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WEEKLY —
Current
Affairs



NATIONAL NEWS

India's 7th Regional Meteorological Centre Inaugurated in Jammu

- **Regional Coverage and Scope:** The new RMC in Jammu will act as a dedicated hub for Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh, and Himachal Pradesh. By centralizing operations for these states and union territories, the IMD aims to provide highly localized, district-level forecasts and specialized weather services tailored to the diverse terrain of the northwestern Himalayas.
- **Disaster Management and Early Warning:** The centre is equipped to provide advanced "nowcast" services, including warnings up to three hours in advance for flash floods, cloudbursts, avalanches, heavy snowfall, and landslides.
- **Expansion of Network:** The inauguration coincides with a broader push to strengthen scientific infrastructure. The Minister noted that there are now 50 Doppler Weather Radars operational across India, with plans to add 50 more in the coming years.

Kerala Launches India's First Judiciary-Integrated Wildlife Offence System

- **Pioneering Digital Integration:** The Kerala Forest Department has officially launched the "Hostile Activity Watch Kernel" (HAWK) system, marking India's first fully digitized and judiciary-integrated wildlife offence management platform. By establishing a direct link via an Application Programming Interface (API) with the District Court Management System, the state has effectively eliminated the need for physical paperwork in environmental crime prosecution.
- **Enhanced Transparency & Real-Time Tracking:** Because all data entries are permanent and immutable, the system significantly improves institutional accountability and curbs the potential for corruption during the judicial process.
- **Advanced Ecological Intelligence:** By mapping geographic hotspots and crime seasonality, the system enables the forest department to deploy its enforcement resources more strategically and effectively.

Footnotes: Kerala's CM: V. D. Satheesan, Governor: Rajendra Arlekar, Capital: Thiruvananthapuram

G S Malik appointed as the new DGP of Gujarat

- **Official Elevation & Background:** The Gujarat Home Department officially appointed 1993-batch IPS officer Gyanender Singh Malik as the new Director General of Police (DGP) on June 6, 2026. Before his elevation to the state's top police post, Malik served with distinction as the Commissioner of Police for Ahmedabad City.
- **Strategic Vision for Policing:** Upon taking charge, Malik emphasized a modernized approach to law enforcement, prioritizing the extensive use of technology and digital surveillance. He intends to expand the CCTV camera network across major cities in the state to enhance crime prevention, detection, and investigation efficiency.

- **Focus on Key Security Challenges:** Malik has identified the rising menace of drug trafficking, cybercrime, and traffic management as the primary focus areas of his administration. His leadership will also be immediately tested by major upcoming security challenges, most notably the management and protection of the Lord Jagannath Rath Yatra in Ahmedabad.

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

UP Launches 'Project Ganga' to Bring High-Speed Internet to Rural Areas

- **Objective and Reach:** The project aims to provide high-speed fiber-based broadband connectivity to approximately 20 lakh households across the state. It will initially roll out in 21 districts, with the ultimate goal of reaching all 57,000 Gram Panchayats and 8,000 Nyaya Panchayats.
- **Empowerment Model:** The initiative will develop a network of 8,000 to 10,000 local youth as Digital Service Providers (DSPs) to establish and manage fiber broadband networks in their communities. This model prioritizes entrepreneurship, with a specific target of ensuring 50% participation from women, and is supported by interest-free loans through the CM Yuva Scheme.
- **Economic and Social Impact:** Beyond internet access, the project is designed to accelerate the adoption of digital education, telemedicine, e-governance, and smart agriculture. The government expects the initiative to generate over one lakh direct and indirect employment opportunities while bridging the digital divide in rural Uttar Pradesh.

Union Home Minister launched Land Port Management System 'VINIMAY'

- **Digital Transformation of Borders:** Union Home Minister Amit Shah recently inaugurated 'VINIMAY,' a state-of-the-art digital platform designed to modernize and streamline operations across India's land ports. This initiative aims to replace manual processes with a unified electronic system, significantly reducing paperwork by approximately 90 percent.
- **Integrated Efficiency:** The system acts as a single electronic window for cargo and passenger processing, facilitating seamless coordination between customs, immigration, and border guarding forces. By integrating with national platforms like ICEGATE and ULIP, it is expected to reduce truck waiting times at borders by 40 to 60 percent.
- **Strategic Security and Trade:** Developed by the Land Ports Authority of India (LPAI), VINIMAY supports the "Smart Borders" initiative by enhancing real-time data exchange and automated security monitoring.

Varanasi becomes first city under Easy Connect model for international travel

- **Pioneering Seamless Connectivity:** Varanasi has become the first city to launch 'Easy Connect' flights, a new initiative under the Government of India's hub-and-spoke aviation model. This service, operated by Air India starting June 25, 2026, aims to significantly simplify international travel for passengers from Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.
- **Streamlined Transit Procedures:** The model allows travelers to complete their baggage check-in and international immigration formalities directly at their originating airport. By doing so, passengers can bypass the need to collect or re-check luggage at major hubs like Delhi, ensuring a much smoother and faster transit experience.
- **Global Network Integration:** The designated flight from Varanasi connects seamlessly to 17 international destinations, including cities across Europe, Southeast Asia, and West Asia, within a four-hour window at the Delhi hub.

