sonar systems, lightweight torpedoes, and ASW rockets, the vessel is optimized for shallow water missions.

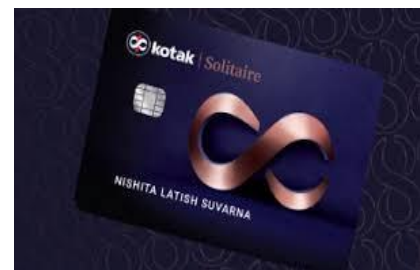


Foot notes:

- **Delivery of INS Arnala:** Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) delivered INS Arnala, the first of eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC), to the Indian Navy on May 8, 2025.
- **Contract Details:** The contract for eight ASW-SWC vessels was signed in April 2019, valued at 6,311 crore, with GRSE partnering with Larsen & Toubro (L&T) for fabrication of some hulls.
- **Vessel Capabilities:** INS Arnala is designed for anti-submarine operations in coastal waters, subsurface surveillance, and coordinated ASW operations with maritime patrol aircraft. It can also lay mines and conduct search-and-rescue missions.
- **Indigenous Content:** The ASW-SWC vessels have over 80% indigenous content, showcasing India's growing defense manufacturing capabilities.
- **Project Timeline:** The Indian Navy plans to have all 16 ASW-SWC vessels, being built by GRSE and Cochin Shipyard, in active service by 2026.

3. Kotak Mahindra Bank Launches All New Solitaire Credit Card

Kotak Mahindra Bank has launched the Solitaire Credit Card, a premium offering tailored for its high-net-worth Solitaire banking customers. Valued at 50,000, the card provides annual benefits worth up to 2.5 lakh, including complimentary access to exclusive travel experiences, a "book two nights, pay for one" offer at ITC Hotels, and the ability to redeem rewards for up to six domestic and two international flight tickets. Additional perks encompass zero forex markup,



unlimited lounge access, and a generous reward structure of 10 air miles per 100 spent, capped at 100,000 miles monthly.

Foot notes:

- **Kotak IndiGo 6E Rewards XL Credit Card:** Offers 6 reward points per Rs. 100 spent on IndiGo flights, 3 reward points per Rs. 100 spent on dining, grocery, and entertainment, and 2 reward points per Rs. 100 spent on other categories.
- **Kotak Myntra Credit Card:** Provides 7.5% off up to Rs. 750 per transaction on Myntra, 5% cashback up to Rs. 1,000 per month on Swiggy, Swiggy Instamart, PVR, Cleartrip, and Urban Company, and 1.25% cashback on other spends.
- **Kotak Zen Signature Credit Card:** Offers 10 Zen points per Rs. 150 shopping spends, 5 points on others, and 3 international Priority Pass and 8 domestic Dream Folks lounge visits per year.
- **Kotak PVR INOX Credit Card:** Features flat 5% off on movie tickets at PVR INOX, flat 20% off on food and beverages, and complimentary access to premium PVR INOX in-cinema lounges.

About Kotak Mahindra Bank:

CEO: Ashok Vaswani

Founded: 2003

HQ's: Maharashtra

4. Haryana approves scheme to provide Rs 10,000 monthly honorarium to artistes

Haryana Chief Minister Manohar Lal Khattar announced a monthly pension of 10,000 for Padma awardees from the state, including recipients of the Padma Shri, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Vibhushan. In addition to the pension, awardees will receive free travel facilities on the state's Volvo bus service, enhancing their mobility and access to resources. The scheme underscores the state's commitment to recognizing and supporting its distinguished citizens, fostering a culture of excellence and inspiration for future generations.



Foot notes:

- **Scheme Objective :** The scheme aims to improve the socioeconomic and financial status of senior artists and art scholars in Haryana who lack a stable income source due to their age.

