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WEEKLY —  
**Current**  
Affairs



## NATIONAL NEWS

### Dr. Jitendra Singh inaugurates BioNEST at CFTRI

- **Bridging Lab-to-Market Gap:** The BioNEST facility is a state-of-the-art incubation hub designed to convert scientific research into market-ready products. It specifically supports food and biotechnology startups with dedicated incubation suites, shared infrastructure, and regulatory facilitation to help them scale and commercialize their innovations.
- **Focus on High-Value Emerging Technologies:** The center currently supports 26 startups (as of March 2026) focusing on cutting-edge sectors such as nutraceuticals, precision fermentation, CRISPR-based technologies, and probiotics. These ventures have already filed 12 patents and contributed to significant research publications, shifting the industry toward science-driven, high-value segments.
- **Strengthening Industry-Research Linkages:** During the event, four Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) were signed and two new CFTRI-developed products were launched. Dr. Singh emphasized that while starting a venture has become easier, long-term sustainability requires the "deep engagement" between research institutions and the private sector provided by this ecosystem.

### A Smarter Tax System: AI-Powered 'Kar Saathi' Launched in India

- **24/7 AI-Powered Virtual Assistant:** At the heart of the website is 'Kar Saathi', an intelligent chatbot that provides round-the-clock guidance. It helps taxpayers navigate the new law, select the correct forms, track refunds, and resolve complex queries in real-time.
- **The 'PRARAMBH' Outreach Initiative:** Launched under the PRARAMBH (Policy Reform and Responsible Action for Mission Viksit Bharat) program, the website is part of a nationwide campaign to ensure a seamless transition to the new tax regime.

### NITI Aayog's AIM Launches ATL Sarthi & Mentor India Academy

- **Telangana Rollout:** On April 4, 2026, the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM) under NITI Aayog launched ATL Sarthi and the Mentor India Academy in Telangana to provide structured support to 379 Atal Tinkering Labs (ATLs) across the state.
- **Four-Pillar Framework:** ATL Sarthi is a self-monitoring tool designed to enhance lab efficiency through four pillars: a digital dashboard (MyATL), compliance SOPs, a cluster-based monitoring approach, and a Performance-Enablement (PE) Matrix.
- **Institutional Linkage:** The initiative moves from providing just infrastructure to sustained engagement by appointing Vardhaman College of Engineering as a nodal institution to mentor school students and foster a "school-to-startup" ecosystem.

### SatSure, Dhruva Space sign MoU to deliver end-to-end space-based solutions

- **Strategic Alliance:** Bengaluru-based SatSure and Hyderabad-based Dhruva Space signed an MoU to provide end-to-end Earth Observation-as-a-Service (EOaaS), combining SatSure's satellite data analytics with Dhruva Space's satellite manufacturing and launch expertise.
- **Upstream & Downstream Integration:** The partnership unifies the space value chain; SatSure's subsidiary, KaleidEO, provides high-resolution optical payloads, while Dhruva Space handles small satellite platforms, ground station infrastructure, and launch integration.
- **National Impact:** This collaboration aims to build a sovereign EO ecosystem, offering fully indigenous, cost-effective, and high-quality space-based data for sectors like agriculture, infrastructure, and defense.

### India Adds Record 6.05 GW Wind Power in FY26, Surpassing 56 GW Total Capacity

- **Historic Milestone:** India added a record 6.05 GW of wind energy capacity in Financial Year 2025–26, marking a 46% increase over the previous year and surpassing the prior peak of 5.5 GW set in FY17.
- **Capacity Breakthrough:** With this addition, the country's cumulative installed wind power capacity has officially crossed the 56 GW mark, strengthening India's progress toward its 500 GW non-fossil fuel target by 2030.
- **Leading Contributors:** The growth was primarily driven by high-performing wind-rich states—Gujarat, Karnataka, and Maharashtra—supported by new policy incentives like the waiver of inter-state transmission (ISTS) charges until 2028.

### UP's Divya Singh Becomes 1st Indian Woman to Cycle to Everest Base Camp in 14 Days

- **Historic Feat:** Divya Singh, a 28-year-old teacher from Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh, became the first Indian woman (and second woman globally) to reach the Mount Everest Base Camp (EBC) at 17,560 feet on a bicycle.
- **The Expedition:** She completed the grueling journey from Kathmandu in just 14 days, cycling 10–12 hours daily through extreme conditions, including temperatures as low as -12°C and thinning oxygen levels.
- **Unyielding Determination:** Navigating rugged mountain trails and steep inclines, she famously carried her bicycle on her shoulders over impassable stretches rather than turning back to ensure she reached the destination.

