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## NATIONAL NEWS

### India names Delhi road 'Jamaica Marg'

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that the road in front of the Jamaica High Commission in New Delhi has been named 'Jamaica Marg', highlighting strong India-Jamaica ties.
- Jamaican Prime Minister Andrew Holness was on his first official trip to India, the first bilateral visit by a Jamaican Prime Minister.

### 'New lady justice statue' unveiled at Supreme Court

- The Chief Justice of India, DY Chandrachud, unveiled the 'new lady justice' statue in the Supreme Court premises that replaced the 'original lady justice'.
- Traditionally depicted with a blindfold and a sword, the new statue now features 'Lady Justice' with open eyes and the Constitution of India in place of the sword, reflecting the judiciary's commitment to constitutional values and justice that 'sees everyone equally'.

### India becomes an affiliate member of the International Medical Device Regulators Forum (IMDRF)

- India has joined IMDRF as an affiliate member, enhancing global collaboration and harmonisation in medical device regulations for public health.
- The Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO), under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare applied for Affiliate Membership and received approval.
- IMDRF was established in 2011. It is a collaborative group of global medical device regulators dedicated to accelerating the harmonisation and convergence of international medical device regulations.

#### Key Points

Union Health Minister	—	Jagat Prakash Nadda
Drugs Controller General of India	—	Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi

### Bihar to develop Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary as Tiger reserve

- The Bihar government will develop the Kaimur Wildlife Sanctuary (KWLS) as the state's second tiger reserve. KWLS is spread over an area of 1,504.96 sq km.
- The National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA) gave the in-principle approval to develop KWLS as another tiger reserve.

- Bihar already has the Valmiki Tiger Reserve (VTR), which has reached its capacity as it currently houses 54 tigers.

### ISRO's PSLV C-37 upper stage Re-enters Earth's Atmosphere

- The upper stage of PSLV-C37 rocket, which launched a record number of 104 satellites in 2017 has re-entered the earth's atmosphere.
- Since September 2024, IS4OM (Isro System for Safe and Sustainable Space Operations Management) regularly monitored the orbital decay as part of its regular activities and predicted the re-entry into the atmosphere in October's first week. The corresponding impact point is in the North Atlantic Ocean.
- The atmospheric re-entry is fully compliant with the international debris mitigation guidelines, in particular, the guideline of the Inter-Agency Space Debris Coordination Committee (IADC) that recommends limiting the post-mission orbital life of a defunct object in Low-Earth orbit (LEO) to 25 years.
- PSLV-C37 was launched on February 15, 2017, with Cartosat-2D as the main payload along with another 103 satellites as co-passengers. It created history as the first mission to launch 104 satellites with a single vehicle.

#### Key Points

ISRO's chairman	—	Dr. Sreedhara Panicker Somanath
ISRO's headquarters	—	Bengaluru, Karnataka

### Asia's Largest and world's highest imaging Cherenkov Observatory inaugurated at Hanle, Ladakh

- The Major Atmospheric Cherenkov Experiment (MACE) Observatory was inaugurated at Hanle, Ladakh. The site has been carefully chosen for its unique scientific advantages as Hanle offers extremely low light pollution required for gamma-ray observations.
- MACE is located at an altitude of ~4,300 m and is also the highest of its kind in the world. It is 21 metres in diameter, 175 tonnes heavy, and has a reflector area of 356 sqm and 1,424 diamond-turned metallic mirror facets, 712 actuators, 1,088 photo-multiplier tubes, and 68 camera modules.
- It has been indigenously built by the Mumbai-based Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) with support

from the Electronics Corporation of India Ltd (ECIL) and other Indian industry partners.

- Gamma rays do not reach the Earth's surface as they are stopped by the atmosphere. However, interaction with the atmosphere creates high-energy particles that travel faster than the speed of flight and emit Cherenkov radiation which is akin to a sonic boom. The mirrors and cameras capture these flashes and trace them back to their cosmic source.

### **National Space Commission approved India's Fifth Lunar Mission-LUPEX**

- The National Space Commission, India's apex body on space missions, cleared the fifth lunar mission, the Lunar Polar Exploration Mission or LUPEX.
- The mission, which aims to explore water and more valuable resources on the lunar surface, will be a collaborative effort between ISRO and Japan's space agency JAXA.
- LUPEX is part of India's larger lunar roadmap that ultimately envisions sending an astronaut to the Moon and bringing them safely back.

### **India's Vaccine Regulatory System declared 'Functional' by the World Health Organisation (WHO)**

- Drug regulator CDSCO and the National Regulatory Authority of India have met the standards set up by WHO for a functional vaccine regulatory system. The three basic parameters of the assessment of vaccines were safety, efficacy, and quality.
- The WHO has established global standards and benchmarks for assurance of vaccine quality through the development of tools and guidelines, benchmarking of the National Regulatory Authorities (NRA) and pre-qualification programme of vaccines.

#### **Key Points**

WHO's Director-General — Tedros Adhanom  
Headquarters — Geneva, Switzerland

### **India Unveils Its National Electricity Plan for 500 GW Renewable Goal**

- India has unveiled its National Electricity Plan which aims to achieve 500 gigawatts of renewable energy by 2030 and over 600 gigawatts by 2032.
- The National Electricity Plan (Transmission) prepared the National Electricity Plan in consultation with various stakeholders.

- The plan includes expanding the transmission network, integrating energy storage solutions, and supporting green hydrogen hubs. It has also taken into consideration the requirement of storage systems viz 47 GW of Battery Energy Storage Systems and 31 GW of Pumped Storage Plants to be developed along with Renewable Energy.
- The Transmission Plan also covers cross-border interconnections with Nepal, Bhutan, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka as well as probable interconnections with Saudi Arabia, UAE etc.

### **Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) releases 'Guidelines for Prevention and Regulation of Greenwashing or Misleading Environmental Claims, 2024.'**

- The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued guidelines for the Prevention and Regulation of Greenwashing and Misleading Environmental Claims to address the issue of greenwashing and misleading environmental claims.
- These guidelines seek to foster truthful practices where environmental claims are both truthful and meaningful, thus enhancing consumer trust and encouraging sustainable business practices.
- A committee chaired by Nidhi Khare, Chief Commissioner of CCPA was constituted on greenwashing and the guidelines have been formulated based on the recommendations of this committee.

### **Meta Launches 'Scam Se Bacho' Safety Campaign in India**

- The Central government and Meta have launched "Scam se Bacho", a National User Awareness Campaign to tackle rising online scams.
- This initiative is launched in collaboration with the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, the Ministry of Home Affairs, the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, and the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C).
- The initiative aims to combat the growing menace of scams and cyber frauds, aligning with the government's commitment to addressing the rising cases of online scams and enhancing cyber safety.

### **PM Modi launches Development Projects worth ₹6,100 crore at Varanasi**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched several development initiatives, including multiple airport projects across the country worth over ₹6,100 crores.

- He inaugurated the RJ Sankara Eye Hospital, designed to provide comprehensive eye care services.
- He laid the foundation stone for the expansion of the airport runway and construction of a new terminal building and allied works of Lal Bahadur Shastri International Airport, costing around ₹2,870 crores.
- He inaugurated phases 2 and 3 of the Varanasi Sports Complex redevelopment, part of the Khelo India scheme and Smart City mission, with an investment exceeding ₹210 crore. The complex will feature a National Centre of Excellence, player accommodations, a sports science centre and facilities for various sports.
- He also inaugurated a 100-bed hostel at Dr. Bhimrao Ambedkar Sports Stadium and tourism enhancements in Sarnath, aimed at improving infrastructure in Buddhist heritage areas.
- He inaugurated tourism initiatives at Banasur Temple and Gurudham Temple, along with beautification projects for local parks.

#### **Supreme Court upholds Assam Citizenship Act Validity**

- In a landmark ruling, a Constitution Bench of the Supreme Court upheld the constitutional validity of Section 6A of the Citizenship Act, 1955 (1955 Act) which laid out an exclusive regime for migrants in Assam from erstwhile East Pakistan (present Bangladesh) to obtain Indian citizenship as long as they entered India before March 25, 1971.
- The decision was rendered by a 4:1 majority. Justice Surya Kant authored the lead majority opinion on behalf of himself, CJI D.Y. Chandrachud, Justices M. M. Sundresh, and Manoj Misra, while Justice Pardiwala delivered the lone dissenting opinion.
- Section 6A originates from the “Assam Accord”, a political settlement signed on August 15, 1985, between the government and Assam’s student groups, following a six-year-long agitation against the influx of undocumented migrants from Bangladesh into Assam. It established a framework for granting or denying Indian citizenship to migrants in Assam based on a cut-off date — March 25, 1971.

