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WEEKLY —  
**Current**  
Affairs



## NATIONAL NEWS

### India's first satellite-tagged Ganges soft-shell turtle released

- **The Event and Location:** On the occasion of Endangered Species Day (May 15, 2026), India's first satellite-tagged Ganges softshell turtle (*Nilssononia gangetica*) was released into its natural habitat along the northern bank of the Brahmaputra River inside the Kaziranga National Park and Tiger Reserve, Assam.
- **Collaborative Conservation Project:** The active bio-telemetry initiative was conducted by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) and the Assam Forest Department, with financial backing from the National Geographic Society.
- **Species Status & Importance:** The Ganges softshell turtle is a crucial river scavenger classified as Endangered on the IUCN Red List and is granted the highest tier of legal protection under Schedule I of India's Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972.

### Sikkim to Implement Anand Marriage Act, 1909 from June 1, 2026

- **Direct Sikh Marriage Registration:** Effective June 1, 2026, Sikh couples in Sikkim can register their marriages directly under their own specific legal framework following traditional Anand Karaj ceremonies, providing distinct legal and cultural identity.
- **Elimination of Legal Gaps:** Previously, due to a lack of localized state rules, Sikh couples in Sikkim had to register their marriages under the Hindu Marriage Act, 1955. The state has now formally established the Sikkim Anand Marriage Registration Rules, 2026 to streamline independent processing.
- **Supreme Court Push:** The implementation was fast-tracked following a landmark Supreme Court ruling in late 2025 (*Amanjot Singh Chadha vs. Union of India*), which directed remaining states to plug administrative loopholes and frame localized registration mechanisms.

**Footnotes: Sikkim's Governor:** Om Prakash Mathur, **CM:** Prem Singh Tamang, **Capital:** Gangtok

### Bhopal Introduces India's 1st Solar-Powered 'Algae Tree'

- **The Innovation:** Installed at Swami Vivekananda Park under the Smart City initiative, the "Algae Tree" is a futuristic, solar-powered photobioreactor structure that utilizes microalgae to capture carbon dioxide and release oxygen via photosynthesis.
- **High Environmental Impact:** Developed by the Mushroom World Group, a single compact unit can absorb approximately 1.5 tonnes of annually—equivalent to the capacity of 25 mature natural trees—and generates nearly 1 ton of oxygen.
- **Pollution Reduction:** The device specifically targets fine air pollutants, capable of reducing dangerous levels by 45% to 55% within a 15-meter radius, making it an ideal green infrastructure supplement for congested urban areas.

### Ministry of Education Launches Pilot Programme for Out-of-School Adolescents

- **Targeting the Secondary Dropout Crisis:** The initiative is designed specifically for adolescents in the 14–18 age group. Data from the Department of School Education and

Literacy (DoSEL) highlights a stark retention gap—only 62 out of every 100 children who enter Class I successfully reach Class XII.

- **Flexible Open Learning & Vocational Integration:** Recognizing that many dropouts cannot return to traditional classrooms, the strategy relies heavily on ODL. In partnership with the NIOS and State Open Schools, the programme offers self-paced education.
- **Data-Driven, Phased Pilot Rollout:** The initial phase is launching as a localized pilot across 10 high-dropout concentration districts spanning nine states/UTs (Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, and Delhi).

### Union Minister Prataprao Jadhav Launches ‘Ayush Anudan’ Portal

- **The Launch:** Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Ayush, Prataprao Jadhav, officially launched the ‘Ayush Anudan Portal’ at Kartavya Bhawan, New Delhi. Developed under the ministry's broader Ayush Grid digital initiative, the centralized platform is designed to transition grant management into a completely paperless ecosystem.
- **Core Objective:** The portal aims to bring 100% transparency, operational efficiency, and strict accountability to the grant management process. It completely digitizes the end-to-end lifecycle—from the online submission and processing to the final approval and real-time tracking of funding proposals under various Central Sector Schemes.
- **Key Integrations:** To streamline verification and prevent administrative bottlenecks, the platform is seamlessly cross-linked with NITI Aayog’s NGO Darpan Portal. This enables automated, error-free background authentication of applicant organizations, significantly speeding up institutional credibility checks.

### Kerala Forms India's First AI Ministry, PK Kunhalikutty Gets Charge

- **India's First Dedicated AI Portfolio:** Kerala has become the first state in India to establish a cabinet-level portfolio for Artificial Intelligence (AI). The department has been strategically structured under the broader umbrella of the Industries and Commerce department to reshape state administration and technology governance.
- **Key Leadership Charge:** Senior IUML leader P. K. Kunhalikutty has been given formal charge of the newly formed AI ministry. His portfolio forms a massive technology and trade cluster that also includes Information Technology, Industries, Start-ups, and Mining & Geology.
- **Political Context & Vision:** The allocation was part of an official gazette notification following the formation of the new Congress-led United Democratic Front (UDF) government under Chief Minister V. D. Satheesan.