### Gujarat High Court Bars AI In Judgment Drafting

- **Judicial Integrity Directive:** The Gujarat High Court has officially barred the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) for drafting judgments, emphasizing that legal reasoning and final decisions must remain the exclusive intellectual work of judges.

- **Concerns Over Accuracy:** The court highlighted risks associated with AI hallucinations, data privacy, and the potential for "algorithmic bias," stating that automated tools cannot replace the human discretion required for complex legal interpretation.
- **Limited Utility Only:** While prohibiting AI for the final drafting process, the court allows its use for administrative tasks such as basic research, translation, or organizing case files, provided the output is strictly verified by human oversight.

**Footnotes: Gujarat's Governor:** Acharya Devvrat, **CM:** Bhupendrabhai Patel, **Capital:** Gandhinaga

### **Doordarshan signs MoU with ICCR in New Delhi**

- **Global Content Dissemination:** The agreement allows Doordarshan to leverage its television, radio, and digital platforms to broadcast cultural performances and events organized by Indian Missions abroad (Embassies/Consulates) and ICCR's regional centers, significantly expanding India's "soft power" reach.
- **Joint Ownership & Digital Rights:** A key feature of the MoU is the joint ownership of content rights in perpetuity. This includes digital rights, enabling both organizations to archive, reuse, and disseminate cultural content over the long term across OTT and social media.
- **Three-Year Strategic Partnership:** The MoU, signed by DG Doordarshan K. Satish Nambudiripad and DG ICCR K. Nandini Singla, is valid for three years. It also authorizes Doordarshan to explore monetization opportunities from the produced content to ensure the sustainability of cultural broadcasting.

**Footnotes: ICCR's DG:** K. Nandini Singla, **HQ:** New Delhi, **Estd:** 1950

### **Bhopal Passport Office Launches Braille And Sign Services**

- **Pioneering Initiative:** Inaugurated on April 7, 2026, by Chief Passport Officer B.S. Mubarak, this project makes Bhopal the first Regional Passport Office in the country to offer such integrated accessibility features.
- **Key Services for Visually Impaired:** The office has introduced special Braille booklets that detail the application process (including ECR/Non-ECR and Tatkaal categories) and installed Braille signage plates throughout the premises to allow for independent navigation.
- **Sign Language Integration:** For speech and hearing-impaired applicants, a series of instructional videos in Sign Language has been launched. These videos are accessible via QR codes placed at various counters, guiding users through biometric enrollment and document verification.

### **IIM Rohtak Wins BIMTECH's 'Hermes' Dialogue 6.0'**

- **The Theme:** The competition focused on the critical global issue: "Should Countries Prioritize Energy Independence to Ensure Global Energy Security Amid Rising Geopolitical Uncertainty?" It explored energy not just as a resource, but as a strategic geopolitical tool.
- **MUN-Style Simulation:** The final round, titled "Battle of Perspectives," was a simulation of high-level global forums like the United Nations and G20. Participants represented 12 different nations (including the US, China, and Russia) to debate international trade, diplomacy, and policy-making.
- **Top Performers:** Out of over 250 registrations from premier B-schools, IIM Rohtak secured the first position. They were followed by FORE School of Management (1st Runner-up) and Shri Ram College of Commerce (SRCC) (2nd Runner-up).

### Amul becomes first Indian FMCG company to hit Rs 1 trillion turnover

- **Historic Growth:** For the financial year 2025-26, the Amul brand recorded a total turnover exceeding ₹1 trillion, representing an 11% growth over the previous year's base of ₹90,000 crore. This cements its position as the largest FMCG organization in India.
- **Global and Domestic Expansion:** The surge was driven by a massive distribution push into smaller Indian towns (populations over 5,000) and an aggressive global strategy. Amul recently expanded its footprint by launching fresh milk in international markets, including the United States and Europe.
- **Empowering the Cooperative Model:** The milestone is a victory for the "Amul Model" of economic democracy, supported by 3.6 million dairy farmers. The federation manages a daily milk procurement of approximately 31 million liters and a diverse portfolio of over 1,200 product variants.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### India, South Korea Sign Pact to Boost Skill Development in Shipbuilding Sector

- **Project Objective:** Titled "Support the Establishment of Development Strategies and to Build a Foundation for Skilled and Professional Talents," the pact aims to bridge the skill gap in India's marine engineering sector using South Korea's global expertise.
- **Strategic Vision:** The initiative is a core part of the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047, which seeks to position India as a top global shipbuilding hub and drive "Atmanirbhar" (self-reliant) maritime growth.
- **Proposed Infrastructure:** Both nations are in final discussions to establish a 'Shipbuilding Workforce Development and Technology Cooperation Center' in India to provide industry-specific vocational training and boost technical productivity.