#### **India celebrates Sardar Patel’s 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary**

- The Central government will commemorate the 150<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel with a two-year-long nationwide programme from 2024 to 2026 to honour his monumental contribution to the country.

- Sardar Patel was born on October 31, 1875, at Nadiad in Gujarat.
- The Central government observes October 31 as ‘Rashtriya Ekta Diwas’ or National Unity Day since 2014 to foster and reinforce its dedication to preserving and strengthening the unity, integrity and security of the nation.
- As India’s first Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister, Patel is credited for the merger of over 550 princely states with the Union of India.
- As part of the celebrations, various programmes are organised across the country, recalling Sardar Patel’s contribution to unifying India.

#### **Sarvam Artificial Intelligence (AI) launches New Language Model for Indian Languages**

- Sarvam AI, an emerging player in India’s generative AI space, has launched a new language model that has been specifically trained for Indian languages.
- The new AI model called Sarvam-1 is open-source and supports up to ten Indian languages, including Bengali, Gujarati, Hindi, Kannada, Malayalam, Marathi, Oriya, Punjabi, Tamil and Telugu – besides English.

#### **India launches \$25 million Pandemic Fund for Animal Health**

- Union Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying, Rajiv Ranjan Singh launched the Pandemic Fund Project on “Animal Health Security Strengthening in India for Pandemic Preparedness and Response”, in New Delhi.
- The Pandemic Fund Project is a \$25 Million initiative funded by the G20 Pandemic Fund. It aims to improve pandemic preparedness and response in the livestock sector.
- Through the National Animal Disease Control Program (NADCP), the department is aiming to control and eradicate Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) and Brucellosis from the country.

#### **Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched health initiatives worth nearly ₹12,850 crore.**

- On the occasion of Dhanvantari Jayanti and the ninth Ayurveda Day, PM Modi launched, inaugurated and laid the foundation stone of multiple projects related to the health sector worth around ₹12,850 crore at the All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), New Delhi.

- PM Modi highlighted the Ayushman Bharat Yojana, which covers hospital costs of up to ₹5 lakh for economically disadvantaged families. This scheme has benefited over four crore individuals, providing essential treatments without financial burden. He expanded the program further with the Ayushman Vaya Vandana Card, offering free healthcare for citizens over 70, a service universally accessible irrespective of income.
- He launched drone services at 11 tertiary institutions, including AIIMS in states like Uttarakhand, Telangana, Assam and Chhattisgarh. These drones will improve emergency response and treatment in hard-to-reach areas.

#### **India launches first Biomanufacturing Institute for Agri-Food Innovation**

- India's first Biomanufacturing Institute, 'BRIC-National Agri-Food Bio-Manufacturing Institute' (BRIC-NABI) aimed at enhancing India's agri-food sector through advanced biotechnology was inaugurated in Mohali, Punjab.
- BRIC-NABI, formed through the strategic merger of NABI and the Centre of Innovative and Applied Bioprocessing (CIAB), is poised to transform India's agricultural landscape by uniting biotechnology and bioprocessing expertise.
- It aims to streamline the journey from research to commercialisation, facilitating pilot-scale production and delivering innovative agri-tech solutions to the market.

#### **PM Narendra Modi to launch National Learning Week Initiative**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the 'Karmayogi Saptah' - National Learning Week on October 19, 2024, at Dr. Ambedkar International Centre, New Delhi.
- Mission Karmayogi was launched in September 2020 and it has made substantial progress since then. It envisions a future-ready civil service rooted in Indian ethos, with a global perspective.
- The National Learning Week (NLW) will be the largest event of its kind providing fresh impetus towards individual and organisational capacity development for Civil Servants.
- This initiative will stimulate a renewed commitment to learning and development. NLW aims to create a "One

Government" message, align everyone with national goals and promote lifelong learning.

#### **Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurates Saharanpur, Rewa and Ambikapur airports under RCS-UDAN**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated three airports, developed under the Regional Connectivity Scheme (RCS) – UDAN (Ude Desh Ka Aam Nagrik), from Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh.
- These airports are Rewa in Madhya Pradesh, Ambikapur in Chhattisgarh and Saharanpur in UP. Flights under RCS-UDAN will begin from these airports shortly.
- The RCS- UDAN, a government-backed initiative to improve infrastructure and connectivity in India, especially in remote and underserved regions, completes seven years. It is a vital component of India's National Civil Aviation Policy (NCAP) 2016, launched by the Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) on October 21, 2016, with a 10-year vision.

#### **Namo Bharat Diwas celebrated**

- The Namoo Bharat Diwas, the first anniversary of the operations of Namoo Bharat Trains was celebrated in New Delhi on October 21, 2024.
- The National Capital Region Transport Corporation (NCRTC) organised a special evening event to commemorate this significant milestone in India's transportation history.
- The Namoo Bharat Trains represent India's first Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS), with the first 17-kilometre priority section between Sahibabad and Duhai Depot inaugurated by the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi, on October 20, 2023.
- The RRTS distinguishes itself from other transport systems by providing high-speed, efficient connectivity between suburban areas, significantly reducing commute times over longer distances and reinforcing India's commitment to developing sustainable urban transport solutions.

#### **PM Modi attends 16th BRICS Summit in Kazan, Russia**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi left for Kazan in Russia to attend the 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit. The summit is the first after the grouping's expansion last year.
- For India, it is especially significant as Prime Minister Narendra Modi could meet China's President Xi Jinping here, soon after the two countries agreed on a disengagement along the LAC (Line of Actual Control).



### PM Modi gifts BRICS leaders Indian handicrafts and paintings

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi showcased Maharashtra's handcrafted works to the leaders of Iran and Uzbekistan and Jharkhand's art to Russian President Vladimir Putin during the recent BRICS Summit.
- Putin was presented with a Sohrai painting from Jharkhand's Hazaribagh district. Sohrai Paintings are recognised as an ODOP (One District One Product) item. They are known for their use of natural pigments and simple tools.
- PM Modi gifted a Mother of Pearl (MOP) sea shell vase to Iran's President Masoud Pezeshkian. The vase, sourced from the coastal artisans of Maharashtra, stands as a testament to the state's skilled craftsmanship and natural beauty.
- PM Modi presented a traditional Warli painting to Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev. Warli Painting is a revered art form from Maharashtra's Warli tribe. The painting traces back nearly 5,000 years and is celebrated worldwide for its distinct style and minimalistic beauty. Artists often use brushes made from twigs, rice straws or even fingers to create intricate designs. They are known for their simple yet expressive storytelling. The depiction of animals, birds and nature is a reflection of the agrarian lifestyle and the reverence for wildlife in tribal culture.

### PM Modi launched infra projects, Agri schemes in Maharashtra

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated infrastructure projects worth ₹32,180 crore in Maharashtra.
- The projects include the first phase of Mumbai Metro Line 3 Aqua Line, which is built at a cost of ₹14,120

crores. The overall cost of the project is said to be ₹37,276 crores. The total length of the project is 29 km, which will have 20 elevated and two underground stations.

- He also launched the Elevated Eastern Freeway Extension, a road infrastructure project in Thane, worth ₹3,310 crores.
- He laid the foundation stone of Phase 1 of the Navi Mumbai Airport Influence Notified Area project worth around ₹2,550 crores.
- He launched several initiatives related to the agricultural and animal husbandry sectors worth about ₹23,300 crores in the Washim district in Vidarbha.
- He disbursed the eighth instalment of the PM-KISAN Samman Nidhi worth about ₹20,000 crore to around 9.4 crore farmers.

### PM Modi inaugurates Indian Institute of Skills (IIS), Mumbai

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Indian Institute of Skills (IIS) in Mumbai to cultivate an industry-ready workforce for Industry 4.0.
- It is equipped with cutting-edge technology and will provide hands-on training across a range of trades including factory automation, digital manufacturing, mechatronics, artificial intelligence, data analytics, and additive manufacturing catering to both the services and manufacturing sectors, as well as other emerging businesses.
- IIS was established through a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model and is a collaboration between the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship, Government of India and Tata IIS.

## GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

### India launches BharatGen project for generative AI in local

- India launched the BharatGen project for generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in local Indian languages. It is the world's first State-funded project of its kind.
- Spearheaded by IIT Bombay under the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems (NM-ICPS), the initiative will create generative AI systems that can generate high-quality text and multimodal content in various Indian languages.

- There will be four thematic hubs (T-Hubs) for Quantum Computing, Quantum Communication, Quantum Sensing and Metrology, and Quantum Materials and Devices, under the National Quantum Mission (NQM). The hubs will be at the forefront of research and innovation, setting the stage for India's leadership in quantum computing, communication, sensing and materials.
- The four T-Hubs have been set up in the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) Bengaluru, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras along with the Centre for

Development of Telematics New Delhi, Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Bombay and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi.