Meta–Reliance Partner to Develop 168 MW AI-Enabled Data Centre in Jamnagar

- **Strategic Infrastructure Project:** Meta and Reliance Industries have signed a landmark agreement to develop a 168 MW AI-enabled data centre in Jamnagar, Gujarat. This facility marks Meta's first "built-to-suit" data centre in India, specifically designed to scale its global AI infrastructure and support compute-intensive workloads.
- **Sustainability and Technology:** The data centre will be powered entirely by renewable energy and utilizes desalinated seawater for cooling, underscoring a commitment to environmentally conscious operations. Reliance will provide comprehensive end-to-end services, including design, construction, and utility management.
- **Expansion of Partnership:** This project significantly deepens the long-standing strategic collaboration between the two companies, which began with Meta's 2020 investment in Jio Platforms. By shifting focus from software to critical physical infrastructure, the partnership aims to position India as a major global hub for hyperscale AI computing and digital innovation.

ICAR Launches Oilseeds Kisaan Mitra AI Advisory via WhatsApp

- **Multilingual Digital Support:** The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has introduced 'Oilseeds Kisaan Mitra,' a 24/7 AI-powered chatbot designed to provide instant, scientific agricultural advice. Farmers can access this service directly through WhatsApp in multiple Indian regional languages without needing to download any additional applications.
- **Comprehensive Crop Guidance:** Developed by the ICAR-Indian Institute of Oilseeds Research (IIOR), the platform offers expert guidance on the entire crop cycle for major oilseeds like groundnut, soybean, mustard, and sunflower. It covers essential topics such as seed selection, agronomic practices, pest and disease management, and post-harvest operations.

- **Bridging the Research Gap:** The initiative aims to enhance domestic oilseed production by connecting farmers to a verified scientific knowledge base synthesized from several premier ICAR institutes.

Footnotes: ICAR's DG: Dr. Mangi Lal Jat

BSNL, IIT Kanpur sign MoU for next-generation telecom technologies

- **Strategic Collaboration:** Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to accelerate the development, testing, and commercialization of next-generation telecom technologies. This partnership bridges academic research excellence with BSNL's nationwide infrastructure to foster indigenous digital innovations and support the "Atmanirbhar Bharat" initiative.
- **Focus on D2M and Connectivity:** A core objective of this agreement is to advance Direct-to-Mobile (D2M) broadcasting, a transformative technology that delivers multimedia content directly to mobile devices without relying on cellular data. The collaboration will also explore the development of a "Bharat Mesh Network" and other advanced wireless frameworks to enhance connectivity across rural and urban regions.
- **Research and Deployment Synergy:** The agreement provides researchers with access to BSNL's physical assets, such as telecom towers and fiber networks, to conduct live field trials and validation.

Footnotes: BSNL's Chairman & MD: Robert J. Ravi, HQ: New Delhi, Estd: 2000

Maharashtra to Introduce Women Farmers Empowerment Bill

- **Financial and Institutional Support:** The proposed bill aims to establish a dedicated state-level framework to provide women farmers with easier access to credit and agricultural subsidies. It focuses on removing systemic barriers that often restrict women from obtaining land ownership rights and necessary farming capital.
- **Promoting Agribusiness Leadership:** A core objective of the legislation is to encourage women to take leadership roles in agricultural cooperatives and value-added processing units. The state plans to offer specific incentives and training programs to help them transition from subsistence farming to commercial agribusiness.
- **Addressing Gender Disparity:** By formalizing the status of women as primary farmers rather than just "helpers," the bill seeks to ensure they receive equal recognition in government records and insurance schemes. This move is designed to bridge the gender gap in agricultural productivity and improve the overall socio-economic standing of rural women.

JNPA Emerges as India's Top Container Port in 2025

- **Top National Performer:** JNPA has officially retained its position as India's best-performing container port. This recognition reflects its ongoing success in optimizing vessel turnaround times and increasing overall operational efficiency.
- **Global Recognition in CPPI 2025:** In the 2025 Container Port Performance Index (CPPI) published by the World Bank and S&P Global Market Intelligence, JNPA secured the 22nd rank globally. This ranking highlights the port's significant improvements in administrative and statistical performance metrics over the past year.
- **Record-Breaking Cargo Throughput:** The port achieved its highest-ever container throughput of 7.94 million TEUs during the 2025 calendar year. This growth is attributed to strategic capacity expansions and the successful integration of digitalized logistics processes across its five container terminals.