- **Eligibility Criteria** : Artists and art scholars must be 60 years or older, have worked in the arts field for at least 20 years, and be permanent residents of Haryana with a valid Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP ID).
- **Monthly Honorarium** : Eligible beneficiaries receive Rs 10,000 per month if their annual income is up to Rs 1.80 lakh, and Rs 7,000 per month if their income is between Rs 1.80 lakh and Rs 3 lakh.
- **Covered Art Forms** : The scheme covers various art forms, including singing, acting, dance, drama, painting, sculpture, theatre, playing musical instruments, and other visual arts.
- **Application Process** : Beneficiaries can apply offline through the District Office of the Art and Culture Affairs Department,

About Haryana:

Capital: Chandigarh

Largest City: Faridabad

5. Bhutan Signs MoU with Adani for 5000 MW hydropower

Bhutan has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Adani Group to develop a 570 MW green hydroelectric plant in the Chukha province, marking a significant step in the nation's renewable energy initiatives. This project aims to harness Bhutan's vast hydro potential, contributing to sustainable energy production and strengthening bilateral ties between the Adani Group and Bhutan. The hydroelectric plant is expected to supply power domestically and export surplus electricity to India, enhancing energy cooperation between the two countries.



Foot notes:

- The MoU is for a 570 MW green hydroelectric power plant, not 5000 MW, in Chukha province, Bhutan.
- **Partnership Details:** Adani Group signed the MoU with Bhutan's Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC) to develop the hydroelectric facility, aligning with Bhutan's goal of sustainable development.
- **Renewable Energy:** The project will utilize Bhutan's natural resources to generate clean and reliable energy, contributing to the country's economic growth and job creation.
- **Infrastructure Development:** The collaboration may extend beyond the hydroelectric plant, with potential partnerships in transportation infrastructure, tourism, and green energy management.

- **Meetings and Discussions:** Adani Group chairman Gautam Adani met with Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck and Prime Minister Tshering Tobgay to discuss the project and other potential collaborations

About Bhutan:

Capital: Thimphu

Currencies: Bhutanese Ngultrum

Official language: Dzongkha

6. Sabalenka beats Gauff to win Madrid Open 2025

World No. 1 Aryna Sabalenka clinched her third Madrid Open title by defeating Coco Gauff 6–3, 7–6(3) in the 2025 women's singles final. This victory marks Sabalenka's 20th career WTA singles title and her third WTA 1000 title of the year, equaling Petra Kvitová's record for the most Madrid Open titles in the tournament's history. Sabalenka showcased her dominance by taking an early lead in the first set and overcoming a 3–5 deficit in the second to win the tiebreak. With this win, Sabalenka improved her 2025 record against top-10 players to 6–0, solidifying her position at the pinnacle of women's tennis.



Foot notes:

- **Final Score:** Sabalenka defeated Coco Gauff with a score of 6-3, 7-6(3) in the WTA 1000 final, held on May 3, 2025.
- **Third Madrid Title:** This victory marked Sabalenka's third Madrid Open title, tying Petra Kvitova's record for the most women's singles wins in the tournament's history.
- **20th WTA Singles Title:** The win was Sabalenka's 20th career WTA singles title, solidifying her position as a top player.
- **Strong Performance:** Sabalenka dominated the first set, winning 17 consecutive points at one stage to build a 4-1 lead, and eventually sealed the win in a closely contested second set tie-break.
- **Seasonal Lead:** With this title, Sabalenka leads the season with 31 match wins, ahead of Jessica Pegula's 27 wins, and also became the second player to win both Miami and Madrid in the same season, after Serena Williams in 2013.

7. Titan names Tanishq CEO Ajoy Chawla as next MD

Titan Company has announced that Ajoy Chawla, the current CEO of its jewellery division, will succeed C.K. Venkataraman as the next Managing Director by the end of

2025. Chawla, a Titan veteran with over three decades of experience, has led the jewellery segment—which includes brands like Tanishq, Zoya, Mia, and CaratLane—to contribute over 80% of the company's revenue in FY24. His leadership during the pandemic was marked by digital innovation and retail expansion, including the launch of new stores and a significant boost in online sales. Titan aims to continue its growth trajectory under Chawla's strategic vision and deep understanding of the company's operations.