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

### ShramMitra App Launched in Haryana to Replace Traditional Labour Chowk System

- **Digital Replacement for "Labour Chowks":** Launched by Haryana Labour Minister Anil Vij, the app functions as a free, multilingual (Hindi, English, and Punjabi) "Electronic Employment Exchange.”

- **Geo-Mapping and Direct Negotiation:** Developed by the Haryana Building and Other Construction Workers Welfare Board, the app features built-in geo-mapping technology that gives workers and employers live data regarding each other's location, distance, and travel time.
- **Mass Worker Onboarding & On-Ground Support:** Data for nearly 75,000 registered workers (including masons, electricians, plumbers, carpenters, and barbers) has already been pre-loaded onto the platform.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Dr Pradeep Singh Rajpurohit appointed as India's Ambassador to Kingdom of Bahrain

- **Official Appointment & Transition:** The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) announced his appointment on May 21, 2026. A 2004-batch Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, he will soon transition to Bahrain from his current role as the High Commissioner of India to Trinidad and Tobago.
- **Extensive Gulf Experience:** Dr. Rajpurohit brings a highly specialized West Asia and Gulf profile to his new post, having previously served as India's Ambassador to Iraq, Deputy Ambassador to Saudi Arabia, and in key diplomatic positions in Abu Dhabi and Cairo.
- **Unique Professional Background:** Before his distinguished career in diplomacy, he was a trained medical doctor who earned his MBBS from Dr. S.N. Medical College in Jodhpur and worked in rural health centers—a background that heavily aided his coordination of large-scale humanitarian and repatriation efforts during his career.

### Kevin Warsh takes oath as Chairman of US Federal Reserve

- **Official Appointment & Ceremony:** Kevin Warsh was sworn in as the 17th Chairman of the US Federal Reserve on May 22, 2026. The oath was administered by US Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas at a White House ceremony.
- **Succession & Board Dynamic:** He succeeds Jerome Powell, whose term expired. In a rare historical move not seen in nearly 80 years, Powell will remain at the Federal Reserve as a member of the Board of Governors.
- **Vision & Past Experience:** Returning to the Fed where he previously served as a governor (2006–2011), Warsh pledged to lead a "reform-oriented" central bank focused on price stability, combating inflation, and maintaining institutional independence.

### Dr Ajay Kumar appointed as High Commissioner of India to Republic of Uganda

- **Transition from the Washington Embassy:** Dr. Ajay Kumar was serving at the Embassy of India in Washington, D.C., prior to this assignment. The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) officially announced his transfer and new leadership role in Kampala.
- **Strengthening Strategic and Economic Ties:** This includes India's strong presence at the 19th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit in Kampala and celebrating over 60 years of formal India-Uganda diplomatic relations, with a core focus on expansion in bilateral trade, infrastructure investment, and public-private business collaboration.

- **Managing a Deeply Rooted Diaspora:** As High Commissioner, a primary responsibility for Dr. Kumar will be engaging and supporting the substantial Indian-origin community in Uganda, which numbers nearly 35,000 people.

### Ali Falih Kadhim al-Zaidi Sworn in as Iraq's Youngest PM

- **Youngest Leader:** At 40 years old, the multimillionaire businessman and banker has become the youngest Prime Minister in Iraq's history.
- **Political Outsider:** Regarded as a political newcomer, he was selected as a consensus candidate by Iraq's dominant ruling Shiite bloc (the Coordination Framework) to succeed Mohammed Shia' al-Sudani.
- **Partial Cabinet Approval:** He was officially sworn in following a vote of confidence in parliament, though he takes power with a partially approved cabinet as several key ministerial posts remain vacant due to political gridlock.

**Footnotes:** Iraq's President: Nizar Amidi, PM: Ali al-Zaidi, Capital: Baghdad

### PM Modi Receives Norway's Highest Civilian Honour, 32nd Global Award

- **The Honor Bestowed:** King Harald V of Norway conferred the Grand Cross of the Royal Norwegian Order of Merit upon Prime Minister Narendra Modi during his official visit to Oslo. It is Norway's highest honor for foreign heads of government.
- **32nd Global Award:** This marks the 32nd international honor PM Modi has received from foreign nations, coming just one day after he was awarded Sweden's highest civilian honor (Royal Order of the Polar Star).
- **Historic Visit:** The award ceremony took place during a major diplomatic milestone, marking the first official visit by a sitting Indian Prime Minister to Norway in 43 years.

