

Current Affairs

22 Dec. 2025

East Bengal FC Clinches Inaugural SAFF Women's Club Title



1. East Bengal FC Clinches Inaugural SAFF Women's Club Title

- **Historic Achievement:** By defeating Nepal's APF FC 3–0 in the final at Dasharath Stadium, Kathmandu, East Bengal became the first Indian women's club to win an international trophy. This title marked the club's fifth international trophy overall across all categories.
- **The "Invincibles" Run:** The "Moshal Girls" completed a flawless campaign, remaining undefeated throughout the tournament. Across five matches, they secured four wins and one draw, scoring 14 goals in total.
- **Impenetrable Defense:** Remarkably, East Bengal did not concede a single goal during the entire championship. Their defense, led by stalwarts like Ashalata Devi and goalkeeper Panthoi Chanu (who won the Best Goalkeeper Award), kept five clean sheets.
- **Star Performance by Fazila Ikwaput:** Ugandan striker Fazila Ikwaput was the standout player of the tournament. She scored a brace in the final and finished as the Top Scorer with 9 goals, including a sensational 5-goal haul in a single match against Bangladesh's Nasrin Sports Academy.
- **Triple Crown Season:** Under the guidance of head coach Anthony Andrews, this victory secured a historic "treble" for East Bengal in 2025. The club added the SAFF title to their existing trophy cabinet, which already included the Indian Women's League (IWL) and the Kanyashree Cup titles from earlier in the season.



2. ISRO to Launch BlueBird Block-2 Communication Satellite

- **Heaviest Payload to Date:** Weighing approximately 6.5 tonnes (6,500 kg), BlueBird Block-2 will be the heaviest payload ever launched by an Indian rocket into Low Earth Orbit (LEO), showcasing the immense lifting power of the LVM3 (nicknamed "Bahubali").
- **Direct-to-Smartphone Connectivity:** The satellite is designed by the US-based company AST SpaceMobile to provide high-speed 4G and 5G cellular broadband directly to standard, unmodified smartphones. This eliminates the need for specialized ground equipment or satellite phones.
- **Record-Breaking Antenna:** Once deployed, the satellite will feature a massive 223-square-meter (2,400 sq. ft.) phased-array antenna. This will be the largest commercial communications array ever operated in Low Earth Orbit, offering 10 times the data capacity of earlier models.
- **Strategic US-India Partnership:** Managed by NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), ISRO's commercial arm, this mission represents a deepening of space cooperation between India and the United States, following other high-profile collaborations like the NISAR mission.
- **Bridging the Digital Divide:** The satellite is part of a global constellation aimed at providing 24/7 connectivity to remote and underserved areas, including oceans, deserts, and high-altitude regions like the Himalayas, where traditional cell towers cannot reach.



3. SmritiMandhana Becomes First Asian to 4,000 T20I Runs

- **First Asian & Indian:** Mandhana is the first Asian woman and the first Indian cricketer (male or female) to reach the 4,000-run mark in T20 Internationals. She joins an elite global club that previously only featured New Zealand legend Suzie Bates.
- **Fastest to the Milestone:** She became the fastest player in women's T20I history to reach 4,000 runs in terms of balls faced. She achieved the feat in just 3,227 balls, significantly quicker than Suzie Bates, who took 3,675 balls.
- **Elite Global Company:** Overall, she is only the second woman in world cricket to cross this landmark. As of the milestone, she sits second on the all-time list with 4,007 runs, trailing only Suzie Bates (4,716 runs).
- **Match Performance:** She needed 18 runs to reach the record before the game. She scored 25 runs off 25 balls in the match, helping India chase down a target of 122 to take a 1-0 lead in the five-match series.



- **Consistency Across Formats:** This T20I milestone comes shortly after Mandhana played a pivotal role in India's 2025 ODI World Cup victory. She currently averages nearly 30 in T20Is with a strike rate of over 123, featuring one century and 31 half-centuries.