Foot notes:

- **Appointment:** Ajoy Chawla, currently the CEO of Titan's Jewellery Division, will succeed C.K. Venkataraman as the Managing Director, effective January 1, 2026.
- **Background:** Chawla joined Titan in 1991 and has held key roles across watches, accessories, and jewellery segments, including chief strategy officer and CEO of the Jewellery Division since October 2019.
- **Achievements:** Under Chawla's leadership, the Jewellery Division has grown 2.5 times in sales and profits, reinforcing its market leadership.
- **Retirement of Predecessor:** C.K. Venkataraman will retire on December 31, 2025, upon reaching the Tata Group's superannuation age.
- **Shareholder Approval:** Chawla's appointment is subject to shareholder approval, with the formal process to be completed in due course.

8. Robert Prevost elected as 1st American pope & takes the name Leo XIV

Cardinal Robert Francis Prevost has made history by becoming the first American-born pope, taking the name Pope Leo XIV following his election on May 8, 2025. Born in Chicago in 1955, Prevost is also a Peruvian citizen and served extensively as a missionary in Peru, where he was known for his humanitarian efforts and closeness to the poor. In his first address from St. Peter's Basilica, Pope Leo XIV emphasized peace, unity, and inclusivity, speaking in Italian and Spanish, and expressing gratitude to the late Pope Francis.



Foot notes:

- **First American Pope:** Robert Francis Prevost became the first American pope in history, marking a significant shift in the papacy's global representation.

- **Papal Conclave:** Prevost was elected on the fourth ballot during the papal conclave held from May 7-8, 2025, succeeding Pope Francis, who passed away on April 21, 2025.
- **Chosen Name:** After accepting his election, Prevost chose the papal name Leo XIV, signifying a connection to the legacy of previous popes with the same name.
- **Background:** As the prefect of the Dicastery for Bishops and president of the Pontifical Commission for Latin America, Prevost brought significant experience to his new role.

9. GDAI, SEPC sign pact to boost gaming industry

The Game Developers Association of India (GDAI) and the Services Export Promotion Council (SEPC) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to bolster India's gaming industry. This partnership aims to enhance policy frameworks, foster innovation, and promote skill development within the sector. By collaborating, GDAI and SEPC intend to create a sustainable ecosystem that supports game developers and positions India as a global leader in video game development. This strategic alliance underscores a unified effort to drive growth and international recognition for India's burgeoning gaming sector.



Foot notes:

- **Partnership Objective:** GDAI and SEPC signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote collaboration, innovation, and growth in India's gaming and esports sectors, aiming to position the country as a leader in video game IPs.
- **Key Focus Areas:** The partnership will focus on boosting India's gaming industry through collaboration, investment, and global outreach, fostering a supportive framework for growth and innovation.
- **Industry Impact:** This collaboration is expected to drive industry advancement, partnerships, and policy development, enhancing the technical and creative skills of Indian game developers.
- **Strategic Milestone:** The MoU was signed at the WAVES Summit 2025 in Mumbai, marking a significant milestone in promoting India's gaming and esports sectors.

10. Praksah Magdum take charge as MD of NFDC

Prakash Magdum, a 1999-batch Indian Information Service officer, has been appointed as the Managing Director of the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) .

Prior to this role, he served as the Additional Director General at the Press Information Bureau (PIB) and the Central Bureau of Communication (CBC) in Ahmedabad . Magdum has also held significant positions such as Director of the National Film Archive of India (NFAI) in Pune, where he played a pivotal role in preserving India's cinematic heritage through the National Film Heritage Mission . His extensive experience in film preservation and communication is expected to contribute significantly to NFDC's mission of promoting Indian cinema.



Foot notes:

- **Film Industry Experience:** He has also held key positions, including Director of the National Film Archive of India (NFAI) in Pune, where he oversaw the preservation and digitization of vintage Indian films, and Registrar of the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII).
- **Key Contributions:** As Director of NFAI, Magdum played a pivotal role in executing the National Film Heritage Mission, focusing on film preservation, conservation, and restoration.
- **NFDC Role:** As Managing Director of NFDC, Magdum is expected to boost the cultural outreach of the organization, enhance film restoration, and promote Indian cinema globally, aligning with India's growing focus on soft power diplomacy through cinema.

About NFDC:

CEO: Shri Ravinder Bhakar

HQ's: Mumbai

Founded: 1975

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