### Vietnam elects Communist Party chief To Lam as President

- **Dual Leadership:** On April 7, 2026, Vietnam's National Assembly elected To Lam as the State President for the 2026–2031 term. He will simultaneously continue to serve as the General Secretary of the Communist Party, consolidating the country's two most powerful roles.
- **Unanimous Election:** Lam was the sole nominee and received 99% of the vote (495 out of 495 delegates present) during the first session of the 16th National Assembly in Hanoi.
- **Economic Vision:** Upon taking his oath, he emphasized a "new era" for Vietnam, aiming to transform the nation into an upper-middle-income country by 2030 and a high-income developed country by 2045 through administrative reforms and modernization.

### **Rajeev Kumar accredited as High Commissioner to Solomon Islands**

- **Concurrent Accreditation:** Shri Rajeev Kumar, a 2001-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, was concurrently accredited as India's next High Commissioner to the Solomon Islands on April 7, 2026.
- **Dual Responsibility:** He is currently serving as the High Commissioner of India to Papua New Guinea and will manage his new role in the Solomon Islands while continuing to reside in Port Moresby.
- **Diplomatic Strategy:** This appointment strengthens India's diplomatic outreach in the Pacific Islands region, focusing on bilateral cooperation and regional stability.

### **Launch of the first ever Annual Survey of Incorporated Services Sector Enterprises**

- **Launch & Authority:** The National Statistics Office (NSO), under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), officially launched the first-ever ASISSE on April 6, 2026, to build a comprehensive database of India's formal services sector.
- **Coverage & Reference Period:** The survey covers approximately 1.21 lakh enterprises (including IT, hospitality, education, and healthcare) registered under the Companies Act or LLP Act across all States and UTs, with the reference period being FY 2024–25.
- **Data Innovation:** For the first time, the NSO is using the GSTN (Goods and Services Tax Network) database as the sampling frame; together with the ASI (manufacturing) and ASUSE (unincorporated), it completes the data ecosystem for India's non-agricultural economy.

### **Deep Jariwala appointed as US Governor's Chair**

- **Joint Strategic Role:** Jariwala will hold a dual appointment at UT's Tickle College of Engineering and Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL). This position is designed to bridge the gap between academic research and federal laboratory resources to advance quantum science.

- **Focus on AI and Energy Efficiency:** His primary research aims to solve the massive power consumption issues of modern AI. He is developing "chips of the future" by using novel materials and architectures—including brain-like (neuromorphic) computing and quantum devices—to make hardware significantly more efficient.
- **Academic and Entrepreneurial Background:** Moving from the University of Pennsylvania (where he spent nine years), Jariwala brings a mix of high-level research—with over 200 publications and 26,000 citations—and industry experience as the co-founder of Agni Semiconductor, a startup focused on memory devices for extreme environments.

**Footnotes:** US's President: Donald Trump, Vice President: JD Vance, Capital: Washington

### **UAE TDRA Launches World's First U6GHz Network**

- **World's First Commercial Rollout:** Announced at the SAMENA Council Leaders' Summit 2026, the UAE became the first nation to transition from U6GHz trials to a full commercial ecosystem.
- **The "Golden Spectrum" & 10Gbps Speeds:** The U6GHz band (6425–7125 MHz) is known as the "golden spectrum" because it perfectly balances wide-area coverage with massive data capacity.
- **Bridge to 6G:** This deployment is a critical step in the UAE's roadmap to becoming a "10 Giga nation." Beyond enhancing 5G-Advanced services, the U6GHz network serves as the foundational layer for the future development and standardization of 6G technology.

### **NTPC signs MoU with France's EDF on cooperation in nuclear power**

- **EPR Technology Assessment:** The collaboration focuses on assessing the feasibility of EDF's European Pressurized Reactor (EPR) technology for the Indian market. This includes evaluating technical support, site suitability, and economic/tariff aspects for large-scale nuclear deployment.
- **Strategic "30 GW by 2047" Goal:** The partnership aligns with NTPC's ambitious target to establish 30 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047. To achieve this, NTPC has already formed a specialized subsidiary, NTPC Parmanu Urja Nigam Limited (NPUNL).
- **Localization & Skill Building:** A key pillar of the MoU is maximizing localization (Indian manufacturing) for nuclear components and developing human resources through dedicated training programs. This supports India's broader goal of reaching 100 GW of nuclear capacity by 2047.

### **Mark Zuckerberg Launches Meta Muse Spark AI**

- **"Personal Superintelligence" & Multi-Agent Reasoning:** Muse Spark is a natively multimodal model designed to act as a personal agent. It features a unique "Contemplating Mode" that coordinates multiple sub-agents in parallel to solve complex

tasks (like planning a full itinerary while simultaneously checking kid-friendly activities) more efficiently than sequential models.