IIT Bhubaneswar Develops ArsenSafe Device for Rapid Water Testing

- **Real-Time Detection Capability:** The device utilizes advanced electrochemical sensing technology to provide accurate arsenic concentration readings in under five minutes. This rapid assessment allows for immediate decision-making in areas where traditional lab testing is unavailable or delayed.
- **Portability and Accessibility:** Engineered for field use, ArsenSafe is compact, battery-operated, and designed to be user-friendly for non-technical personnel such as local village officials. Its cost-effective design aims to make regular water quality monitoring affordable for marginalized communities in arsenic-prone regions.
- **Integration with Digital Monitoring:** The device features built-in data logging and Bluetooth connectivity to sync results directly with a central government water quality database. This ensures that authorities can maintain a live, geotagged map of contamination levels to prioritize mitigation efforts and infrastructure deployment.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

South Korean President Lee Jae Myung Nominates Han Seong-sook as PM

- **Background and Expertise:** Han Seong-sook, the current Minister of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises and Startups, is a former CEO of the internet giant Naver. Her background in the technology sector is intended to help the administration navigate the transition toward an artificial intelligence-driven economy.
- **Governmental Significance:** If confirmed by the National Assembly, Han will become the first female Prime Minister of the Lee administration. Furthermore, she would hold the distinction of being South Korea's second female Prime Minister, following Han Myeong-sook, who served nearly two decades ago.
- **Strategic Reshuffle:** The nomination follows the resignation of current Prime Minister Kim Min-seok, who is stepping down to pursue the leadership of the ruling Democratic

Party. This transition occurs as the Lee administration marks its first anniversary since taking office in June 2025.

IFS Officer Lakshmanan Ramesh Babu appointed India's Ambassador to Côte d'Ivoire

- **Diplomatic Appointment:** The Ministry of External Affairs has officially appointed Lakshmanan Ramesh Babu as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. He is a career diplomat from the 2005 batch of the Indian Foreign Service (IFS) and is expected to assume his new role shortly.
- **Professional Background:** Before this new assignment, he served as the Consul General of India in Atlanta, United States. His extensive career includes serving in various capacities within the Ministry of External Affairs and at Indian missions in Moscow, Dushanbe, Paris, and Colombo.
- **Proven Experience:** During his time in New Delhi, he held significant responsibilities, including managing the operational aspects of G20 meetings during India's presidency. He also played a key role as the official in charge of the ministry's control room during the high-stakes "Operation Ganga" evacuation efforts.

NASA Names Artemis III Crew for Historic 2027 Moon Mission

- **Crew Announcement:** NASA has officially named the four-person crew for the Artemis III mission, which is scheduled for a 2027 launch. The team consists of commander Randy Bresnik, pilot Luca Parmitano (ESA), and mission specialists Frank Rubio and Andre Douglas.
- **Earth-Orbit Test Objectives:** Unlike previous lunar-focused plans, Artemis III will serve as a critical two-week test flight in low-Earth orbit. During this time, the crew will perform complex rendezvous and docking operations with test versions of SpaceX and Blue Origin's human landing systems.
- **Strategic Stepping Stone:** This mission acts as a vital "dress rehearsal" to validate the safety and functionality of lunar technology before the Artemis IV mission attempts a crewed landing on the lunar South Pole in 2028. By conducting these high-stakes tests in Earth orbit, NASA aims to significantly reduce risks for future long-term missions to the Moon and eventually Mars.

Rudra Gaurav Shresth appointed as India's Ambassador to the Republic of Türkiye

- **New Diplomatic Posting:** The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has officially appointed senior Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer Rudra Gaurav Shresth as the next Ambassador of India to the Republic of Türkiye. A seasoned 1999-batch diplomat, he is expected to transition from his current role in Tehran to take charge in Ankara shortly.
- **Strategic Experience:** Shresth brings extensive experience from his tenure as India's Ambassador to the Islamic Republic of Iran, where he managed critical matters related to

energy security and regional connectivity. His background is expected to play a pivotal role in strengthening India's bilateral cooperation with Türkiye in areas such as trade, investment, and technology.

- **Diplomatic Background:** Throughout his career, Shresth has served in various significant diplomatic missions, including postings in France, Mauritius, Afghanistan, Singapore, and Bhutan. He also served as the High Commissioner to Mozambique and completed a notable three-year deputation to the Prime Minister's Office in New Delhi.

Sri Lanka ranked 67th in Global Peace Index

- **Significant Improvement:** Sri Lanka has climbed 14 places to secure the 67th position globally in the 2026 Global Peace Index, reflecting a notable recovery in national stability. This advancement marks one of the most significant improvements in the region, showcasing progress in public security and social cohesion.
- **Regional Standing:** Within South Asia, Sri Lanka has achieved the second-most peaceful ranking, trailing only behind Bhutan. This positive trajectory contrasts with the broader regional trend, where South Asia recorded its worst deterioration in peacefulness on this year's index.
- **Key Drivers of Progress:** The country's improved score was primarily driven by advancements in the militarisation domain and a 25% improvement in indicators related to political instability. These gains reflect ongoing efforts to rebuild economic resilience and confidence following the challenges of the 2022 financial crisis.