4. Narendra Ostawal appointed Non-Executive Director at IDFC First Bank

- **Official Confirmation:** Ostawal's appointment as a Non-Executive Non-Independent Director was formally ratified on December 20, 2025, after a postal ballot process. He had previously joined as an Additional Director in September 2025, but this latest step makes the appointment permanent and subject to rotation.
- **Warburg Pincus Representation:** He joins the board as a nominee of Currant Sea Investments B.V., an affiliate of the global private equity giant Warburg Pincus. This follows a massive investment of approximately ₹ 7,500 crore made by Warburg Pincus and ADIA into the bank earlier in April 2025.
- **Extensive Finance Background:** Ostawal is a Managing Director at Warburg Pincus, where he leads the firm's investment advisory activities in India. He has been with the firm since 2007 and has a deep track record in the financial services and healthcare sectors.
- **Highly Credentialed Leadership:** Professionally, he is a Chartered Accountant and holds an MBA from IIM Bangalore. Before his tenure at Warburg Pincus, he gained valuable experience at global firms like McKinsey & Company and 3i India.



5. Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty Win Bronze at BWF World Tour Finals 2025

- **Historic First for India:** Satwik and Chirag became the first-ever Indian men's doubles pair to win a medal at the prestigious season-ending BWF World Tour Finals. They joined PV Sindhu (who won gold in 2018) as the only Indian shuttlers to ever medal at this event.
- **Unbeaten Group Stage:** The Indian duo entered the knockouts with immense momentum, finishing as Group B toppers with a flawless 3–0 record. Their group-stage run included a victory over the world No. 2 Malaysian pair, Aaron Chia and Soh Wooi Yik, avenging their Paris 2024 Olympic defeat.
- **The Semifinal Clash:** In the semifinals, they faced the world No. 5 Chinese pair, Liang Wei Keng and Wang Chang. Despite a dominant start where the



Indians won the first game 21–10, the Chinese duo staged a comeback to win the match 10–21, 21–17, 21–13 in 63 minutes.

- **Ending a Season of Consistency:** This bronze medal capped off a highly consistent 2025 season for the world No. 3 pair. While they ended the year without a title, they reached six semifinals and two finals (Hong Kong Open and China Masters), cementing their spot among the world's elite.

6. IIFL Finance appointed Former RBI Dy-Governor BP Kanungo as Chairman

- **Elevation from the Board:** Bibhu Prasad Kanungo was already serving as a Non-Executive Independent Director on the board of IIFL Finance since June 2025. His elevation to the position of Chairperson was approved unanimously by the board and took effect immediately.
- **Decades of Regulatory Expertise:** Kanungo brings over 40 years of experience in central banking and financial regulation. He served as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) from 2017 to 2021, where he oversaw critical portfolios like currency management, foreign exchange, and payment systems.
- **Strategic Governance Focus:** The appointment is a strategic move by the NBFC to align with SEBI listing regulations and reinforce its commitment to "best-in-class" corporate governance. As Chairman, he will lead the board in setting strategic direction and enhancing transparency and compliance functions.
- **Monetary Policy Background:** During his tenure at the RBI, Kanungo was a vital member of the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC). He also represented the RBI on the boards of major national institutions including NABARD, National Housing Bank, and Punjab National Bank.



7. Jay Shah Receives 'Transformational Leader of the Year' Award

- **Honored by the Judiciary:** The award was presented to Jay Shah by the Chief Justice of India (CJI), Surya Kant. The recognition highlights Shah's role in driving structural and cultural shifts in cricket administration during his tenure as BCCI Secretary (2019–2024).
- **Dedication to Women's Cricket:** Shah dedicated the award to the Indian Women's Cricket Team, specifically mentioning players like Harmanpreet Kaur, Smriti Mandhana, and coach Amol Muzumdar. He noted that their success on the field inspired the administrative reforms he championed.
- **Landmark Policy Reforms:** The award specifically recognized his pioneering role in introducing pay parity (equal match fees for men and women) and the



successful launch of the Women's Premier League (WPL), which has become a ₹ 6,000 crore property.