- They comprise 17 Technical Groups across 17 states and two union territories.
- Each T-Hub will operate under the Hub-Spoke-Spike model, supporting a cluster-based network of research projects (Spokes) and individual research groups (Spikes) alongside these central hubs to enhance coordination among research institutions, enabling them to pool resources and expertise.

#### **Union Cabinet grants Classical Language status to Five Languages**

- The Union Cabinet has approved the conferring of the status of classical language to five Indian Languages. These are Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, Bengali and Marathi.
- The inclusion of languages such as Classical languages will create significant employment opportunities, particularly in academic and research fields.
- Additionally, the preservation, documentation, and digitization of ancient texts of these languages will generate jobs in archiving, translation, publishing, and digital media.
- A new category of languages known as “Classical Languages” was created on October 12, 2004. Tamil was the first language to be conferred the status of a classical language.

#### **Union Cabinet approves Two Umbrella Schemes for Agriculture**

- The Union Cabinet approved the proposal of the Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) for rationalisation of all Centrally Sponsored Schemes (CSS) operating under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer into two-umbrella Schemes viz. Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY), a cafeteria scheme and Krishonnati Yojana (KY).
- PM-RKVY will promote sustainable agriculture, while KY will address food security & agricultural self-sufficiency.
- The PM Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (PM-RKVY) and Krishonnati Yojana (KY) will be implemented with a total proposed expenditure of ₹1,01,321.61 crore. These Schemes are implemented through the State Governments.

#### **Key Points**

Union Agriculture Minister — Shivraj Singh Chouhan

#### **Cabinet approves ₹2,642 Crore Ganga Rail-Cum-Road Bridge**

- The Union Cabinet has approved the construction of a new rail-cum-road bridge over the Ganga River in Varanasi as part of the Varanasi-Pt. Deen Dayal Upadhyaya multitracking project.
- The project, with an estimated cost of ₹2,642 crore, is expected to take around four years to complete and will significantly enhance connectivity in the region.
- The new bridge will replace the 137-year-old Malviya Bridge, which currently has two rail lines and two road lanes.
- The new bridge, designed to last for 150 years and span over one kilometre, will connect the districts of Varanasi and Chandauli.

#### **Centre launches system to block international spoofed calls, curb fraud**

- The government introduced a sophisticated tracking system- ‘International incoming spoofed calls prevention system’ to track and block international calls disguised as Indian numbers.
- Cybercriminals have developed a tactic that allows international calls to appear as local Indian numbers (e.g., +91-xxxxxxx). By altering the Calling Line Identity (CLI), these calls are made to look like they are from within India, even though they originate from abroad. These spoofed calls have been used for financial scams, impersonating government officials, and creating panic.
- The system works by identifying and blocking these fraudulent numbers before scammers can reach their targets.
- According to government reports, the system started operation on October 17 and it identified and blocked around 13.5 million spoofed calls within the first 24 hours, which accounts for 90% of all incoming international calls.

#### **Key Points**

Union Minister for — Jyotiraditya Scindia  
Communications

#### **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment launch PM-YASASVI scheme**

- The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment has implemented the PM Young Achievers Scholarship Award Scheme for Vibrant India (PM-YASASVI).



- This comprehensive umbrella scheme is aimed at uplifting students from Other Backward Classes (OBC), Economically Backward Classes (EBC) and Denotified Tribes (DNT) by providing them with access to quality education during their formative years.
- It consolidates and enhances several earlier initiatives.

### 30% of rural land parcels have Bhu-Aadhaar

- Around 30% of the rural land parcels in the country have been given a Unique Land Parcel Identification Number (ULPIN) or Bhu-Aadhaar—an initiative to give a 14-digit alpha-numeric identity to each land parcel.
- ULPIN was launched in 2021 as part of the Centre's Digital India Land Records Modernisation Programme (DILRMP) to streamline and bring uniformity to the process adopted by states in assigning unique identification numbers to land parcels.
- It was earlier known as the National Land Record Modernisation Programme and was approved by the cabinet in August 2008. It was revamped as DILRMP and implemented as a central sector scheme from April 1, 2016.

### Center launches CRS Mobile App for Births and Deaths

- Union Home Minister Amit Shah launched a new mobile application, the Civil Registration System (CRS), for birth and death registration.

- It was developed by the Registrar General and Census Commissioner of India and the app is expected to reduce the time required for these registrations seamlessly.
- It will streamline the process of birth and death registration, allowing citizens to register anytime, anywhere, and in their state's official language.
- The CRS mobile app enables digital certificate delivery and online digitisation of legacy records and assures that states will not be burdened with additional financial burdens for the app's operation and maintenance.

### Aandhi Village in Rajasthan marches towards zero-waste through green technology interventions

- Aandhi, a tiny village in the district of Jaipur, is transforming itself into a zero-waste model with the help of green technology interventions. Food waste, agro waste, wastewater and hospital waste coming from various village sources including institutions like schools, agricultural fields, and community health centres could now be converted to resources with the help of a package of technology interventions that have been installed in the village.
- The package of technology interventions consisting of an Organic Waste Bio-Methanation Plant, verifiltration technology, Constructed Wetlands and resource recovery centre, stands as a unique and socially relevant initiative, creating a zero-waste model through the integration of innovative technologies.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### Taiwan receives the First Shipment of Harpoon Missile Systems

- Taiwan has received the first batch of Harpoon missile systems from the US.
- This acquisition is part of a larger deal approved by the U.S. in 2020. It includes 400 RTM-84L-4 Harpoon Block II missiles, four manoeuvrable versions of the missile, 100 launcher transporter units, and 25 radar trucks.
- The first phase of deliveries, set to conclude by 2026, is expected to deliver 128 missiles, while the second and final phase is anticipated by the end of 2028.

### Taiwan plans to launch the Global Elite Card

- Taiwan plans to launch a new card that enables highly skilled foreign professionals to apply for permanent residence within one year.

- The new visa will allow foreign professionals with an annual salary of more than TWD 6 million (US\$187,612) to apply for foreign residence within one year. It will also enable them to get work permits for their spouses and permit unrestricted stays for dependent relatives.
- Currently, the employment gold card serves as an open work permit, allowing eligible foreign professionals — either those who earned more than TWD 160,000 (USD 5,003) per month in their previous job or who have a proven track record in designated fields — to stay and work in Taiwan for up to three years.

### China introduces guidelines to combat Obesity Crisis

- China's National Health Commission (NHC) and 15 other government departments launched public awareness efforts to fight obesity.

- These guidelines standardise obesity diagnosis and treatment.
- The campaign, set to last three years, is built around eight slogans: “lifelong commitment, active monitoring, a balanced diet, physical activity, good sleep, reasonable targets and family action.”

#### **COP16: Landmark biodiversity agreements adopted**

- The world’s largest biodiversity summit, known as COP16, concluded in Colombia. It was organised under the theme ‘Peace with Nature’.
- This was the first biodiversity COP since the adoption of the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework at COP15 in December 2022 in Montreal, Canada.
- There were several landmark decisions, including first-ever agreements on nature’s genetic data and on recognising people of African descent and Indigenous Peoples as key stewards in conservation efforts. It was also agreed to create a subsidiary body to represent the interests of Indigenous Peoples under Article 8J of the Convention.
- COP16 delegates decided to create a global fund for collecting economic resources from the use of digital sequence information — genetic codes coming from organism samples that are often shared digitally — and its fair, equitable distribution.

#### **NASA’s Europa Clipper Mission**

- The NASA Europa Clipper mission was launched on October 14, 2024, aboard a SpaceX Falcon Heavy rocket from Kennedy Space Center, Florida. It is expected to reach Jupiter by April 2030.
- The spacecraft will perform approximately 50 close flybys of Europa while in orbit around Jupiter.
- The spacecraft’s objective is to reveal new details about Europa, a moon thought to contain liquid water. NASA is collaborating with the European Space Agency’s JUICE (Jupiter Icy Moons Explorer) mission, which also aims to explore Europa.

##### **Key Points**

NASA’s Headquarters	—	Washington DC, US
Administrator	—	Bill Nelson

#### **European Space Agency (ESA) launches ‘Moonlight’ program**

- Europe has officially launched the Moonlight program, which aims to provide services for the more than 400 moon missions planned by space agencies and private companies over the next two decades.

- Moonlight will be a constellation of five lunar satellites, which together will enable precise, autonomous landings and surface mobility. It will facilitate high-speed communication and data transfer across the roughly 250,000 miles (400,000 kilometres) between Earth and the moon.
- The first step will be launching Lunar Pathfinder, a precursor communications relay satellite manufactured by Surrey Satellite Technology Ltd (SSTL), in 2026.
- Moonlight’s initial services are scheduled to begin by the end of 2028 and the system is to be fully operational by 2030.