Footnotes: Sri Lanka's President: Anura Kumara Dissanayake, **Capital:** Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte

India to remain fastest growing economy at 6.6% in FY27

- **World Bank Projections:** The World Bank has projected India's GDP growth at 6.6% for the financial year 2026-27, maintaining its status as the world's fastest-growing major economy. While this represents a moderation from the 7.7% growth recorded in FY26, the forecast highlights the country's continued economic resilience amidst global headwinds.
- **Drivers of Domestic Demand:** Economic activity remains robust due to strong internal demand, particularly with resilient private consumption in rural areas and a steady recovery in urban markets. Government measures, including strategic tax adjustments such as reductions in Goods and Services Tax (GST) rates, are expected to further support consumer spending.
- **Global Resilience and Future Outlook:** Despite challenges like higher energy prices and geopolitical uncertainties affecting global trade, India is expected to navigate these pressures through improved export prospects and upcoming free trade agreements. The economy is anticipated to rebound significantly, with growth forecasts projected to rise to 7.2% in FY28.

Dinesh Trivedi took charge as High Commissioner to Bangladesh

- **Commencement of Diplomatic Assignment:** Dinesh Trivedi crossed the Petrapole-Benapole border on June 12, 2026, to begin his tenure in Bangladesh. He is set to present his credentials to the Bangladesh President shortly to officially take charge from his predecessor, Pranay Verma.
- **Focus on Regional Cooperation:** Upon his arrival, Trivedi emphasized the importance of dialogue and cooperation in resolving bilateral issues. He specifically advocated for strengthening ties between the two nations through collaboration in sectors such as health, technology, education, and sports.
- **Political Background & Appointment:** A seasoned politician and former Union Minister for Railways, Trivedi is a unique appointment as his role follows a tradition typically reserved for career diplomats.

BANKING NEWS

RBI Deputy Governor Swaminathan Janakiraman Gets Two-Year Extension

- **Effective Date and Duration:** The extension is effective from June 26, 2026, for a period of two years or until further orders, whichever is earlier. He was originally appointed to the position on June 26, 2023, for a three-year term, during which he succeeded M.K. Jain.
- **Key Responsibilities:** As the senior-most Deputy Governor, Janakiraman oversees critical departments within the central bank, including Supervision, Inspection, Consumer Education and Protection, Financial Inclusion, and Human Resource Management.
- **Background:** Prior to joining the RBI as a Deputy Governor, he spent nearly three and a half decades at the State Bank of India (SBI), where he served in various leadership capacities, including as Managing Director. His background as a career banker is pivotal in his current role overseeing the regulation and supervision of the financial sector.

DFS Secretary Sanjay Lohiya named director on RBI

- **Strategic Appointment:** The Government of India has officially nominated Sanjay Lohiya, Secretary of the Department of Financial Services (DFS), as a Director on the Central Board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). This appointment, effective from June 11, 2026, reinforces the coordination between the Ministry of Finance and the central bank on critical monetary and regulatory matters.
- **Dual Responsibility:** In addition to his new role at the RBI, Mr. Lohiya has also been appointed as a director on the Central Board of the State Bank of India (SBI). He succeeds former DFS Secretary M. Nagaraju, who retired from government service last month after completing his tenure.
- **Administrative Background:** A 1994-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer of the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, Mr. Lohiya assumed charge as the DFS Secretary on

June 1, 2026. He brings extensive experience to these board positions, having previously served in key roles within the Ministry of Mines and the Prime Minister's Office.

Footnotes: RBI's Governor: Sanjay Malhotra, HQ: Mumbai, Estd: 1935

SPORTS NEWS

India Win 6th SAFF Women's Championship Title 2026

- **Dominant Performance:** India had a flawless campaign, winning all four of their matches throughout the tournament. They showcased clinical form in front of the goal, scoring a total of 18 goals while conceding only one in the entire competition.
- **Historic Significance:** This victory marked India's return to the top of South Asian women's football for the first time since 2019, ending a seven-year wait. The final also served as a fitting farewell for veteran player Dangmei Grace, who announced her retirement from international football after winning her third SAFF title.
- **Strategic Qualification:** By securing this championship, the Indian women's football team has significantly boosted their FIFA world ranking and secured an automatic qualification spot for the upcoming 2027 AFC Women's Asian Cup qualifiers.

Savitha Shri Baskar wins 2026 Women's Asian Individual Chess Championship

- **Tournament Performance:** Competing as the sixth seed in a field of over 100 players from 17 countries, Savitha finished at the top of the standings with 7.5 points out of 9 rounds. She narrowly edged out Uzbekistan's Afruza Khamdamova on tie-breaks to claim the gold.
- **World Cup Qualification:** By winning this continental crown, Savitha has earned a direct qualification spot for the 2027 FIDE Women's World Cup, further solidifying her trajectory in the international chess circuit.
- **National Milestone:** This victory marks India's 13th Women's Asian Championship title. Savitha's success adds to India's dominant record in the tournament, where the nation has now secured the title in three of the last four editions.