- **Strategic Pivot to Proprietary Models:** In a major shift from Meta's previous open-source strategy (the Llama series), Muse Spark is a closed, proprietary model. It was developed over nine months as part of a total overhaul of Meta's AI stack, focusing on speed and "thought compression" to deliver high reasoning power with lower computational cost.
- **Domain-Specific Expertise (Health & Shopping):** Trained with data curated by over 1,000 physicians, Muse Spark leads industry benchmarks in health reasoning (e.g., identifying muscles used in an exercise from a photo).

### Preeti Saran Re-Elected as UN Committee Head

- **New Tenure & Status:** Re-elected on April 8, 2026, Ambassador Saran will serve a fresh three-year term beginning in January 2027. She was elected by acclamation (unanimously) to an Asia-Pacific seat, serving in her personal capacity as an independent expert.
- **Leadership Role:** Ambassador Saran is the current Chair of the CESCR, having been elected to the post in February 2025. She holds the distinction of being the first Indian to lead this prestigious committee, which monitors the implementation of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).
- **Diplomatic Significance:** Her re-election was part of a broader "unopposed sweep" where India secured seats in four key subsidiary bodies of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), including the Commission on Science and Technology for Development and the Committee on NGOs.

## BANKING NEWS

### Central Bank of India Signs Landmark MoU with EPFO

- **National Salary Account Hub:** The Central Bank of India will now serve as the primary banker for opening and managing salary accounts for EPFO employees across all its offices in India. This move centralizes their banking, which was previously fragmented across various institutions.
- **Enhanced Employee Benefits:** Beyond standard banking, the MoU provides EPFO staff with exclusive benefits, including comprehensive insurance coverage, preferential loan rates, and specialized digital banking services tailored to their needs.
- **Operational Efficiency:** By using a single national public sector bank, the EPFO aims to eliminate delays in salary disbursements and streamline financial reconciliation across its massive nationwide network, ensuring "same-day" salary credits for all staff.

**Footnotes:** CBI's Executive Director: Praveen Sood, HQ: New Delhi

### Vinay Tonse Takes Charge as MD & CEO of YES Bank

- **Appointment Details:** Vinay Muralidhar Tonse officially took charge as the MD & CEO of YES Bank on April 6, 2026, for a tenure of three years. He succeeds Prashant Kumar, who completed his term on April 5.
- **SBI Veteran:** Tonse brings nearly four decades of experience from the State Bank of India (SBI), where he most recently served as Managing Director (Retail Business & Operations). He also previously served as the MD & CEO of SBI Mutual Fund.
- **Strategic Focus:** His appointment, approved by the RBI, is seen as a shift for YES Bank from "stabilization" to "growth and expansion," specifically focusing on strengthening retail banking and the bank's digital platform.

**Footnotes:** YES Bank's Previous MD: Prashant Kumar, HQ: Mumbai, Founded: 2004

### **BoB Launches AI-based 'bob SAMVAD' Platform**

- **Multilingual Support (22 Languages):** Developed entirely in-house, the platform uses AI-driven speech and language technology to provide real-time, two-way translation across 22 Indian languages. This is designed to eliminate language barriers between customers and branch staff.
- **Dual-Mode Interaction:** At service counters, customers can either speak or type their queries in their preferred local language. The system instantly translates the input into the staff member's language (and vice-versa) as text on a screen, with an optional voice-to-speech mode for better accessibility.
- **Phased Deployment:** The initial rollout covers 250 branches across five linguistically diverse states: Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh, and Maharashtra. Following this pilot phase, the bank plans a large-scale deployment across its entire national network.

**Footnotes:** BoB's MD & CEO: Debadatta Chand, HQ: Vadodara, Estd: 1908

### **Canara Bank appoints Hardeep Singh Ahluwalia as MD & CEO**

- **Interim Leadership Role:** Effective January 1, 2026, Hardeep Singh Ahluwalia took over as the Interim MD & CEO of Canara Bank. He succeeded K. Satyanarayana Raju, who retired on December 31, 2025.
- **Recent Tenure Extension:** Originally appointed for three months, his additional charge was recently extended by the Government of India through June 30, 2026, ensuring leadership stability during the transition.
- **Extensive Banking Background:** A career banker with over 30 years of experience, Ahluwalia previously served as the bank's Executive Director. His background includes a start as an Agricultural Field Officer in 1992 and significant leadership roles at Indian Bank (formerly Allahabad Bank), including international exposure in Hong Kong.