### Google, Blackstone launch \$5 billion AI cloud company

- **Strategic Core & Compute-as-a-Service:** The primary objective is to commercialize and expand the reach of Google's custom-built AI chips TPUs providing enterprises with a powerful, non-Nvidia hardware alternative for training and deploying advanced AI models outside the traditional boundaries of Google Cloud.
- **Massive Capital Investment & Scale:** Blackstone is making an initial equity capital commitment of \$5 billion to secure majority ownership of the new venture. The company aims to leverage Blackstone's vast digital infrastructure and energy portfolio to bring 500 megawatts (MW) of data center capacity online by 2027.
- **Leadership & Market Position:** To steer the newly formed entity, Blackstone has named Benjamin Treynor Sloss as CEO. Sloss is a seasoned Google infrastructure veteran with over two decades of experience managing Google's global engineering, reliability networks, and supply chains.

### India Becomes Bangladesh's Second-Largest Trading Partner, Surpassing US

- **The Shift:** Based on data from the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics (BBS), India has narrowly surpassed the United States to become Bangladesh's second-largest trading partner, accounting

for 8.47% (Tk 123.28 billion) of its total external trade, compared to the US share of 8.46% (Tk 123.17 billion). China continues to hold the top spot.

- **Key Drivers:** The surge is heavily fueled by Bangladesh's high volume of imports from India, which consist of essential food commodities (like rice, onions, and sugar) and vital industrial inputs (such as cotton, yarn, and intermediate goods) to support its local manufacturing and textile sectors.
- **Geographical Advantage:** India's shared land border offers distinct logistics and freight advantages over distant partners like the US, drastically reducing transport times and supply chain costs for Bangladeshi industries.

### PM Modi Receives FAO Agricola Medal in Rome

- **The Honour:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred with the prestigious Agricola Medal for 2026 by the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) Director-General, Qu Dongyu, at its headquarters in Rome. This visit marked the first by an Indian Head of Government to the FAO headquarters in 30 years.
- **Recognition of Leadership:** The award recognizes his exceptional leadership in enhancing food security, sustainable agriculture, and rural development. Key milestones highlighted included India's massive food safety net covering 800 million citizens, direct income support for 110 million farmers, and global advocacy for nutrient-rich millets.
- **Dedication of the Award:** Upon receiving the medal, PM Modi dedicated the recognition to the millions of Indian farmers, livestock rearers, fishers, and the agricultural scientific community for driving a science-backed, climate-resilient farming ecosystem.

## DEFENCE NEWS

### DRDO Successfully Tests Indigenous ULPGM-V3 Missile

- **Dual Combat Modes & Purpose:** The Unmanned Aerial Vehicle Launched Precision Guided Missile (ULPGM)-V3 was successfully tested in both Air-to-Ground and Air-to-Air modes at the DRDO test range near Kurnool, Andhra Pradesh.
- **Key Technological Features:** The missile features a 10-kilometer extended range and utilizes a high-definition, dual-channel seeker enabling highly precise day and night operations.
- **Nodal Development & Mass Production Readiness:** Developed by the Research Centre Imarat (RCI), Hyderabad as the nodal laboratory alongside other DRDO labs, the project heavily involved Indian MSMEs.

### Squadron Leader Saanya Becomes IAF's 1st Woman Cat-A Flying Instructor

- **Pinnacle of Flight Instruction:** By earning the Category-A Qualified Flying Instructor (QFI) qualification, Squadron Leader Saanya achieved the absolute highest instructional tier a military pilot can attain in India.
- **A Historic Gender Milestone:** Her achievement marks the first time in the 93-year history of the IAF that a woman officer has broken through to this elite instructional ranking. Trained as an accomplished transport pilot, her certification follows intensive schooling at the prestigious Flying Instructors School (FIS) at Air Force Station Tambaram near Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

- **Stellar Career Trajectory:** Commissioned into the Flying Branch of the IAF on June 20, 2015 (from the 42 Short Service Commission Flying Pilot Course), her progression reflects consistent excellence. She was promoted to Flight Lieutenant in 2017 and Squadron Leader in 2021 before being formally felicitated for this historic milestone by Air Chief Marshal A.P. Singh.