Kimi Antonelli Wins Monaco Grand Prix 2026

- **Record-Breaking Performance:** With this win, Antonelli became the youngest driver in history to win the prestigious Monaco Grand Prix. This victory also extended his winning streak to five consecutive races, a dominant run that has widened his lead in the 2026 Drivers' Championship standings to 66 points.
- **Tactical Resilience:** The race was held under challenging conditions, including a long delay caused by track surface damage which led to a red-flag period. Despite the pressure and an uncertain restart, Antonelli maintained his composure and control from the front of the grid to secure the win ahead of Lewis Hamilton.

- **Significance of the Venue:** Winning in Monaco is considered one of the highest honors in motorsport. Antonelli's ability to navigate the tight, narrow streets of Monte Carlo while managing safety car periods and multiple restarts underscored his transition from a rookie talent to a championship contender in his debut season with Mercedes.

Bibisara Assaubayeva Wins Norway Chess Women 2026 Title

- Bibisara Assaubayeva secured the Norway Chess Women 2026 title with a standout performance that left her competitors behind. She entered the penultimate round as the sole leader and officially clinched the championship with a draw in her ninth-round classical game against defending champion Anna Muzychuk. Her final tally of 16.5 points across the elite event solidified her status as the clear winner.
- Making her debut in this prestigious tournament, the 22-year-old grandmaster from Kazakhstan displayed exceptional preparation throughout the competition. She defeated several world-class opponents, including the reigning five-time Women's World Chess Champion, Ju Wenjun.
- For her remarkable first-place finish, Assaubayeva earned a prize of 700,000 Norwegian kroner, equivalent to approximately US\$74,821. Beyond the financial reward, her stellar run in Oslo earned her 15.2 rating points, propelling her to fifth place in the live world rankings for women.

Zverev clinches Maiden Grand Slam title at French Open

- **Historic Breakthrough in Paris:** German tennis star Alexander Zverev finally secured his first-ever Grand Slam title at the 2026 French Open on June 7, 2026. Playing in his fourth major final, the 29-year-old defeated Italian challenger Flavio Cobolli in a dramatic five-set encounter that ended with a score of 6-1, 4-6, 6-4, 6-7, 6-1.
- **Overcoming Past Adversity:** Zverev's win was a deeply emotional moment, coming on the same Court Philippe-Chatrier where he had previously suffered a severe ankle injury four years prior. Having lost three previous Grand Slam finals, including a painful five-set defeat in Paris in 2024, the victory represented a long-awaited "happy ending" for the German player.
- **Strategic Dominance & Milestone Achievement:** The final lasted four hours and 16 minutes, with Zverev regaining control in the deciding set after Cobolli's energy levels began to dip. By clinching the title, Zverev joined an exclusive group of players—alongside legends like Novak Djokovic, Andre Agassi, and Andy Murray—who have won all four major ATP accolades, including Grand Slams, Masters 1000 events, ATP Finals, and Olympic gold.

Sagar & Kajal Dhochak clinch golds at Ulaanbaatar Open 2026

- **Dominant Performances in Freestyle Wrestling:** Asian Games-bound wrestler Sagar Jaglan secured the gold medal in the men's 74kg freestyle category by defeating Tamir Eshinimaev 3-2 in the final. Simultaneously, 18-year-old Kajal Dhochak impressed in the women's 76kg division, clinching her gold with a commanding 8-0 victory over African champion Damola Ojo.
- **Key Path to the Podium:** Sagar's route to the top included a technical superiority win against Mongolia's Tolui Munkhbat in the semi-finals. Kajal demonstrated exceptional skill throughout her campaign, pinning opponents from Kazakhstan and China before her decisive win in the championship bout.
- **Significance for Indian Wrestling:** These victories were part of a successful campaign for India at the Ulaanbaatar Open, which serves as a crucial Ranking Series event ahead of the 2026 Asian Games. The Indian contingent concluded the four-day tournament with a total of 16 medals, including eight gold medals across various weight categories.

India Tops World Yogasana Championship 2026 Medal

- **Global Participation:** The championship brought together over 500 athletes from more than 70 countries to compete in various disciplines, including traditional, artistic, and rhythmic yogasana. The event featured a diverse range of participants from nations including the USA, Japan, Mauritius, and Sri Lanka, among many others.
- **Significance of the Venue:** Hosted in the UNESCO World Heritage City of Ahmedabad, the championship was inaugurated via video-conferencing by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Prime Minister emphasized that hosting this inaugural event in India—the birthplace of yoga—further cements the nation's role in the global legacy of health and wellness.
- **Future Aspirations:** By organizing this event through the collaboration of Yogasana Bharat, the Indian Olympic Association, and the World Yogasana federation, organizers aim to pave the way for Yogasana's inclusion in major international multi-sport events, including the Olympics.