**Footnotes:** Canara Bank's Previous MD & CEO: K. Satyanarayana Raju, HQ: Bengaluru, Estd: 1906

## DEFENCE NEWS

### Union Minister Commissioned Advanced Stealth Frigate 'INS Taragiri'

- **Pinnacle of Project 17A (Nilgiri-class):** INS Taragiri is the fourth stealth frigate delivered under Project 17A. Designed by the Warship Design Bureau and built by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), this 6,670-tonne vessel features advanced stealth architecture, including a reduced radar cross-section and radar-absorbent materials, making it a "lethal ghost" in contested maritime environments.
- **High Indigenous Content & Economic Impact:** The warship boasts over 75% indigenous content, utilizing Indian-made DMR 249A steel from SAIL. Its construction integrated a network of over 200 Indian MSMEs, directly supporting the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. Notably, it was delivered in a significantly compressed timeline of 81 months, demonstrating India's maturing industrial capability in complex warship production.
- **Multi-Role Combat Punch:** Equipped for three-dimensional warfare (Air, Surface, and Sub-surface), its weapons suite includes BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, Barak-8 Surface-to-Air missiles (MRSAM), and the indigenous HUMSA-NG sonar system.

## SPORTS NEWS

### Bhuvneshwar Kumar Becomes First Fast Bowler to 200 IPL Wickets

- **The Milestone Match:** He reached the 200-wicket mark playing for Royal Challengers Bengaluru (RCB) against Chennai Super Kings (CSK) at the M. Chinnaswamy Stadium. His 200th victim was young CSK opener Ayush Mhatre.
- **Elite Company:** He is only the second bowler overall in IPL history to reach this landmark, following leg-spinner Yuzvendra Chahal (who currently leads with 224 wickets).
- **Unrivaled Consistency:** Known as the "Swing King," Bhuvneshwar remains the only bowler in the league's history to win back-to-back Purple Caps (2016 and 2017) and played a pivotal role in RCB's maiden title win in 2025.

### Murali Sreeshankar wins men's long jump at Indian Athletics Series 2026

- **Dominant Season Opener:** Sreeshankar clinched the gold medal with a best jump of 8.15m, achieved on his fourth attempt. He showed remarkable consistency throughout the series, clearing the 8-meter mark in five out of his six attempts (8.03m, 7.99m, 8.13m, 8.15m, 8.12m, and 8.10m).
- **Asian Games Qualification:** With this performance, he became the first Indian athlete to breach the Asian Games qualifying standard of 7.91m in this competition. His winning mark also improved upon his 2025 season-best of 8.13m, signaling a strong return to peak form following previous injury concerns.

- **Elite Continental Standing:** Sreeshankar is now only the third Asian long jumper to breach the 8m mark in the ongoing 2026 season. He joins fellow Indian Lokesh Sathyanathan (8.21m) and Japan's Yuki Hashioka as the early leaders in the continental rankings for the year.

### **Payal Nag: First Quadruple Amputee Archery Champion**

- **Historic International Debut:** At 18 years old, Payal Nag became the world's first quadruple amputee (limbless) archer to compete internationally, making her debut at the 2025 Asian Youth Para Games in Dubai.
- **Major Gold Medal Victory:** In April 2026, she secured the gold medal at the World Archery Para Series in Bangkok by defeating her teammate and world No. 1, Sheetal Devi, with a score of 139-136 in the compound women's final.
- **Unique Shooting Technique:** Hailing from Odisha, she was discovered by coach Kuldeep Vedwan; she uses customized prosthetic legs to hold the bow and a mouth-operated trigger mechanism to aim and release her arrows.

### **Indian shooters Palak & Mukesh win Gold medal at the ISSF World Cup**

- **World Record Achievement:** On April 7, 2026, the Indian duo of Palak Gulia and Mukesh Nelavalli clinched the gold medal in the 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team event at the ISSF World Cup in Granada, Spain, with a record-breaking score of 487.7.
- **Double Record Holders:** Their performance shattered both the senior and junior world records, surpassing the previous mark of 481.3 held by Uzbekistan; they defeated the reigning Chinese world champions to secure the top spot.
- **Rising Shooting Stars:** This victory marked Mukesh's first senior international medal and Palak's first ISSF World Cup gold, further solidifying her reputation following her 10m Air Pistol individual gold at the 2023 Asian Games.

### **Ayush Shetty Stuns World No. 7 Li Shi Feng at Badminton Asia Championships**

- **Defeating a Heavyweight:** Ranked world No. 25, Ayush defeated the world No. 7 and reigning Asian Games gold medalist, Li Shi Feng of China, in straight games (\$21-13\$, \$21-16\$).
- **Dominant Performance:** Despite Li starting with early leads in both games, Ayush showcased exceptional composure and aggression. He sealed the match in 51 minutes, highlighted by a critical six-point scoring streak in the second game that broke a \$13-13\$ tie.
- **Advancement in Tournament:** This victory propelled the 20-year-old into the Round of 16 (Pre-Quarterfinals), where he is set to face Chi Yu Jen of Chinese Taipei. This win was a significant bright spot for India on a day when other top players like Lakshya Sen and Kidambi Srikanth exited the tournament.