- **Commercial & Infrastructure Growth:** Under his leadership, the BCCI secured a record-breaking ₹ 48,390 crore IPL media rights deal and completed the state-of-the-art National Cricket Academy (NCA) Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru, sprawling across 20 lakh square feet.
- **Global Leadership Transition:** This award comes just weeks after Shah officially took over as the Chairman of the ICC on December 1, 2024. His vision for the sport now includes a global expansion push, highlighted by cricket's inclusion in the LA28 Olympic Games.

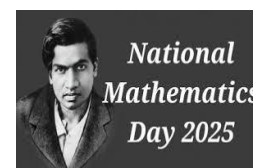
8. Indian Team Photonics Odyssey Wins Most Inspirational Award 2025

- **Global Recognition in a Massive Competition:** The team emerged as a winner from a pool of more than 11,500 project submissions globally. The 2025 hackathon was the largest to date, featuring over 114,000 participants from 167 countries.
- **Visionary Satellite Internet Concept:** The team proposed a sovereign, phased-array satellite internet infrastructure designed to provide high-speed broadband directly to users. Their project reimaged satellite internet as a "national public utility" rather than a private commercial service.
- **Targeting the Digital Divide:** The primary goal of the project is to connect over 700 million people in India who currently lack reliable broadband access, particularly those in remote, rural, and geographically challenging regions like the Himalayas.
- **Technological Sovereignty:** By focusing on an indigenous satellite-based system, the concept aims to reduce India's reliance on traditional ground-based fiber networks and foreign satellite constellations, ensuring technological independence in telecommunications.



9. National Mathematics Day observed on 22 December

- **Honoring a Genius:** The day celebrates the life and legacy of Srinivasa Ramanujan (born 1887), a self-taught mathematical prodigy who made extraordinary contributions to number theory, infinite series, and continued fractions despite having almost no formal training.
- **Established in 2012:** The observance was officially declared by the Government of India in 2012 (the 125th birth anniversary of Ramanujan) by the

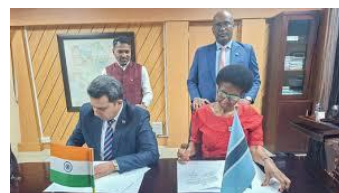


then Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh. The year 2012 was also celebrated as the "National Mathematics Year."

- **Promoting Mathematical Temper:** The primary objective of the day is to raise awareness about the importance of mathematics in the development of humanity and to reduce "math phobia" among students by encouraging logical thinking and problem-solving through workshops and competitions.
- **The Hardy-Ramanujan Number:** A key highlight of the celebrations often includes the story of the number 1729. Known as the "Hardy-Ramanujan Number," it is the smallest number that can be expressed as the sum of two different cubes in two different ways.

10. RITES & Botswana Government Sign MoU for Rail and Transport Modernisation

- **Modernizing Botswana's Rail:** The primary goal of the MoU is the development and modernization of Botswana's railway infrastructure. RITES will provide technical support for the supply of rolling stock, commissioning, repair, and the overall operation and maintenance of railway systems.
- **Expansion Beyond Railways:** While rail is the core focus, the collaboration is multi-modal. It extends to the modernization of highways, bridges, airports, and buildings, helping Botswana create a comprehensive and resilient national transport network.
- **Technological Integration:** RITES will deploy advanced information technology solutions to upgrade Botswana's systems. Key features include the implementation of integrated train operations and passenger management systems to enhance safety and efficiency.
- **Capacity Building & Training:** A major pillar of the agreement is human capital development. RITES will conduct technical training programs and knowledge-sharing initiatives to strengthen the local workforce's capabilities in managing modern transport infrastructure.

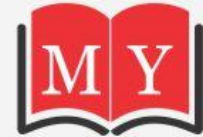


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