### Multilateral Exercise Pragati 2026 Commences AtUmroi

- **The Event:** PRAGATI 2026, a prominent two-week multilateral military exercise, commenced on May 20, 2026, at the Umroi Military Station in Meghalaya. Hosted by the Indian Army, it brings together armed forces from 13 nations in total (India and 12 friendly partner countries, including Bhutan, Malaysia, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Vietnam).
- **Core Focus & Framework:** The acronym PRAGATI stands for "Partnership of Regional Armies for Growth and Transformation in the Indian Ocean Region." Conducted in a spirit of mutual respect, the drill specifically focuses on tactical-level drills and joint counter-terrorism operations across challenging semi-mountainous and jungle terrains
- **Atmanirbhar Bharat Showcase:** Alongside military drills and tactical interoperability training, the exercise features a dedicated exhibition where Indian technology and defence firms showcase indigenous military equipment and innovations, highlighting India's growing self-reliance and capabilities in defence manufacturing.

## BANKING NEWS

### ICICI Bank & Visa Launch India's First USD-Denominated Debit Card for NRI Customers

- **The Launch and Integration:** ICICI Bank, in partnership with Visa, has introduced India's first USD-denominated debit card for Non-Resident Indian (NRI) customers. The card is specifically issued from its IFSC Banking Unit (IBU) at GIFT City, Gujarat, and is linked to the bank's USD Global Savings Account.
- **Key Financial Benefit:** Built on Visa's premium Infinite platform, the standout feature of this card is that it offers 0% foreign exchange markup on US Dollar transactions made globally at Point of Sale (PoS) terminals and e-commerce websites.
- **Enhanced Global Utility and Control:** The card provides NRIs with seamless access to their dollar savings for worldwide spending across ATMs, online shopping, and travel platforms.

### Union Bank of India appoints Sowmya Sridhar as CRO

- **Key Leadership Role:** Union Bank of India has appointed Smt. Sowmya Sridhar as its new Chief Risk Officer (CRO) on a contractual basis for a tenure lasting until August 31, 2029.
- **Seamless Succession:** Effective May 22, 2026, she officially succeeds Shri Ashwini Kumar Ramakrishna Chowdhary, whose three-year contract as CRO concluded on May 21, 2026.
- **Internal Veteran:** Sridhar brings over 30 years of extensive banking experience to the role. Having joined the bank in 1995, she has spent 19 of those years specializing in risk management and holds a global Financial Risk Manager (FRM) certification.

**Footnotes:** UBI's MD & CEO: Ashish Pandey, HQ: Mumbai, Estd: 1919

## RBI Appoints Gunveer Singh as Executive Director

- **Key Department Portfolio:** This makes him responsible for regulating India's digital payments architecture, scaling platforms like UPI, managing cross-border payment linkages, and strengthening the country's payment infrastructure cybersecurity frameworks.
- **Prior Internal Elevation:** Before this promotion, Singh was already closely tied to this vertical, serving as the Chief General Manager-in-Charge of the exact same department (DPSS) at the RBI.
- **Extensive Background & Qualifications:** He brings over three decades (30+ years) of experience within the RBI, spanning banking supervision, risk monitoring, and government banking operations.

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

## Federal Bank Appoints Elias George as Part-Time Chairman

- **RBI Approval & Tenure:** The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved the appointment of Elias George as the Part-Time Chairman of Federal Bank for a fixed three-year term, effective from May 23, 2026.
- **Existing Board Association:** Prior to this elevation, he had already been serving on the Federal Bank's Board of Directors as a Non-Executive Independent Director since September 5, 2023.
- **Distinguished Bureaucratic Background:** He is a retired Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer who previously served as the Additional Chief Secretary to the Government of Kerala and famously held the role of CEO for the Kochi Metro Rail project.

## SPORTS NEWS

### Shriyanshi Valishetty Wins Silver at Baoji China Masters

- **The Achievement:** Indian badminton player Shriyanshi Valishetty clinched the silver medal in the women's singles category at the Baoji China Masters 2026, which is a BWF Super 100 event.
- **The Summit Clash:** In the final match held at the Baoji City Gymnasium, she finished as the runner-up after going down to China's local favorite An Qi Yuan in straight sets.
- **Tournament Highlight:** On her way to the final, the 19-year-old delivered a major breakthrough performance by defeating the reigning 2024 Junior World Champion, Xu Wen Jing of China, in straight games during the semifinals.

### Jannik Sinner wins Italian Open title

- **The Victory:** World No. 1 Jannik Sinner won the men's singles title at the 2026 Italian Open in Rome by defeating Norway's Casper Ruud in straight sets during the final clash at the Foro Italico.
- **Historic Milestone for Italy:** With this triumph, Sinner became the first Italian man in 50 years to win the Italian Open singles title, ending a half-century drought that dated back to Adriano Panatta's victory in 1976.

- **Career Golden Masters & Records:** By capturing this title (his 10th ATP Masters 1000 crown), the 24-year-old became the youngest and only the second man in tennis history, after Novak Djokovic, to complete the Career Golden Masters—which means winning all nine unique ATP Masters 1000 tournaments.