FIFA World Cup 2026 Kicks Off at Estadio Azteca

- **Historic Venue Selection:** The iconic Estadio Azteca in Mexico City has been officially selected to host the opening match of the 2026 FIFA World Cup. This legendary stadium makes history by becoming the first venue to host opening games in three different World Cup tournaments.
- **Global Sporting Celebration:** The opening match will serve as the spectacular start to an expanded tournament featuring 48 teams from around the globe. Fans from across the world will turn their attention to Mexico City as the host nation kicks off the biggest sporting event on the planet.
- **Legacy and Infrastructure:** Hosting this prestigious opener highlights the deep-rooted football culture of Mexico and the enduring significance of the Azteca. Extensive

renovations have been completed to ensure the facility meets modern international standards while preserving its status as a cathedral of football.

Indian wicket-keeper KS Bharat announces retirement from international cricket

- **Formal Announcement:** Indian wicket-keeper and batter KS Bharat has officially announced his retirement from international cricket at the age of 32. He shared the decision in a heartfelt social media post, describing the opportunity to represent his country as the greatest honor of his life.
- **International Career Summary:** Bharat made his Test debut against Australia in February 2023 and went on to feature in seven Test matches for India. Across these appearances, he scored 221 runs with a career-best of 44 and affected 19 dismissals behind the stumps.
- **Gratitude and Future Plans:** In his farewell message, he expressed deep gratitude to his family, the BCCI, and mentors including Virat Kohli, Rohit Sharma, and Rahul Dravid. While stepping away from the international arena, he confirmed he will continue his involvement in cricket by mentoring and coaching the next generation of players.

DeVANS GianChand wins Double Gold at SFWSC 2026

- **Sole Indian Double Gold Winner:** GianChand Indian Single Malt Whisky was the only Indian single malt to be awarded the prestigious Double Gold Medal at SFWSC 2026. This rare distinction is given only when every judge on the panel independently awards the spirit a gold rating.
- **Rarity of the Accolade:** Winning a Double Gold is considered one of the highest and most rigorous honors in the global spirits industry. It serves as a strong validation that Indian single malts can compete at the highest level of quality and craftsmanship worldwide.
- **Broad Portfolio Success:** Beyond the Double Gold win, the brand's peated expression, GianChand Manshaa, secured a Silver Medal at the same competition. Furthermore, both expressions earned additional Silver Medals at the 2026 International Spirits Challenge, highlighting consistent excellence across the portfolio.

Kane Williamson, Former New Zealand captain announces his retirement

- **Immediate Conclusion to a Storied Career:** Williamson announced his departure midway through New Zealand's ongoing Test series against England, effective immediately. After a 16-year international career, he decided the timing was right to step away on his own terms.
- **Historic Statistical Legacy:** He retires as New Zealand's all-time leading run-scorer in international cricket with 19,346 runs, including 48 centuries and six double-centuries.

His prolific career across 378 matches established him as arguably the greatest batsman to ever represent the Black Caps.

- **Captaincy and Leadership Achievements:** During his tenure as captain from 2016 to 2024, Williamson led the team through a golden era, headlined by winning the inaugural World Test Championship in 2021. He also guided the side to two ICC Cricket World Cup finals and multiple semi-final appearances, earning widespread respect for his calm leadership and sportsmanship.

AWARD NEWS

Major Prabhat Mishra of IA Wins Two Major Awards at USA Army CGSOC

- **Dual Academic Honors:** During the graduation ceremony for the Command and General Staff Officer Course (CGSOC) held in early June 2026, Major Mishra was awarded the Birrer-Brookes Award for his "Outstanding Master of Military Arts and Science Thesis" and the General Douglas MacArthur Military Leadership Writing Award.
- **Highly Competitive Environment:** The awards were presented to Major Mishra from a graduating class of 951 officers. This cohort included military personnel from the United States as well as 120 international military students representing 92 different countries, highlighting the global scale of his academic achievement.
- **Strategic Significance:** Major Mishra's success underscores the growing professional cooperation, defense interoperability, and strong educational exchange between the armed forces of India and the United States.

Panchayat Advancement Index Wins Gold Award at National e-Governance Awards 2026

- **Prestige and Recognition:** The Ministry of Panchayati Raj's flagship "Panchayat Advancement Index" (PAI) has been selected for the prestigious Gold Award at the National Awards for e-Governance 2026. This honor is awarded under Category VII, which recognizes excellence in digital transformation through the use of data analytics in digital platforms.
- **Objective and Framework:** As India's first comprehensive, data-driven framework, the PAI assesses and ranks the performance of over 2.6 lakh Gram Panchayats. It evaluates these rural bodies across nine critical themes of the Localisation of Sustainable Development Goals (LSDGs) using 150 indicators and 230 specific data points.
- **Award Presentation:** The award, which includes a trophy, a citation, and a ₹10 lakh cash incentive, will be officially conferred during the 29th National Conference on e-Governance. The event is scheduled to take place on July 1–2, 2026, in Jaipur, Rajasthan, focusing on the theme of "Viksit Bharat 2047: AI-Enabled, Data-Driven and Secure Digital Governance."

e-Jagriti Wins Silver Award at National Awards for e-Governance 2026

- **Recognition & Category:** The platform received the Silver Award under the "Government Process Re-engineering by Use of Technology for Digital Transformation" category. This prestigious recognition from the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances highlights its success in modernizing consumer grievance redressal.
- **System Consolidation & Efficiency:** Launched on January 1, 2025, e-Jagriti consolidated four fragmented legacy systems—OCMS, e-Daakhil, NCDRC CMS, and CONFONET—into a single AI-enabled, paperless interface. This transformation has been highly effective, facilitating the filing of over 2.29 lakh cases and achieving an impressive disposal rate of 90.75 percent.
- **Enhanced Accessibility & Citizen-Centricity:** The platform has significantly improved access to justice by enabling virtual hearings as the default mode and allowing Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to file complaints without returning to India.