##### **Key Points**

ESA’s Headquarters	—	Paris, France
Director General	—	Josef Aschbacher

#### **Google to get electricity from nuclear reactors to power Artificial Intelligence**

- Google has agreed with Kairos Power to utilise small nuclear reactors to power its Artificial Intelligence (AI) operations.
- The partnership aims to bring Kairos Power’s first small modular reactor (SMR) online by 2030, with additional reactors planned through 2035. Collectively, these reactors are expected to generate up to 500 megawatts of power, providing a consistent and carbon-free energy source for Google’s data centres.
- Recently, Microsoft announced plans to utilise energy from the Three Mile Island nuclear facility, while Amazon has invested in a nuclear-powered data centre campus.

##### **Key Points**

Google’s Headquarters	—	California, US
CEO	—	Sundar Pichai

#### **Saudi Arabia begins construction of World’s Largest Building**

- Saudi Arabia has officially commenced construction on The Mukaab, a monumental cube-shaped building that will reach an impressive height of 400 metres in Riyadh.
- The Mukaab is projected to cost around US \$50 billion and will serve as the centrepiece of a new urban district known as New Murabba. This expansive area will feature over 25 million square metres of floor space, including plans for 104,000 homes.

- The development aims to provide a unique blend of retail, corporate, and cultural experiences, making it a hub for business and leisure.

#### **Rome Declaration addresses Water Scarcity in Agriculture**

- Member countries of the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, Heads of Delegations and partners of the Global Framework on Water Scarcity in Agriculture (WASAG) adopted the Rome Declaration on Water Scarcity in Agriculture, aimed at addressing water scarcity, increasingly exacerbated by the climate crisis, particularly in the agriculture sector.
- The WASAG initiative was launched at the United Nations Climate Conference in Marrakesh in 2016 to support countries in addressing water scarcity challenges.
- Through the declaration, the countries committed to mobilising greater political support in terms of policies, legal and institutional frameworks, access to financing, and responsible water governance to address the effects of water scarcity and climate change, including both floods and droughts, on global food security.

#### **Key Points**

FAO's Headquarters — Rome, Italy  
 Director General — Qu Dongyu

#### **Pakistan: Punjab Government to use Artificial rain against Smog**

- Punjab province in Pakistan has planned artificial rains to mitigate the impact of the smog after Lahore faced an alarming Air Quality Index (AQI) of 394.
- It would be the second time that Lahore would carry out cloud seeding for artificial rain. The first time it was done was in December 2023 when cloud seeding was done to combat hazardous levels of smog and the project cost an estimated ₹350 million.

- Lahore was declared the most polluted city in the world with an alarming AQI of 394. The AQI is a measure of the concentration of various pollutants in the air and an AQI above 100 is considered unhealthy and above 150 is "very unhealthy."

#### **Federal Trade Commission (FTC), US releases "click-to-cancel" rule**

- The US Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has adopted a 'click to cancel' rule, which aims to make it easier for people to end subscriptions.
- It will force companies to make subscription sign-ups and cancellations equally straight forward.
- Businesses, including retailers and gyms, will also have to get consent from customers before renewing subscriptions or converting free trials into paid memberships.
- The new rule is due to come into effect in around six months.

#### **US deploys THAAD in Israel**

- The United States has deployed one of its most advanced missile defence systems, the Terminal High Altitude Area Defense (THAAD), along with 100 US troops to Israel.
- The move came in response to a recent barrage of Iranian missile strikes on Israel, retaliating for the assassinations of key Iranian and Hezbollah leaders.
- The THAAD is a state-of-the-art missile defence system designed to counter short, medium and intermediate-range ballistic missile threats.
- It is the only US system capable of intercepting targets inside and outside the atmosphere. THAAD undergoes continuous improvements to enhance its effectiveness against evolving threats.

## **INDIA AND WORLD**

#### **U.S., Japan and South Korea launch Digital Infrastructure Initiative in India**

- U.S., Japan and South Korea joined hands to support digital infrastructure in India focusing on areas like 5G, Open RAN, submarine cables, optical fiber networks, telecom towers, data centres, smart cities, e-commerce, AI, and quantum technology.

- The DiGi Framework creates a streamlined process where the US International Development Finance Corporation (DFC), the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), and the Export-Import Bank of Korea (Korea Eximbank), in partnership with the Indian private sector, can provide support to meet the needs of strategic digital infrastructure deals in India.

### India, Maldives aim for Comprehensive Economic Partnership

- India and Maldives agreed to transform the bilateral relationship into a “Comprehensive Economic and Maritime Security Partnership”.
- As Prime Minister Narendra Modi met President Muizzu in New Delhi, India decided to extend support in the form of INR 30 billion and USD 400 million as part of a bilateral currency swap agreement, instrumental in tackling the ongoing financial challenges faced by the Maldives.
- President Muizzu expressed gratitude for India’s timely financial assistance, including a rollover of \$100 million in T-bills and a new \$400 million bilateral currency swap agreement. These efforts are crucial for addressing the Maldives’ financial challenges.

### India-China sign border deal after Four-Year Negotiations

- India has reached an agreement with China on patrolling along the Line of Actual Control (LAC), a key breakthrough in a four-year-old military standoff.
- The two sides have gone back to the situation that existed on the LAC in 2020, and the disengagement process with China “has been completed”.

### India, Pakistan renew Kartarpur Corridor Agreement

- India and Pakistan extended the agreement on the Sri Kartarpur Sahib Corridor for another five years. The agreement was signed to fulfil the long-standing demand of pilgrims to have easy and smooth access to the gurdwara and to operationalise the corridor in time for the 550<sup>th</sup> birth anniversary of Guru Nanak, the founder of Sikhism and the first of the ten Sikh Gurus.
- In response to continuous requests from pilgrims concerning the removal of the \$20 service charge that Pakistan levies on each pilgrim for every visit, India also once again appealed to Pakistan to waive any fees for the pilgrims.
- The agreement provides for visa-free travel of Indian pilgrims, as well as Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cardholders, from India to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur in Pakistan daily, throughout the year.
- However, all pilgrims travelling to Gurdwara Darbar Sahib Kartarpur are required to return the same day. Under the agreement, there is no restriction on the faith of the pilgrims who travel through the corridor.
- Up to 5,000 pilgrims can visit the gurdwara through the Kartarpur Sahib Corridor each day.

## FINANCE, ECONOMY & BANKING

### BEML secures contract for India’s first Indigenous Bullet Trains

- State-owned BEML has been awarded a contract of ₹867 crores for designing, manufacturing, and commissioning two high-speed train sets, marking the first time that such work will be done indigenously.
- The contract was awarded by Integral Coach Factory (ICF), Chennai. This project marks a significant milestone in India’s high-speed rail journey and will see the first indigenously designed and manufactured train sets with a test speed of 280 kmph.
- The sets will be built at BEML’s Bengaluru rail coach complex and are scheduled for delivery by the end of 2026.

#### Key Points

Headquarters — Bengaluru, Karnataka  
Chairman & MD — Shantanu Roy

### Govt announces extra pension for seniors over 80 years.

- The Department of Pension and Pensioners’ Welfare

(DoPPW) announced that central government pensioners aged 80 and older will qualify for an additional pension called compassionate allowance.

- Additional compassionate allowance shall be payable in the following manner:
  - I. From 80 to 85 years of age: 20% of basic pension/compassionate allowance.
  - II. From 85 to 90 years of age: 30% of basic pension/compassionate allowance.

### IMF maintains India’s GDP Growth at 7% for FY25, 6.5% for FY26

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) kept its growth forecasts for India unchanged at 7% and 6.5% for FY25 and FY26, respectively.
- Earlier this month, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), in its latest monetary policy committee (MPC) review, also kept its growth projection for the current financial year unchanged at 7.2%. It cited robust consumption and investment momentum.



**Key Points**

IMF's Headquarters — Washington DC, US  
 Managing Director — Kristalina Georgieva

**Reliance and Nvidia Partner to build Artificial Intelligence (AI) infrastructure in India**

- Reliance Industries and Nvidia announced a partnership to build large-scale AI infrastructure in India that could accelerate India's artificial intelligence capabilities.
- The partnership will see Reliance deploying Nvidia's latest GB 200 supercomputer technology to build a massive AI infrastructure. The collaboration aims to make AI accessible and affordable to India's 1.4 billion population, following a model similar to what Reliance's Jio did for mobile data.