### Ukraine's Elina Svitolina wins Italian Open women's title

- **The Victory:** Ukraine's Elina Svitolina defeated world No. 4 Coco Gauff of the United States in a hard-fought three-set final (6–4, 6–7, 6–2) to win the 2026 Italian Open women's singles title.
- **Milestone Hat-Trick:** This marks her third career Italian Open title (following her victories in 2017 and 2018) and her fifth overall WTA 1000-level tournament win.
- **Record-Breaking Run:** At 31 years old, she became the oldest woman to win three titles at the same WTA 1000 event, completing a "giant-slaying" campaign by defeating three top-5 opponents (Elena Rybakina, Iga Świątek, and Gauff) in a single tournament. Jannik & Elina won Men's & Women's Singles Title at Italian Open Tennis 2026

### North Korean women's team win Asian Champions League title

- **Historic First for North Korea:** Pyongyang-based club Naegohyang Women's FC captured the 2025–2026 AFC Women's Champions League (AWCL) title on May 23, 2026, becoming the first-ever North Korean club to win Asia's premier women's club tournament.
- **The Decisive Final Match:** Played on South Korean soil at the Suwon Sports Complex, Naegohyang defeated Japan's Tokyo Verdy Beleza 1-0 in a tight defensive battle. Team captain Kim Kyong-yong scored the match-winning goal in the 44th minute, subsequently earning the tournament's MVP award.
- **Sanctions and Prize Money Dilemma:** While the victory secures a \$1 million cash prize for the club, the actual payout remains highly uncertain as experts and officials debate whether transferring the funds complies with stringent United Nations Security Council sanctions aimed at blocking foreign currency flow to North Korea.

### East Bengal Win Indian Super League Title for First Time

- **Maiden ISL Title & 22-Year Wait Ended:** East Bengal FC clinched their first-ever Indian Super League title on May 21, 2026, ending an agonizing 22-year drought for a top-tier national league trophy (their last league triumph was the National Football League in 2004).
- **Dramatic Final-Day Finish:** In a unique truncated season without playoffs, the title was decided solely by the league table on the final day. East Bengal secured a dramatic 2-1 comeback victory over Inter Kashi, edging out arch-rivals Mohun Bagan Super Giant on goal difference after both teams finished level on 26 points.
- **A Season of Top Honors:** Managed by Oscar Bruzón, the Red and Gold Brigade dominated the campaign with the most goals scored (30). The historic triumph was further sweetened by individual honors, as East Bengal's Youssef Ezzejari won the Golden Boot (11 goals) and Miguel Figueira claimed the Golden Ball.

## AWARD NEWS

### Paradeep Parivahan Wins LEAPS Award 2025

- **The Recognition:** Odisha-based logistics provider Paradeep Parivahan Limited (PPL) won the prestigious LEAPS Award 2025 (Logistics Excellence, Advancement and Performance Shield) under the Multimodal Transport Operator (MTO) category.
- **The Ceremony:** The flagship national award, institutionalized by the DPIIT (Ministry of Commerce & Industry), was presented by Union Minister Shri Piyush Goyal on May 13, 2026, at Vanijya Bhawan, New Delhi.
- **Evaluation & Green Focus:** PPL was selected through a rigorous multi-stage evaluation process involving 71 competitive companies, including global majors like FedEx and Maersk.

### Ishaan Khatter honored by Indian Armoured Corps' 45 Cavalry

- **Honorary Membership:** Bollywood actor Ishaan Khatter was formally inducted and conferred with an honorary membership into the 45 Cavalry, an elite regiment of the Indian Army's Armoured Corps.
- **The Cinematic Connection:** This rare honor comes as a tribute to his portrayal of real-life war hero Captain Balram Singh Mehta in the military drama film Pippa, which beautifully brought the regiment's historic 1971 Battle of Garibpur victory to life.
- **Regimental Traditions:** The induction took place during a formal military ceremony, making him one of the few contemporary Indian actors to be officially recognized and embraced as an honorary member by a frontline armored regiment.