India's First Food-Led Metabolic Recovery System 'GRASA' Won Rashtriya Ratna Samman 2026

- **Recognition of Innovation:** The award, presented at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi, recognizes GRASA's unique approach to addressing metabolic health through clinical nutrition rather than traditional supplements. This honor highlights the startup's success in leveraging food science, fermentation, and millet-based diets to restore gut microbiome and improve metabolic stability.
- **Clinical Impact & Methodology:** GRASA utilizes a 72-hour natural fermentation process to create everyday foods like millet flour and sourdough bread that break down anti-nutrients and reduce chronic inflammation. Their clinical outcomes have been documented in peer-reviewed journals, with over 87% of their 500+ clients reporting measurable improvements in energy and digestion within just 30 days.
- **Ecosystem and Scientific Validation:** The startup operates as the precision nutrition arm of MediCAPS and was incubated within the Innovation Development Council (IDC) India's COSMINNOX ecosystem. This award validates a comprehensive model where food science, clinical research, and startup incubation work.

Indian-Origin Scientist Gautam Dey Bags EMBO Gold Medal 2026

- **Prestigious Recognition:** The European Molecular Biology Organization (EMBO) has awarded its prestigious 2026 Gold Medal to Gautam Dey, a group leader at the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Germany. This annual honor recognizes exceptional researchers in the early stages of their independent careers for their outstanding contributions to the life sciences in Europe.
- **Groundbreaking Research:** Dr. Dey is being celebrated for his pioneering work on the evolutionary origins of nuclear organization and cell division. His laboratory utilizes a

unique combination of comparative cell biology, experimental evolution, and genomics to investigate how key cellular processes have diversified across eukaryotes over billions of years.

- **Academic Journey:** An Indian-origin scientist, Dr. Dey completed his early education at the University of Delhi and the National Centre for Biological Sciences in Bangalore.

APPOINTMENT & PERSON IN NEWS

UIDAI CEO Saurabh Vijay took Charge as CEO of IndiaAI Mission

- **Dual Leadership Role:** A 1998-batch IAS officer of the Maharashtra cadre, Saurabh Vijay, currently serving as the CEO of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), will now lead the IndiaAI Mission alongside his existing responsibilities.
- **Context of the Appointment:** The position had been vacant following the reassignment of the former IndiaAI Mission CEO, Abhishek Singh, to the post of Director General of the National Testing Agency (NTA).
- **Mission Objectives:** Under the current leadership transition, the IndiaAI Mission continues to focus on its core pillars: building world-class sovereign computing infrastructure in multilingual AI foundational models, and providing research and development support to startups and academic institutions.

Raman Meenakshi Sundaram appointed Director of NAARM

- **Professional Background:** Dr. Sundaram is a renowned scientist specializing in crop biotechnology, rice genetics, and molecular breeding. Before his current appointment at NAARM, he served as the Director of the ICAR-Indian Institute of Rice Research (ICAR-IIRR) from 2021 to May 2026.
- **Academic and Research Excellence:** Throughout his distinguished career, he has published over 160 research papers and contributed to significant agricultural innovations, such as the development of the "Improved Samba Mahsuri" rice variety. He is also a fellow of several prestigious scientific bodies, including the National Academy of Agricultural Sciences (NAAS) and the National Academy of Sciences, India (NASI).
- **Current Leadership Role:** As the Director of ICAR-NAARM, he oversees capacity-building initiatives and research management programs for the agricultural sector. He is also actively involved in mentoring agricultural stakeholders, including workshops for input dealers to promote science-based nutrient management for farmers.

Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan Elects Banwarilal Purohit as President

- **Leadership Transition:** Banwarilal Purohit succeeds Surendralal Mehta, who resigned from the presidency due to health reasons after serving the institution for over two

decades. The committee formally expressed deep appreciation for Mehta's distinguished service and leadership during his long tenure.

- **Professional Background:** Purohit, a former parliamentarian and veteran administrator, brings extensive experience to the role, having previously served as the Governor of Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Assam, and Meghalaya. His long-standing commitment to education and social development is well-aligned with the Bhavan's mission of promoting Indian culture and values.
- **Organizational Continuity:** Alongside Purohit's appointment, the institution elected finance industry veteran Deepak Parekh as its new Vice-President. Having served as a Trustee and executive member for over 22 years, Purohit's transition into the presidency is expected to provide steady leadership for the organization's network of educational and cultural institutions.