### Indian women boxers secure three gold & one silver in Mongolia

- **Gold Medalists:** The gold sweep was led by Minakshi Hooda (48kg), who defeated a local Mongolian favorite; Preeti Pawar (54kg), who outpunched a three-time world champion; and Priya Ghanghas (60kg). Later, Arundhati Choudhary (70kg) added a fourth gold to the tally.
- **Silver Success:** JaismineLamboria (57kg) and Alfiya Pathan (80+kg) both secured silver medals, contributing to India's overall dominance in the women's division.
- **Historical Achievement:** With 10 medals in total (4 Gold, 2 Silver, 4 Bronze), the Indian women's team finished at the top of the medal table, making India the most successful nation in the women's category at this continental meet.

### Meenakshi Goyat wins Silver medal at Asian Wrestling Championships 2026

- **Final Performance:** Competing in the women's 53kg category, Meenakshi faced China's Jin Zhang in the final. She finished with a silver medal after losing the gold-medal bout 10-0 via technical superiority.
- **Path to the Podium:** To reach the final, the 25-year-old staged a remarkable comeback in the semi-finals against South Korea's Seoyoung Park, overcoming a 0-2 deficit in the final 30 seconds to win 4-2. Earlier, she defeated Uzbekistan's SakibjamalEsbosynova 15-4 in the quarter-finals.
- **Significance of Participation:** Meenakshi earned her spot in the Indian contingent by stunning two-time World Championship medalist Antim Panghal during the national selection trials in March 2026. This was a major upset, marking Antim's first domestic defeat in three years.

## AWARD NEWS

### Ranveer Singh won Best Actor at the Screen Awards 2026 in Dhurandhar

- **Dominance at the Awards:** Dhurandhar: The Revenge emerged as the biggest winner of the night, bagging a total of 14 awards. While the film won for Best Actor (Ranveer Singh) and Best Director (Aditya Dhar), the title of Best Film went to the Oscar-nominated gritty drama, Homebound.
- **A Box Office Juggernaut:** Released on March 19, 2026, the film has become a historic success, surpassing the ₹1,000 crore mark in net collections in India. It is currently the highest-grossing Indian film of 2026 and the fourth-highest-grossing Indian film of all time globally, with earnings exceeding ₹1,600 crore.
- **Complex Character Portrayal:** In this sequel to the 2025 hit Dhurandhar, Ranveer Singh plays a dual-identity role as Hamza Ali Mazari / Jaskirat Singh Ranghi.

### MCL's Keshav Rao Wins Professional CSR Person of the Year 2026

- **Top Recognition:** Shri Keshav Rao, Director (Human Resources) of Mahanadi Coalfields Limited (MCL), was honored with the "Professional CSR Person of the Year 2026" award on April 6, 2026.
- **The Conclave:** The accolade was presented during the State CSR Corporate Awards & Conclave, recognizing his exemplary leadership in driving impactful Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and HR initiatives.
- **Impactful Strategy:** Under his guidance, MCL transitioned to need-based programs focusing on inclusive development in local communities, specifically targeting education, healthcare, skill development, and infrastructure in the company's operational areas in Odisha.

### **GAIL Executive Shri A. K. Tripathi Conferred CIDC Vishwakarma Achievement Award 2026**

- **Award Category & Event:** The honor was conferred during the 17th CIDC Vishwakarma Awards held in New Delhi in March/April 2026. Shri Tripathi received the "Achievement Award for Public Officer" for his exceptional contribution to the growth of India's construction and infrastructure sector.
- **Infrastructure Impact:** The award recognizes his leadership in executing large-scale energy infrastructure, notably the commissioning of over 1,600 km of pipelines in the 2025–26 fiscal year and the management of projects worth approximately ₹18,900 crore.
- **Engineering Excellence:** Under his guidance, GAIL successfully implemented complex engineering feats, including the Dabhol–Breakwater project and high-difficulty Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) river crossings.

## **APPOINTMENT & PERSON IN NEWS**

### **Narendra Bhooshan appointed Secretary, Department of Land Resources**

- **Appointment Details:** Shri Narendra Bhooshan, a 1992-batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, officially assumed charge as the Secretary of the Department of Land Resources (Ministry of Rural Development) on April 6, 2026.
- **Diverse Experience:** He has over three decades of administrative experience, previously serving as the Additional Chief Secretary (Energy) in Uttar Pradesh and the CEO of Greater Noida Authority. At the Centre, he has served in the UIDAI and as Joint Secretary in the Department of Agriculture.
- **Academic Profile:** Bhooshan holds a Master's degree in International Development Policy from Duke University (USA), a postgraduate degree in Economics, and a graduate degree in Electronics.