**Key Points**

Reliance's Chairman — Mukesh Ambani and  
 Nvidia's CEO — Jensen

**IIM Shillong And SIDBI (Small Industries Development Bank of India) collaborate to foster Northeast entrepreneurship**

- IIM Shillong and SIDBI have signed an MoU to promote entrepreneurship in the Northeast.
- The partnership will launch the STEM Programme, providing 18 months of training, mentorship, and incubation support to aspiring entrepreneurs, aiming to foster innovative and sustainable enterprises in the region.

**Key Points**

SIDBI's Headquarters — Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh  
 Chairman & MD — Manoj Mittal

**Adar Poonawalla acquires a 50% stake in Dharma Productions**

- Adar Poonawalla has acquired a 50% stake in Karan Johar's Dharma Productions for 1000 crore, allowing Johar to maintain creative control.
- This investment was done by Poonawalla in his private capacity through Serene Productions after which Dharma Productions will retain the residual stake with Karan Johar continuing to remain Executive Chairman.

**Jio Payments Bank Secures Mutual Funds Distribution From AMFI**

- Jio Payments Bank, a subsidiary of Jio Financial Services, has secured a mutual fund distribution licence from the Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI).

- The Category 1 Execution-only Platform (EOP) licence allows the distribution of the direct plan of mutual fund (MF) schemes. Category 1 EOPs receive transaction charges from fund houses.
- Currently, there are 15 Category 1 EOPs registered with AMFI. The direct plan distribution business is dominated by stock brokers like Groww and Zerodha.
- In August, Jio Financial announced that it has increased its stake in Jio Payments Bank from 78.95% to 82.17% by investing ₹68 crore.
- Separately, Jio Financial Services has also formed a joint venture with United States-based BlackRock to set up a wealth management and broking business.

**SECL becomes the first coal company to open four AMRIT Pharmacies**

- In a significant step towards providing affordable and accessible healthcare, South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL), a Chhattisgarh-based subsidiary of Coal India, inaugurated the country's 216<sup>th</sup> AMRIT (Affordable Medicines and Reliable Implants for Treatment) Pharmacy.
- The AMRIT pharmacies, part of a flagship initiative launched by the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 2015, provide a wide range of generic and life-saving branded drugs, implants, and surgical consumables at highly subsidised rates.
- SECL's initiative will benefit both inpatients and outpatients, including SECL employees, the general public, and especially people from tribal and rural areas within the coal belt.

**Power Finance Corporation secures largest-ever foreign currency term loan of USD 1.265 billion**

- Power Finance Corporation (PFC), a Maharatna company and leading NBFC in the Indian power and infrastructure sector successfully closed the issuance of the largest-ever foreign currency term loan from an Indian PSU amounting to USD 1.265 billion.
- This landmark transaction was executed through a facility agreement with multiple banks based in IFSC GIFT City, Gandhinagar.
- The loan will primarily be deployed towards financing assets other than thermal generation projects, furthering PFC's strong commitment to decarbonization and the transition to green energy.



### Reliance Group partners with Bhutan govt to develop solar, hydropower projects

- Reliance Group announced a strategic partnership with the Bhutan government to develop solar and hydropower projects, making this the largest foreign direct investment by a private company in the renewable energy sector in Bhutan.
- As part of the partnership with Druk Holding and Investments Ltd, the commercial and investment arm of the government of Bhutan, the Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group will jointly develop 500 MW of solar and 770 MW of hydropower projects in the country.
- In addition to the solar project, Reliance Power Ltd and Druk Holding will jointly develop the 770-MW Chamkharchhu-1 Hydro Project, which has been classified as a run-of-the-river project under a concession model in accordance with Bhutan government policy.

### DBS Bank India recognised as one of the 'Best Companies for Women in India'

- DBS Bank India has been recognised as one of the Best Companies for Women in India (BCWI) 2024 for the ninth successive year.
- The bank has also been featured in the "Best Companies - Hall of Fame", an accolade reserved for organisations that have consistently championed gender equity and diversity.

### Slice completes merger with North East Small Finance Bank

- Fintech firm Slice completed its merger with North East Small Finance Bank, consolidating the operations, assets, and brand identities of the financial entities into a single institution.
- The merged entity aims to deepen the bank's presence in the country's northeastern region. The entity will introduce banking products and services, including savings accounts, fixed deposits, and credit products.
- Earlier, Slice had acquired a 5% stake in North East Small Finance Bank for \$3.4 million in September 2022.

#### Key Points

Satish Kumar Kalra — Managing Director (MD) and CEO of North East Small Finance Bank

### Paytm receives NPCI approval to onboard new UPI users after RBI restrictions

- One97 Communication Ltd. (OCL), the company that operates the brand Paytm, received a nod from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to onboard new Unified Payments Interface (UPI) users.
- This comes nearly nine months after RBI placed an embargo on OCL to add new customers. The permissions are subject to NPCI's procedural guidelines and agreements with Payment Service Provider (PSP) banks.
- Paytm has a 7% share in the UPI ecosystem dominated by players such as PhonePe and Google Pay, who cumulatively have a share of 85%.

#### Key Points

NPCI Chief — Dilip Asbe  
Paytm Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) — Vijay Shekhar Sharma

### HAL becomes the fourteenth Maharatna CPSE in India

- Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) will be the fourteenth 'Maharatna' company among Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSE).
- This status will give more autonomy to the company in terms of financial and strategic matters.
- HAL is a Department of Defence Production (DoDP) CPSE with an annual turnover of ₹28162 crore and a net profit of ₹7595 crore for FY 2023-24.
- Government has laid down six key parameters for a CPSE to be considered for the granting of Maharatna status.
- These include the CPSE already having a 'Navratna' status. It needs to be listed on the Indian stock exchange, with a minimum prescribed public shareholding under SEBI regulations. It should have an average annual turnover of more than ₹20,000 crore, an average annual net worth of more than ₹10,000 crore and an average annual net profit of more than ₹2,500 crore during the last three years. The CPSE should have a significant global presence or international operations.

#### Key Points

Headquarters — Bengaluru, Karnataka  
Chairman & MD — DK Sunil

### India and South Korea to join the FTSE Russell EMGB index

- Global index provider FTSE Russell said it would include India's sovereign bonds in its Emerging Markets Government Bond Index (EMGBI) starting September 2025, following index inclusion by JP Morgan and Bloomberg Index Services, potentially drawing billions of dollars into local bonds.
- The London-based index provider also added South Korean government bonds to the FTSE World Government Bond Index (WGBI) after two years on its watch list.
- South Korean government bonds would represent 2.22% of the index on a market value-weighted basis and would be included in the FTSE's WGBI beginning in November 2025.

### IFC partners with Axis Bank for India's first Blue Loan of \$500 Million

- The International Finance Corporation (IFC) is lending \$500 million to Axis Bank to develop blue finance and green projects in India.
- This partnership aims to enhance water and energy efficiency and support climate-friendly investments in sectors like wastewater management and green buildings.
- The collaboration marks the IFC's first-ever blue investment in India and the country's inaugural blue loan issued by a financial institution.
- Blue finance, an emerging area in climate finance, targets investments in water management, marine ecosystem restoration, sustainable shipping and renewable energy.

#### Key Points

IFC's Headquarters	—	Washington DC, US
Managing Director	—	Makhtar Sop Diop
Axis Bank Headquarters	—	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Axis Bank MD & CEO	—	Amitabh Chaudhry

### HDFC Bank divests 100% Stake in HDFC Edu for ₹192 Crore to Vama Sundari Investments for ₹192 crore

- India's largest private sector lender HDFC Bank's board has approved a 100% stake sale of subsidiary HDFC Education to Vama Sundari Investments in an all-cash deal amounting to ₹192 crore.
- Vama Sundari Investments (Delhi) Private Limited is a related party of HDFC Asset Management Company Ltd - a subsidiary of HDFC Bank.

- The divestment will occur in two phases: the sale of 91% of HDFC Edu's shares is expected by October 31, 2024, while the remaining 9% must be sold by June 30, 2025. This move comes in response to a directive from RBI mandating that HDFC Bank fully divest from HDFC Edu within two years of the merger.

#### Key Points

HDFC Bank's Headquarters	—	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Chairperson	—	Atanu Chakraborty

### Government notifies reconstitution of Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934

- The section 45ZB of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 gives the power to the Central Government to appoint three members of the MPC and under this power, the central government appointed three new members of MPC on October 1, 2024.
- In all, the MPC consists of six members, three of whom are from the central bank. The other three are external members, appointed by the Union government for four years.
- The new external members are Ram Singh, director, Delhi School of Economics, University of Delhi; Saugata Bhattacharya, economist; and Nagesh Kumar, director and chief executive, Institute for Studies in Industrial Development, New Delhi.
- The MPC was set up in June 2016 to periodically review monetary policy and broad-base monetary policy decisions by including external voices.