### Rajasthan Wins WHO No Tobacco Day Award 2026

- **The Global Recognition:** The Department of Medical and Health, Government of Rajasthan, has been conferred with the World Health Organization's (WHO) prestigious World No Tobacco Day Award 2026. The state secured the top honor in the South-East Asia Region for its exemplary initiatives and outstanding achievements in tobacco control during the 2025–26 period.
- **Widespread Institutional Network:** Rajasthan established a highly successful nationwide model by setting up more than 500 geo-tagged tobacco cessation treatment and counseling centers extending down to the block level. Additionally, the state successfully implemented "Tobacco-Free School" guidelines across more than 83,000 educational institutions.
- **Grassroots Enforcement & Awareness:** Led by Chief Minister Bhajanlal Sharma's administration, the state combined strict legal enforcement of the Cigarettes and Other Tobacco Products Act (COTPA), 2003 with massive public outreach. This included organizing over 255,000 awareness activities (like street plays and rallies) and integrating a "Tobacco-Free Village" campaign into the Ayushman Adarsh Gram Yojana to drive rural community participation.

### Kantha Artist Tripti Mukherjee Honored with Padma Shri

- **Massive Grassroots Women's Empowerment:** Over her 40-year career, Mukherjee has traveled to nearly every village in West Bengal's Birbhum district, establishing a specialized training center in Suri.
- **Global Promotion of Cultural Heritage:** Sponsored by the Government of India and the Ministry of Textiles, she has conducted high-profile exhibitions and live craft demonstrations internationally, including major showcases in Birmingham, UK (2017) and Tokyo, Japan (2025).
- **A Highly Decorated Master Artisan:** Her unique creations—which vividly depict rural life, historical figures like Mahatma Gandhi, and mythological themes—previously earned her the National Award, the West Bengal government's Bangashree Award, and the coveted Shilp Guru Award, the highest honor for craftspersons in India.

### **Bank of Maharashtra Wins APY Annual Award of Excellence FY 2025-26**

- **Recognition for Target Excellence:** The award acknowledges the bank's exceptional performance in significantly exceeding its enrollment targets under the central government's flagship pension program.
- **Top Leadership Presentation:** The award was officially presented at a national felicitation ceremony by M. Nagaraju (Secretary, Department of Financial Services) and Sivasubramanian Ramann (Chairperson, Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority).
- **Focus on the Unorganized Sector:** The milestone highlights the bank's aggressive grassroots financial inclusion initiatives. Through proactive outreach and awareness campaigns, BoM successfully expanded retirement safety nets, specifically onboarding underserved and unorganized sector workers into the social security scheme.

**Footnotes: BOM's MD & CEO: Nidhu Saxena, HQ: Pune, Estd: 1935**

### **Chandrayaan-3 honored with AIAA Goddard Astronautics Award 2026**

- **Highest AIAA Honor:** The American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics (AIAA) presented its highest astronautics honor to ISRO for the Chandrayaan-3 mission during the ASCEND conference in Washington, D.C.
- **Historic Achievement Recognized:** The award directly recognizes India's historic August 23, 2023 achievement as the first nation to successfully execute a soft landing near the Moon's challenging south polar region.
- **Scientific Contribution:** The citation honors the mission for significantly deepening global scientific understanding of the Moon and providing critical resource and soil data to support future human lunar exploration.

### **Taiwan Travelogue Wins International Booker Prize 2026**

- **Historic Double Milestone:** Awarded on May 19, 2026, at London's Tate Modern, Taiwan Travelogue made history as the first-ever book originally written in Mandarin Chinese, and the first by a Taiwanese author (Yáng Shuāng-zǐ), to win the prestigious prize.

- **The Narrative & Themes:** Set in 1938 during the Japanese colonial rule of Taiwan, the novel uses an experimental, metafictional format (disguised as a rediscovered Japanese travel journal) to follow a Japanese author and her local female interpreter on a culinary tour.
- **Prize Distribution & Publisher Success:** The £50,000 prize money will be split equally between the author and the translator, Lin King. The victory also marks an impressive consecutive win for the independent publisher And Other Stories, which also published the 2025 winner (Heart Lamp).

## APPOINTMENT & PERSON IN NEWS

### Sandeep Kumar Garg inducted as DIG in NIA

- **The Appointment:** Sandeep Kumar Garg, a 2012-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer of the Punjab cadre, has been officially appointed as the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) in the National Investigation Agency (NIA).
- **Central Deputation:** The appointment was approved by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in May 2026. He has been inducted into the premier counter-terror probe agency against an existing vacancy on a central deputation basis.
- **Previous Assignment:** Prior to this central posting, he was serving within the state infrastructure as the DIG of the Punjab Police Intelligence Wing, where he supervised key units including the Social Media, TV Media, Technical Analysis, and Data Center cells.

### Sahdev Yadav Elected President of South Asian Weightlifting Federation

- **Unanimous Election:** Dr. Sahdev Yadav, who currently serves as the President of the Indian Weightlifting Federation (IWLFF), was unanimously elected as the President of the South Asian Weightlifting Federation (SAWF) during its election meeting held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.
- **Key Administration Portfolios:** Alongside this new regional role, Yadav holds several other prominent positions in sports administration, serving as the Treasurer of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA)
- **Vision and Key Leadership Appointment:** Yadav's vision for SAWF focuses on strengthening sports ecosystems across South Asian nations through enhanced athlete development programs, standardized coaching, and upgraded infrastructure.