### **Krishna Kumar Singh Takes Additional Charge as SAIL CMD**

- **Interim Leadership:** Singh was appointed to the role following the completion of Amarendu Prakash's tenure as CMD on March 31, 2026. He will hold the additional charge for a period of three months (until July 1, 2026) or until a full-time regular incumbent is appointed, whichever is earlier.
- **Decades of Domain Expertise:** A veteran of the steel industry, Singh joined SAIL in 1987 as a Management Trainee. He has nearly four decades of experience across diverse functions, including ten years in technical operations at the Bhilai Steel Plant before transitioning into Human Resource Development and Personnel.
- **Strategic Continuity:** As Director (Personnel) since 2022, Singh has been a key architect of SAIL's "people-centric" growth. His appointment is intended to ensure operational stability and the continued implementation of progressive welfare schemes as the company navigates its next phase of expansion under the new fiscal year.

### Menaka Guruswamy Becomes India's First Openly Queer MP

- **Historic Milestone:** Senior Advocate Menaka Guruswamy took her oath as a Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha on April 3, 2026, becoming the first openly queer (LGBTQ+) person to serve in India's Parliament.
- **Political Representation:** She was elected as a candidate of the Trinamool Congress (TMC) representing the state of West Bengal, following the Rajya Sabha elections held in March 2026.
- **Legal Legacy:** Guruswamy is renowned for her pivotal role as a lead lawyer in the landmark Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India (2018) case, which resulted in the Supreme Court decriminalizing consensual same-sex relationships by reading down Section 377.

### Double Olympic medallist Blanka Vlašić named ambassador for World 10K Bengaluru

- **Event Ambassador:** Double Olympic medalist and high jump legend Blanka Vlašić was named the International Event Ambassador for the 18th edition of the TCS World 10K Bengaluru, scheduled for April 26, 2026.
- **Athletic Credentials:** The Croatian star won silver at the 2008 Beijing Olympics and bronze at the 2016 Rio Olympics. Her personal best of 2.08m remains the third-highest clearance in women's high jump history.
- **Global Recognition:** The World 10K Bengaluru is a World Athletics Gold Label Race and one of the premier distance running events globally, attracting both elite international athletes and thousands of mass participants.

### Shri Tejveer Singh assumes Charge as Secretary, Department of Chemicals & Petrochemicals

- **Extensive Administrative Background:** Prior to this central appointment, he served as the Additional Chief Secretary in the Department of Technical Education and Industrial Training for the Government of Punjab. He has also held critical roles as Principal Secretary and Secretary to the Chief Minister of Punjab.
- **Highly Qualified:** Singh brings strong academic credentials to the role, holding degrees from the London School of Economics (LSE). His expertise is expected to drive strategic growth in India's chemicals and petrochemicals sectors, which are vital for the "Make in India" and "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiatives.
- **Leadership Transition:** He succeeds Smt. Nivedita Shukla Verma, who has moved on to become the Secretary of the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG). Singh's leadership comes at a time when the department is focusing on reducing import dependency and expanding domestic manufacturing capacity.

### **Jindal Stainless appoints Actor Ranveer Singh as Brand Ambassador**

- **First-Ever Celebrity Face:** On April 7, 2026, Jindal Stainless, India's leading stainless steel manufacturer, announced Bollywood actor Ranveer Singh as its first-ever brand ambassador and nationwide celebrity endorser.
- **Strategic Growth Objective:** The partnership aims to enhance brand visibility and strengthen consumer connection as the company targets a capacity of 4.2 million tonnes by FY27 and focuses on the material's role in nation-building projects like Vande Bharat and Chandrayaan-3.
- **Integrated Campaign Launch:** Singh will front a series of multi-channel campaigns across television, digital, and social media platforms, highlighting the "reliability, grit, and performance" that align with the brand's core identity.

### **Coforge Promotes Sunil Fernandes To Chief Operating Officer**

- **Expanded Mandate:** Formerly the Chief Delivery Officer, Fernandes will now oversee global delivery along with key organizational functions including administration, facilities, and internal IT services. He continues to report directly to CEO Sudhir Singh.
- **Strategic AI Focus:** His primary objective as COO is to accelerate the adoption of AI-native practices across Coforge's engineering and internal operations. This move is part of the company's broader strategy to lead as an "AI-first" organization and drive faster innovation for clients.
- **Veteran Leadership:** Fernandes brings over 30 years of industry experience to the role. Before joining Coforge in 2024, he held senior leadership positions at major global IT firms, including Accenture, Infosys, and Cognizant, specializing in large-scale global delivery and strategic transformation.