#### Key Points

RBI's Headquarters	—	Mumbai, Maharashtra
RBI's Governor	—	Shaktikanta Das

### Tata-Airbus plant: PM Modi, Spanish PM Pedro Sanchez to inaugurate facility for C-295 aircraft manufacturing

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi and Spanish Prime Minister Pedro Sanchez jointly inaugurated the Tata Aircraft Complex in Vadodara which will manufacture C-295 aircraft.
- This would be the first private sector final assembly line for military aircraft in India.
- As part of the agreement, a total of 56 aircraft will be built at the Vadodara facility, while Airbus will deliver 16 aircraft directly. Tata Advanced Systems will make 40 aircraft in India.

- The first private sector final assembly line for military planes in the country will involve the full development of a complete ecosystem, from manufacturing and assembling to testing, delivering, and maintaining the complete cycle of the aircraft.
- Bharat Electronics and Bharat Dynamics, as well as private micro, small and medium enterprises will contribute to this programme.

#### **Bank of Baroda to sell Oman operations to Bank Dhofar**

- State-owned Bank of Baroda (BoB) has approved the sale of its Oman operations to Bank Dhofar as part of the rationalisation of foreign operations.

- The total business of BoB's operation in the country was 113.35 million Omani Rial while the net worth stood at 25.54 million Omani Rial.
- BoB has been rationalising its foreign operations based on a comprehensive evaluation framework. As part of this exercise, the wholesale branch in China was closed during 2020-21, and the entire stake in the wholly-owned overseas subsidiary at Trinidad and Tobago viz. Bank of Baroda (Trinidad and Tobago) Ltd was divested by way of sale to Ansa Merchant Bank Ltd.

#### **Key Points**

- |                    |   |                   |
|--------------------|---|-------------------|
| BOB's Headquarters | — | Vadodara, Gujarat |
| Chairman           | — | Hasmukh Adhia     |

## DEFENCE NEWS

#### **DRDO successfully conducts flight tests of Advanced VSHORADS System**

- Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted three flight tests of the fourth Generation, technically advanced miniaturised Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) at the Pokhran Field Firing Ranges in Rajasthan.
- The tests were carried out against high-speed targets, demonstrating very critical parameters of maximum range and maximum altitude interception.
- These development trials showcased the repeatability of the hit-to-kill capability of the weapon system in various target engagement scenarios covering approaching, receding and crossing modes.
- The development of VSHORADS missiles has been completed and two production agencies have been engaged in the Development cum Production Partner (DcPP) mode.
- VSHORADS is a Man Portable Air Defence System designed and developed indigenously by Research Centre Imarat (RCI) in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and DcPPs.

#### **Key Points**

- |              |   |                 |
|--------------|---|-----------------|
| Headquarters | — | New Delhi       |
| Chairman     | — | Sameer V. Kamat |

#### **IAF successfully lands C-295 at Navi Mumbai airport**

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) successfully conducted a landing trial with its C-295 aircraft, which touched down on the runway of the Navi Mumbai International Airport.

- The first phase of the airport, jointly built by Adani Airport and CIDC, is expected to be completed by March 2025.
- The aircraft touched down on the newly completed 3,700-metre runway, marking a crucial step in the airport's development.
- The trial was accompanied by a fly-past of a Sukhoi-30 fighter jet.

#### **Key Points**

- |                              |   |                                    |
|------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|
| Chief of Air Staff (CoAS)    | — | Air Chief Marshal Amar Preet Singh |
| Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) | — | General Anil Chauhan               |

#### **SAMARTHAK- The First Ship of Multi-Purpose Vessel**

- The first ship of the two Multi-Purpose Vessel projects being built by L&T, Shipyard for the Indian Navy was launched at L&T, Kattupalli.
- The ship has been named 'Samarthak' which means 'Supporter' and is synonymous with the multi-dimensional role envisaged from the platform.
- The contract for building two Multi-Purpose Vessels was signed between the Ministry of Defence and L&T Shipyard.
- These Multi-Purpose Vessels will be capable of towing ships, launching and recovering various targets, operating uncrewed autonomous vehicles and acting as a trial platform for various indigenous weapons and sensors under development.
- The Multi-Purpose Vessels can achieve a maximum speed of 15 knots and are 106 m long and 16.8 wide.

**Key Points**

Chief of Naval Staff — Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi

**Indian army conducts the Swavlamban Shakti exercise**

- The Indian Army concluded its integrated fire and manoeuvre training Exercise Swavlamban Shakti at the Babina Field Firing Range.
- The exercise showcased the Army's integration of indigenous technologies, aligning with the govt's Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative.
- This large-scale manoeuvre and live-fire exercise focused on testing New Technology Equipment (NTEs) from the Indian defence industry, to shape future combat strategies.

**Key Points**

Chief of Army Staff — General Upendra Dwivedi

**India launches the fourth nuclear submarine, S4**

- India launched its fourth nuclear-powered Ballistic Missile (SSBN) submarine at Ship Building Center (SBC) in Visakhapatnam to strengthen its nuclear deterrence against its adversaries.
- While India's second SSBN INS Arighaat was commissioned by Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on August 29, 2024, the third SSBN INS Aridhaman will be commissioned next year.
- The fourth SSBN, codenamed S4 has nearly 75% indigenous content and is equipped only with 3,500 km range K-4 nuclear ballistic missiles, which can be fired through vertical launching systems.
- While the first of its class INS Arihant carries 750 km range K-15 nuclear missiles, its successors are all upgrades of the previous ones and carry only K-4 ballistic missiles.
- Both INS Arihant and INS Arighaat are already on deep-sea patrols, and a nuclear-powered attack submarine of the Russian Akula class is set to join the force on lease in 2028. The next class of Indian SSBNs will be

double the 6,000-ton displacement of the Arihant class and will carry nuclear missiles with a range of 5,000 kilometres and beyond.

**Key Points**

Union Defence Minister — Rajnath Singh

**Indian Navy launches 'Abhay' anti-submarine warfare ship**

- The Indian Navy has marked a significant milestone with the launch of 'Abhay,' the seventh Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC) being constructed by Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE) at L&T's Kattupalli facility.
- The Arnala-class vessels are designed to replace the existing Abhay-class ASW corvettes, specifically for anti-submarine operations in coastal waters, Low-Intensity Maritime Operations (LIMO), and mine-laying operations.
- Each ship measures approximately 77 meters in length, capable of reaching speeds up to 25 knots and covering an endurance of 1,800 nautical miles.

**U.S., France, Armenia emerge as India's top three defence export customers**

- The United States (US), France, and Armenia have emerged as the top three destinations for Indian defence exports, with Armenia in particular being the biggest client of 'finished' Indian weapons and equipment like 155mm artillery guns and the Akash air defence missile and Pinaka multi-launch rocket systems.
- India's defence exports have touched a record ₹ 21,083 crore (approximately \$2.63 billion) in the financial year 2023-24 (FY24), amounting to a growth of 32.5% over the previous financial year's figure of ₹15,920 crore.
- This figure indicates that Indian defence exports have grown by 31 times in the past 10 years when compared to FY14.

**Joint Exercises**

S.No.	Name of the Exercise	Countries Involved	Highlights
1.	KAZIND (Joint Military exercise)	India and Kazakhstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Held at Surya Foreign Training Node, Auli, Uttarakhand.</li> <li>• Enhance the joint military capabilities of both sides to undertake counter-terrorism operations in a sub-conventional scenario under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.</li> </ul>

2	Naseem-Al-Bahr (Bilateral Naval exercise)	Indo-Oman	Conducted in two phases: with the harbour phase followed by the sea phase in Goa.
3	Joint Military Training (JMT)	India- Singapore	Conducted at Air Force Station Kalaikunda, West Bengal.
4	SIMBEX (Singapore India Maritime Bilateral Exercise)	India- Singapore	Conducted in two phases- the Harbour Phase at Visakhapatnam and the Sea Phase in the Bay of Bengal.