### Surendra Kumar Jha appointed as Deputy Inspector General in BSF

- **The Appointment:** Senior IPS officer Surendra Kumar Jha has been officially appointed as the Deputy Inspector General (DIG) in the Border Security Force (BSF) on a central deputation basis.
- **Cadre and Current Role:** Jha is a veteran 2010-batch IPS officer from the Jharkhand cadre. Prior to this central posting, he was serving as the DIG (Personnel) at the Jharkhand Police Headquarters.
- **Distinguished Profile:** Highly regarded for his administrative and crime-control capabilities, he has previously served as the Senior Superintendent of Police (SSP) of Ranchi and is a recipient of the Police Medal for Gallantry (PMG) for his courage in the field.

**Footnotes:** BSF's Director General: Praveen Kumar, HQ: New Delhi, Estd: 1965

## IAS Officer Saurabh Vijay Takes Charge as CEO of UIDAI

- **Jannik Sinner's Historic Home Victory:** World No. 1 Jannik Sinner defeated Casper Ruud 6–4, 6–4 in the men's singles final. With this victory, Sinner broke a 50-year title drought for local fans, becoming the first Italian man to lift the Rome trophy since Adriano Panatta in 1976.
- **Sinner's Rare Career Golden Masters:** By capturing the Rome title, Sinner officially completed the Career Golden Masters feat, joining Novak Djokovic as the only other male player in tennis history to achieve this milestone. He also became just the second player after Rafael Nadal (2010) to sweep all three clay-court Masters events in a single season.
- **Elina Svitolina's Resurgent Milestone:** In the women's singles final, Ukraine's Elina Svitolina defeated American Coco Gauff 6–4, 6–7. The victory marked her 20th career WTA tournament triumph and capped off a spectacular run where she defeated three of the world's top four players—Elena Rybakina, Iga Świątek, and Gauff—in consecutive matches.

**Footnotes:** UIDAI's Previous CEO: Bhuvnesh Kumar, Estd: 2009

## Bharat Singh Chauhan re-Elected as Chairman of Commonwealth Chess Association

- **The Election:** Veteran Indian sports administrator Bharat Singh Chauhan was unanimously and unopposed re-elected as the Chairman of the Commonwealth Chess Association (CCA) for a four-year term (2026–2030). The elections took place during the CCA's Annual General Body Meeting at the Citrus Hotel in Wasakaduwa, Sri Lanka.
- **Global Leadership Profile:** Chauhan brings nearly five decades of experience to the role. Alongside his CCA chairmanship, he currently serves as the Chairman of the International Chess Federation's (FIDE) Advisory Board and as the Deputy President of the Asian Chess Federation (ACF), having previously served as the secretary of the All India Chess Federation (AICF).
- **New Grassroots Initiative:** During the same high-level assembly, the association resolved to expand youth participation across member countries by launching the inaugural Commonwealth School Chess Championship, which is scheduled to be hosted in Malaysia in October 2026.

## Medha Kulkarni appointed Chairperson of Parliamentary Panel on Science & Environment

- **The Appointment:** Rajya Sabha MP Prof. Medha Vishram Kulkarni has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the Department-related Parliamentary Standing Committee on Science and Technology, Environment, Forests and Climate Change. The appointment, approved by Rajya Sabha Chairman C.P. Radhakrishnan, officially took effect on May 18, 2026.
- **Role & Responsibilities:** As the head of this crucial parliamentary panel, the BJP leader from Maharashtra will lead the scrutiny of government policies, review budgetary allocations, and evaluate upcoming national legislation regarding scientific advancement, environmental protection, and climate change challenges.
- **Political Background:** Kulkarni is a prominent leader from Pune, Maharashtra, who previously served as a Member of the Legislative Assembly (MLA) before being elected to the Rajya Sabha (Council of States), bringing extensive legislative and academic experience to this high-level policy monitoring role.

## Madhya Pradesh partnered with Google Cloud India for Simhastha Kumbh 2028

- **AI-Driven Smart Event Management:** The collaboration focuses heavily on deploying Google Cloud's advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI) for large-scale security and analytics during the Ujjain Kumbh. This includes real-time crowd density monitoring, predictive traffic routing, and automated emergency response coordination to handle millions of incoming devotees safely.
- **Multilingual "Sahayak" Pilgrim App:** Operating in multiple local regional languages, it will provide pilgrims with real-time updates regarding crowd congestion, step-by-step route guidance, and dynamic safety alerts.
- **Indore AI Center of Excellence:** A key component of the upcoming Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) is the creation of a specialized tech hub in Indore.