### **Sanjay Khanna appointed CMD of BPCL**

- **Internal Elevation & Tenure:** Prior to this full-time role, Khanna served as Director (Refineries) and had been holding the additional charge of CMD since May 2025. His appointment, approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), will last until his retirement on May 31, 2029.
- **Operational Expertise:** A Chemical Engineering graduate from NIT Trichy, he has over 30 years of experience. He is credited with leading the commissioning of BPCL's first niche petrochemical project, the Propylene Derivative Petrochemical Project (PDPP), and has previously headed both the Mumbai and Kochi refineries.
- **Strategic Vision:** As CMD, he will oversee a massive ₹75,000 crore investment cycle over the next five years. This includes the major ₹50,000 crore Bina Petrochemical and Refinery Expansion Project (BPREP) in Madhya Pradesh, focusing on energy security and petrochemical integration.

**Footnotes: BPCL's Chairman & MD: Sanjay Khanna, HQ: Mumbai, Estd: 1976**

### **Shweta Teotia appointed as Director in the Ministry of Environment**

- **Background and Cadre:** Shweta Teotia is a 2011-batch IAS officer of the Gujarat cadre. Before this appointment, she was serving as a Deputy Director (at the Director level) at the Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA) in Mussoorie.
- **Appointment Terms:** The appointment was made on a 'lateral shift' basis under the Central Staffing Scheme. Her tenure in the Ministry is approved for a period up to February 17, 2030, or until further orders.
- **Strategic Role:** As Director, she will be part of the core administrative team at the MoEF&CC, which is responsible for planning and coordinating India's environmental policies, forest conservation efforts, and climate change strategies.

### **Policybazaar Insurance Brokers appoints Sajja Praveen Chowdary as CEO**

- **Effective Date & Scope:** The appointment became effective on April 7, 2026, following approval from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI). In addition to becoming CEO, Chowdary will serve as the Principal Officer and Whole-Time Director.
- **Succession Details:** He succeeds Tarun Mathur, a long-serving co-founder and executive who stepped down from the CEO and Principal Officer roles due to personal commitments.
- **Leadership Background:** An industry veteran with over 17 years of experience, Chowdary has been with the PB Fintech Group since 2011. Before this elevation, he successfully headed "Policybazaar for Business," where he was instrumental in scaling the company's corporate, SME, and reinsurance segments.

### **Vibhor Jain appointed CEO of ONDC, Set to Drive Digital Commerce Growth**

- **Elevation to Full-time Leadership:** Effective April 7, 2026, Vibhor Jain transitioned from his role as Acting CEO to permanent MD & CEO. He had been leading the organization in an interim capacity since May 2025, following the departure of the founding CEO, Thampy Koshy.
- **Operational Background:** Prior to his elevation, Jain served as ONDC's Chief Operating Officer (COO). With over 18 years of experience in technology and consulting, he was a key architect in designing ONDC's scalable infrastructure and managing its transition from a pilot project to a national network.
- **Growth Strategy & Focus:** Under his leadership, ONDC reported a 127% revenue surge (reaching ₹33.41 crore) for the 2024-25 fiscal year. Jain has stated that his priority is to move beyond traditional platform models to empower "kisaans (farmers), karigars (artisans), and kiranas (small retailers)" through an interoperable digital ecosystem.

**Footnotes:** ONDC's Previous CMD: T. Koshy, HQ: India, Estd: 2021

## OBITUARY NEWS

### Former Union Minister & Veteran Congress Leader Mohsina Kidwai passed away

- **Pioneer in Indian Politics:** Kidwai was a trailblazer for women in Indian politics, serving as a member of both the Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha. She held the distinction of being one of the few women to serve as the President of the Uttar Pradesh Congress Committee (UPCC).
- **Key Ministerial Roles:** A loyalist to the Nehru-Gandhi family, she served as a Union Minister under Prime Ministers Indira Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi. She managed several high-profile portfolios, including Health and Family Welfare, Urban Development, Transport, and Rural Development.
- **Bridge Between Eras:** Throughout her six-decade career, she was seen as a bridge between post-independence grassroots politics and modern governance. She remained an influential figure within the Congress party until her passing, serving on the Congress Working Committee (CWC) and acting as a mentor to multiple generations of leaders.

### C D Gopinath, India's Oldest Test Cricketer, passed away

- **End of an Era:** He was the last surviving member of the historic Indian team that achieved the nation's first-ever Test victory (against England at Madras in 1952). His passing marks the end of the final living link to that landmark achievement.
- **Cricketing Career:** Between 1951 and 1960, he played 8 Test matches, scoring 242 runs. He made a memorable debut at the Brabourne Stadium against England, scoring an unbeaten 50 in the first innings and 42 in the second.
- **Post-Retirement Legacy:** After his playing days, he served as the Chairman of the National Selection Committee and was a respected administrator.