## APPOINTMENTS

Name	Designation
MV Shreyams Kumar	President of Indian Newspaper Society
Sanjeev Kumar Singla	Ambassador of India to France
Sharad Kumar	Chief, Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU), Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)
Aviral Jain	Executive Director, RBI
Ajit Vinayak Gupte	Ambassador of India to Germany
Manish Tiwari	Managing Director of Nestlé India Limited
Air Marshal SP Dharkar	Vice Chief of the Air Staff
L Satya Srinivas	CEO of the Government e-Marketplace (GeM)
Manoj Kumar Dubey	Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC)
Praveen Vashista	Special Secretary (Internal Security) in the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)
Paramesh Sivamani	26 <sup>th</sup> Director General of the Indian Coast Guard
Aishath Azeema	Ambassador of India to Maldives
Amit Kumar	Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) of AI Assets Holding Limited (AIAHL) by the Public Enterprise Selection Board (PESB)
Sandip Goenka	CEO of ACKO Life
Akash Tripathi	Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD/CEO) of Digital India Corporation (DIC) and President/Chief Executive Officer (P&CEO) of the National e-Governance Division (NeGD).
Vijaya Kishore Rahatkar	Chairperson of the National Commission for Women (NCW)
Abhyuday Jindal	President of the Indian Chamber of Commerce
Prabhakar Raghavan	Chief Technologist, Google
Vikram Dev Dutt	Coal secretary
Deepak Agarwal	Managing Director (MD) of the National Agriculture Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED)
Pranav Chawda	Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of JP Morgan Chase India
Amitabh Chaudhry	MD and CEO of Axis Bank
Ajay Kumar Singh	Director General of Police (DGP) for Jharkhand
Nayab Singh Saini	Chief Minister of Haryana



Sanjiv Khanna	51 <sup>st</sup> Chief Justice of India (CJI)
Partha Pratim Sengupta	MD & CEO of Bandhan Bank
Noel Tata	Chairman of TATA trust
Omar Abdullah	Chief Minister of Jammu & Kashmir
Dr. Himanshu Pathak	Director General of International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT)
Professor Shubha Tole	President-elect of the International Brain Research Organisation (IBRO)
Shigeru Ishiba	Prime Minister of Japan
Luong Cuong	New President of Vietnam
Lt. Gen. Muhammad Asim Malik	Director General of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI)
Sumathi Dharmawardena P.C	New independent chair of the ICC's Anti-Corruption Unit (ACU)

### BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Name of the Book	Author
War	Bob Woodward
Mountain Mammals of the World	M.K. Ranjitsinh

### OBITUARIES (NATIONAL)

Name	Occupation
Mohanraj	Veteran Malayalam actor
Dr. P. Venugopal	Doctor (Conducted India's first heart transplant)
Indranand Singh Jha	Radio presenter and compere
KS Puttaswamy	Judge
Vasant Anant Gadgil	Sanskrit Scholar and founder of Sharda Gyan Peetham
Atul Parchure	Actor
Rohini Godbole	Esteemed physicist

### OBITUARIES (INTERNATIONAL)

Name	Occupation
Ron Ely	Actor

### DAYS AND THEMES

Date	Day	Theme
October 1	International Day of Older Persons	Ageing with Dignity: The Importance of Strengthening Care and Support Systems for Older Persons Worldwide
October 1	International Coffee Day	

October 1	World Vegetarian Day	
October 2	Gandhi Jayanti	
October 2	International Day of Non-Violence	Fostering Global Peace through Cultural and Educational Exchanges
October 2	Lal Bahadur Shastri Jayanti	
October 4	World Animal Welfare Day	The world is their home too
October 4-10	World Space Week	Space & Climate Change
October 5	World Teacher's Day	Valuing teacher voices: towards a new social contract for education
October 6	World Cerebral Palsy Day	Uniquely CP
October 6	World Smile Day	Do an act of kindness. Help one person smile
October 7	World Cotton Day	Cotton for Good
October 7 (First Monday of October)	World Habitat Day	Engaging youth to create a better urban future
October 8	Indian Air Force Day	Bhartiya Vayu Sena: Saksham, Sashakt, Atmanirbhar
October 9	World Postal Day	150 years of enabling communication and empowering peoples across nations
October 9	Indian Foreign Service Day	
October 10	World Mental Health Day	Mental Health at Work
October 10 (Second Thursday of every October)	World Sight Day	Children love your eyes
October 11	International Day of the Girl Child	Girls' vision for the future
October 12	World Migratory Bird Day	Protect Insects, Protect Birds
October 12	World Arthritis Day (WAD)	Informed Choices, Better Outcomes
October 13	International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction	Empowering the next generation for a resilient future
October 14	World Standard Day	
October 15	International Day of Rural Women	Rural Women Sustaining Nature for Our Collective Future
October 15	Global Handwashing Day	Why are clean hands still important?
October 16	World Food Day	
October 16	World Anesthesia Day	Workforce Well Being
October 17	International Day for Eradication of Poverty	Ending Social and Institutional Maltreatment Acting together for just, peaceful and inclusive societies
October 20	National Solidarity Day	
October 20	World Osteoporosis Day	Say no to fragile bones

October 21	World Iodine Deficiency Day/ Global Iodine Deficiency Disorders Prevention Day	
October 22	International Stuttering Awareness Day	The Power of Listening
October 24	United Nations Day	
October 24	World Development Information Day	
October 24	World Polio Day	
October 24—31, 2024	Global Media and Information Literacy Week	The New Digital Frontiers of Information: Media and Information Literacy for Public Interest Information
October 31	World Cities Day	Youth Leading Climate and Local Action for Cities
October 31	National Unity Day (India) or Rashtriya Ekta Diwas	

## REPORTS, RANKINGS AND INDEX

### Two billion women without access to social protection

- The UN Women released a report highlighting the widening gender gap in social protection.
- The report reveals that an alarming two billion women and girls are without access to any form of social protection.
- Despite some progress since 2015, gender disparities in social protection coverage have widened in most developing regions, suggesting that recent gains have disproportionately benefitted men. This is putting at risk progress towards Sustainable Development Goal 5 (SDG 5).
- Women aged 25 to 34 are 25% more likely than men in the same age group to live in extreme poverty. Globally, over 63% of women still give birth without access to maternity benefits, with the figure reaching 94% in sub-Saharan Africa.

### India Ranks 105<sup>th</sup> in Global Hunger Index 2024

- India has been ranked 105<sup>th</sup> out of 127 countries in the Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2024, placing it in the “serious” category for hunger levels.
- India has a GHI score of 27.3. 13.7% of India’s population is undernourished, 35.5% of children under five are stunted, 18.7% suffer from wasting, and 2.9% of children die before their fifth birthday.
- The GHI, a tool used to measure and track hunger globally, is based on indicators like undernourishment,

child stunting, child wasting, and child mortality.

- The index is published by Concern Worldwide, an Irish humanitarian organisation and Welthungerhilfe, a German aid agency.

### Cancer Cases projected to Surge in India by 2045

- Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)-National Centre for Disease Informatics and Research conducted a study that reveals cancer cases and deaths are likely to surge between 2022 and 2045, in India.
- The study conducted on BRICS countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) observed the cancer cases, deaths and quality of life and found that India and South Africa showed similar tendencies for the rise in cancer cases.
- India has witnessed a rapid surge in cancer cases, especially mouth cancers. Men are mostly diagnosed with lip and mouth cancer while women with breast cancer, the latest study revealed.
- The highest cancer death rates for both men and women are recorded in South Africa while Russia tops the chart for cancer-related deaths among women and South Africa again led the most deaths due to cancer among women.
- Among BRICS countries except India, lung cancer is the top cause of cancer-related deaths. While in India, breast cancer was the main reason for the highest number of cancer-related deaths.

- The impact of cancers, especially in terms of life years lost, was mostly due to lung-related cancers, such as cancers of the trachea and bronchus, across the countries.

#### **India ranks 176<sup>th</sup> in the Global Nature Conservation Index (NCI) 2024**

- India ranks 176 position with a score of 45.5 out of 100 on the Global Nature Conservation Index, 2024.
- It is the first-ever Nature Conservation Index (NCI) and evaluates conservation efforts using four markers — land management, threats to biodiversity, capacity and governance, and future trends.
- The NCI is developed by Goldman Sonnenfeld School of Sustainability and Climate Change at Ben-Gurion University of the Negev and BioDB.com, a non-profit website to maintain biodiversity data.
- The NCI is a data-driven analysis assessing each country's progress in balancing conservation and development, aimed at helping governments, researchers and organisations identify concerns and enhance conservation policies for long-term biodiversity protection.

#### **Hong Kong regains the title of the World's Freest Economy**

- According to the Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World report, Hong Kong regained the title of the world's freest economy with a score of 8.58.

- It was followed by Singapore which has a score of 8.55. Switzerland was in the third position.
- Venezuela was placed at 165 (last) position with a score of 3.02.
- Globally, economic freedom has declined for a third consecutive year, following more than a decade of progress, according to the institute, which has been publishing the rankings since 1970.

#### **Rule of Law Index Ranking 2024- India ranked at 79**

- India was ranked 79 out of 142 countries in the Rule of Law Index 2024, released by the World Justice Project (WJP), a Washington D.C. based think tank.
- India performed tolerably on governance indicators i.e. constraints on government powers (60/142) and open government (44/142). The governance ranks showed India's push for better governance frameworks and also the myriad lapses, lack of coordination and intentionality in the efforts.
- Globally, Denmark, Norway, Finland, Sweden and Germany were the top five countries.
- The Rule of Law Index ranks the countries on eight indicators: constraints on government powers, absence of corruption, open government, fundamental rights, order and security, regulatory enforcement, civil Justice and criminal justice.