**Footnotes:** MP's Governor: Mangubhai C. Patel, CM: Mohan Yadav, Capital: Bhopal

## Manipur Police Chief Rajiv Singh appointed as Secretary in Cabinet Secretariat

- **New National Security Role:** The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) officially appointed senior IPS officer Rajiv Singh as the Secretary (Security) in the Cabinet Secretariat in New Delhi. He takes over the crucial post that was previously being handled as an additional charge by R&AW chief Parag Jain.
- **Administrative Head of the SPG:** In this elite role, Singh will function as the administrative head of the Special Protection Group (SPG). He will directly oversee the specialized security arrangements, protocols, and VIP protection frameworks tasked with safeguarding the Prime Minister of India and their immediate family.
- **Transition from Manipur Command:** A 1993-batch IPS officer of the Tripura cadre, Singh moves to the Centre after serving as the Director General of Police (DGP) of Manipur since June 2023.

**Footnotes:** Manipur's Governor: Ajay Kumar Bhalla, CM: Y. Khemchand Singh, Capital: Imphal

## OBITUARY NEWS

### Former Mohun Bagan FC President Tutu Bose passed away

- **Legacy at Mohun Bagan:** Affectionately called "Tutu Babu" in Kolkata's Maidan circles, he was a stalwart football administrator who served Mohun Bagan AC for over three decades in multiple capacities, including as Secretary (1991–1995) and President. For his immense lifelong contributions, he was honored with the prestigious "Mohun Bagan Ratna" award.
- **Modernizing Indian Football:** He is widely recognized as the architect of modern Mohun Bagan. Under his stewardship, the club broke traditional norms to sign its first-ever foreign player (Nigerian striker Chima Okorie in 1991), aggressively professionalized player recruitment, and later facilitated the club's transition into the corporate era through its Indian Super League (ISL) merger.

### BJP veteran & former Uttarakhand CM B.C. Khanduri passed away

- **Decorated Military Career and Transition to Politics:** Before stepping into public life, Khanduri served in the Corps of Engineers of the Indian Army for nearly 36 years (1954–1990),

participating in the 1971 India-Pakistan War and retiring as a Major General. He was awarded the prestigious Ati Vishisht Seva Medal (AVSM) in 1982 for his distinguished service.

- **Two-Term Chief Minister of Uttarakhand:** Affectionately known as "General Sahab," he served as the Chief Minister of Uttarakhand twice—first from March 2007 to June 2009, and again from September 2011 to March 2012.
- **Architect of National Highway Expansion:** As a Union Cabinet Minister for Road Transport and Highways (2000–2004) under Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Khanduri played a central, visionary role in transforming India's road infrastructure.

### Former England Captain MJK Smith passed away

- **The Passing:** Former England Test captain Michael John Knight (MJK) Smith passed away at the age of 92 on May 17, 2026, following a prolonged illness. The legendary cricketer's passing was officially announced by his long-time domestic county club, Warwickshire.
- **A Rare Double International:** A phenomenal multi-sport athlete, Smith holds the unique distinction of being England's last male "double international" in major sports. He represented his country in 50 Test matches as a batsman between 1958 and 1972, and also earned a rugby union cap for England against Wales in 1956.
- **Leadership & Legacy:** He captained the England cricket team in exactly half of his appearances (25 Tests) between 1963 and 1966 and amassed nearly 40,000 first-class runs. Following his playing retirement, he continued serving the sport as the Chairman of Warwickshire (1991–2003) and as an international match referee for the ICC.

### Former Microsoft Executive and Tech Mentor passed away

- **Sudden Demise:** S. "Soma" Somasegar, a highly respected Indian-American tech leader, investor, and mentor, passed away unexpectedly on May 19, 2026, at the age of 59, prompting widespread grief across Silicon Valley and the Seattle tech communities.
- **Massive Microsoft Legacy:** Over an illustrious 27-year career at Microsoft, he rose to Corporate Vice President and led the Developer Division—successfully steering critical ecosystems like Visual Studio and .NET. He was also instrumental in establishing Microsoft's major India Development Center (IDC) in Hyderabad in 1998.
- **Venture Capital & Mentorship:** After leaving Microsoft in 2015, he joined Madrona Venture Group as Managing Director, focusing on AI and cloud software startups (including investments in UiPath and Snowflake). He was widely celebrated as a legendary, selfless mentor who helped launch and shape the careers of an entire generation of tech founders and engineers.