Indraprastha Gas Limited appoints Kumar Shanker as New MD

- Kumar Shanker has officially taken charge as the Managing Director of IGL, succeeding Kamal Kishore Chatiwal. Mr. Chatiwal has been repatriated to the company's parent organization, GAIL (India) Ltd, following the completion of a three-year tenure.
- Mr. Shanker is a chemical engineer from BITS Pilani and brings over three decades of extensive experience in the oil and gas sector. Prior to this role, he served as the Managing Director of Maharashtra Natural Gas Ltd (MNGL), where he was instrumental in its growth into one of India's top five city gas distributors.
- Throughout his career at GAIL, he has held diverse roles across multiple states and business verticals, including gas processing, petrochemicals, and project management. Notably, he played a significant role in advancing regulatory reforms in the Indian natural gas sector.

S S Yadav appointed CEO Delhi Jal Board

- **New Leadership Appointment:** Dr. Sajjan Singh Yadav, a 1995-batch IAS officer of the AGMUT cadre, was officially appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) on June 9, 2026. This appointment comes as part of a significant administrative shuffle within the Delhi government's key utility departments.
- **Expanded Administrative Responsibilities:** In addition to his role as CEO of the Delhi Jal Board, Dr. Yadav has been assigned the rank of Additional Chief Secretary. He will also concurrently hold the additional charges of Additional Chief Secretary (Industries)

and Chairperson of the Delhi State Industrial and Infrastructure Development Corporation (DSIIDC).

- **Transition of Power:** Dr. Yadav steps into this role following the recent transition of his predecessor, Kaushal Raj Sharma, who was appointed as Secretary to the Lieutenant Governor of Delhi in April 2026. This move is viewed as a strategic placement of a senior officer to oversee critical infrastructure and industrial development projects in the capital.

Rajneesh Narain appointed as Director of Finance at IRCTC

- **Formal Appointment and Tenure:** Rajneesh Narain has taken charge on an immediate absorption basis. He is slated to serve in this role until his superannuation on June 30, 2030.
- **Previous Leadership Experience:** Prior to joining IRCTC, Rajneesh Narain served as the Director (Finance) at Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL). He brings over 26 years of extensive experience in the coal sector, with deep expertise in corporate accounting, fund management, and major infrastructure financial closure.
- **Strategic Role in IRCTC:** His appointment follows a recommendation by the Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB) earlier this year, where he was selected from a pool of eight candidates. He is expected to leverage his financial acumen to steer IRCTC's budgetary control and strategic planning as the company continues to expand its tourism and catering operations.

Footnotes: IRCTC's Chairman & MD: Sanjay Kumar Jain, HQ: New Delhi, Estd: 1999

OBITUARY NEWS

National Award-Winning Malayalam Actor Salim Kumar passed away

- **Passing of a Cinematic Icon:** Renowned Malayalam actor and filmmaker Salim Kumar passed away on June 6, 2026, at the age of 56 while undergoing treatment at a private hospital in Kochi. He had been battling health complications, including respiratory issues and cardiac arrest, before his passing was officially confirmed.
- **Celebrated Career and Achievements:** Salim Kumar was a versatile performer who transitioned from a popular mimicry artist to one of the most influential figures in Malayalam cinema. He earned the prestigious National Film Award for Best Actor in 2010 for his powerful, emotive performance in the critically acclaimed film *Adaminte Makan Abu*.

National Award-Winning Director Bharathi Rajaa passed away

- **Legendary Filmmaker Passes:** Acclaimed director and actor Bharathi Rajaa has passed away at the age of 84. His death marks the end of an era for the Indian film industry, where he was celebrated for bringing a raw, realistic portrayal of rural life to the silver screen.
- **Cinematic Legacy:** Known as a pioneer of the "village-centric" genre, he revolutionized Tamil cinema with pathbreaking films like 16 Vayathinile and Karuththamma. Over his illustrious career, he won multiple National Film Awards and Filmfare Awards, cementing his status as one of India's most influential directors.
- **Enduring Impact:** Beyond his directorial brilliance, he was a mentor to countless actors and technicians, shaping the careers of many current industry icons. His unique storytelling style and deep understanding of human emotions earned him a permanent place in the hearts of audiences across generations.

Jaspal Rana, former Asian Games gold medallist, passed away at 49

- **Tragic Loss for Indian Sports:** Indian shooting icon and decorated coach Jaspal Rana passed away at a private hospital in New Delhi on June 11, 2026, at the age of 49. He had been suffering from heart-related complications after falling ill during his return from the ISSF World Cup in Munich, Germany.
- **A Storied Athletic Career:** A trailblazer in Indian shooting, Rana was a multiple-time Asian Games gold medallist and a Commonwealth Games champion who dominated the sport for nearly two decades.
- **Mentorship and Legacy:** Beyond his competitive success, Rana was a highly respected coach who famously mentored Manu Bhaker to her historic double bronze-medal performance at the 2024 Paris Olympics.