## EVENTS

#### **Ayush Medical Value Travel Summit 2024**

- The Ayush Medical Value Travel summit was organized by the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India, in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism, the Government of Maharashtra and key partners.
- The theme of the summit was 'Global Synergy in Ayush: Transforming Health and Wellness through Medical Value Travel'.
- It aimed to strengthen India's position in Medical Value Travel (MVT) by integrating traditional Indian systems of medicine—Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (Ayush)—with modern healthcare systems.

#### **US-India Leadership Summit 2024**

- The US-India Strategic Partnership Forum (USISPF) hosted its annual India Leadership Summit 2024 in New Delhi to enhance bilateral trade, supply chains,

semiconductor investment, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and next-gen technologies cooperation.

- The summit follows on the heels of Prime Minister Narendra Modi's successful recent visit to the US for the Quad Leaders' Summit and the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA).

#### **PM Modi inaugurated India Mobile Congress 2024 and ITU-WTSA**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the International Telecommunication Union - World Telecommunication Standardization Assembly (WTSA) 2024 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi.
- WTSA is the governing conference for the standardization work of the International Telecommunication Union, the United Nations Agency for Digital Technologies. It is organized every four years and is for the first time that the ITU-WTSA will be hosted in

India and the Asia-Pacific. It is a pivotal global event that will bring together more than 3,000 industry leaders, policy-makers and tech experts from over 190 countries, representing telecom, digital and ICT sectors.

- He also inaugurated the eighth edition of the India Mobile Congress during the programme. India Mobile Congress showcased India's innovation ecosystem, where leading telecom companies and innovators will highlight advancements in Quantum technology and Circular Economy along with a spotlight on 6G, 5G use-case showcases, cloud & edge computing, IoT, semiconductors, cybersecurity, green tech, satcom and electronics manufacturing.

#### 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit

- The 16<sup>th</sup> BRICS Summit was held from October 22 to 24, 2024, in Kazan, Russia. The BRICS leaders had

productive discussions including on strengthening multilateralism, countering terrorism, fostering economic growth, pursuing sustainable development and bringing a spotlight on the concerns of the Global South.

- This summit marked the first gathering after the expansion of the group to include new members: Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the United Arab Emirates, alongside the original five members: Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa.
- Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the same. PM Modi met Chinese President Xi Jinping on the sidelines of the BRICS summit and agreed to work towards a "peaceful and stable" relationship.
- The leaders adopted the 'Kazan Declaration' and the BRICS presidency was passed on to Brazil.

## AWARDS

#### MIDORI Prize 2024

- Vera Voronova from Kazakhstan and Ysabel Agustina Calderón Carlos from Peru will be awarded the MIDORI Prize for Biodiversity 2024.
- They have been recognised for their outstanding contributions to conservation and sustainability.
- Vera Voronova is the executive director of the Association for the Conservation of Biodiversity of Kazakhstan.

- Ysabel Agustina Calderón Carlos is the founder and chief executive of Sumak Kawsay, an environmental business in Peru.
- MIDORI Prize was instituted by AEON Environmental Foundation and the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity. It is given every two years to people who make outstanding contributions to protecting biodiversity at all levels. Each winner receives a cash prize of \$100,000 and a commemorative plaque.

#### Nobel Prize 2024

Name of the winner	Subject	Work
John J. Hopfield (Princeton University, USA) and Geoffrey E. Hinton (University of Toronto, Canada)	Physics	Foundational discoveries and inventions that enable machine learning with artificial neural networks
Victor Ambros and Gary Ruvkun	Medicine	Discovery of microRNA and its role in post-transcriptional gene regulation
David Baker (University of Washington, Seattle, WA, USA)	Chemistry	Recognized for computational protein design
Demis Hassabis (Google DeepMind, London, UK) and John M. Jumper (Google DeepMind, London, UK)	Chemistry	Recognized for protein structure prediction
Han Kang, South Korea (The first Korean writer and the first female Asian writer to be awarded the Nobel Prize in Literature)	Literature	Intense poetic prose that confronts historical traumas and exposes the fragility of human life



Nihon Hidankyo, Japan	Peace	Efforts to achieve a world free of nuclear weapons and to demonstrate through witness testimony that nuclear weapons must never be used again
Daron Acemoglu, Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson	Economics (Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences)	Studies of how institutions are formed and affect prosperity

### 70<sup>th</sup> National Film Awards

- The 70<sup>th</sup> National Film Awards were announced on October 8, 2024, at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi where President Droupadi Murmu presented the awards.
- National Film Awards (NFA) were established in 1954 to promote cinematic excellence in India. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting confers the prestigious National Film Awards along with cinema's highest honour, the Dadasaheb Phalke Award each year. Dadasaheb Phalke is the father of Indian cinema and created the first indigenous film, Raja Harishchandra.
  - I. Dadasaheb Phalke Award- Veteran actor Mithun Chakraborty
  - II. Best Book on Cinema- Kishore Kumar: The Ultimate Biography
  - III. Best Film Critic- Deepak Dua
  - IV. Best Film: Aattam (Malayalam)
  - V. Best Debut Film: Fouja (Haryanvi)
  - VI. Best Film providing wholesome entertainment: Kantara (Kannada)
  - VII. Best Feature Film promoting national, social, and environmental values: Kutch Express (Gujarati)
  - VIII. Best Film in AVGC: Brahmastra Part 1 (Hindi)
  - IX. Best Director: Sooraj Barjatya - Uunchai (Hindi)
  - X. Best Actor in Leading Role: Nithya Menen - Thiruchitrambalam (Tamil), Manasi Parekh - Kutch Express (Gujarati), Rishab Shetty - Kantara (Kannada)
  - XI. Best Actor in Supporting Role: Neena Gupta - Uunchai (Hindi), Pavan Raj Malhotra - Fouja (Gujarati)
  - XII. Best Child Artiste: Sreepath - Malikappuram (Malayalam)
  - XIII. Best Action Direction: Anbariv - KGF Chapter 2 (Kannada)
  - XIV. Best Choreography: Jani Master, Sathish Krishnan - Thiruchitrambalam (Megham Karukatha) (Tamil)
  - XV. Best Lyrics: Naushad Sadar Khan - Fouja (Salaami) (Gujarati)
  - XVI. Best Music Direction: Pritham (songs) - Brahmastra Part 1 (Hindi), AR Rahman (background music) - Ponniiyin Selvan Part 1 (Tamil)
  - XVII. Best Makeup: Somnath Kundu - Aparajito (Bengali)
  - XVIII. Best Costume Design: Niki Joshi - Kutch Express (Gujarati)
  - XIX. Best Production Design: Ananda Addhya - Aparajito (Bengali)
  - XX. Best Editing: Mahesh Bhuvanend - Aattam (Malayalam)
  - XXI. Best Sound Design: Anand Krishnamoorthi - Ponniiyin Selvan Part 1 (Tamil)
  - XXII. Best Screenplay: Anand Ekarshi (screenplay writer) - Aattam (Malayalam), Arpita Mukherjee and Rahul V Chittella (dialogues) - Gulmohar (Hindi)
  - XXIII. Best Cinematography: Ravi Varman - Ponniiyin Selvan Part 1 (Tamil)
  - XXIV. Best Playback Singer: Bombay Jayshree - Saudi Vellakka CC 225/2009 (Chaayum Veyil) (Malayalam), Arijit Singh - Brahmastra Part 1 (Kesariya) (Hindi)
  - XXV. Best Non-Feature Film: Ayena
  - XXVI. Best Documentary: Murmurs of the Jungle

### Ministry of Jal Shakti launches the sixth National Water Awards (NWAs), 2024

- The Department of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation (DoWR, RD & GR), under the Ministry of Jal Shakti announced the 38 winners, including joint winners, for the fifth National Water Awards, 2023, in nine categories- Best State, Best District, Best Village Panchayat, Best Urban Local Body, Best School or College, Best Industry, Best Water User Association, Best Institution (other than school or college), and Best Civil Society.

- In the category of Best State, the first prize has been conferred upon Odisha, with Uttar Pradesh securing the second position and Gujarat and Puducherry jointly securing the third position. Each award winner will be conferred with a citation and a trophy as well as cash prizes in certain categories.
- NWAs focus on the good work and efforts made by individuals and organisations across the country in attaining the government's vision of a 'Jal Samridh Bharat'. The awards are for creating awareness among the people about the importance of water and motivating them to adopt the best water usage practices.

#### **Conservation scientist Bibhab Talukdar receives Harry Messel Award for Conservation**

- Bibhab Kumar Talukdar from Assam has been conferred 'The Harry Messel Award' for Conservation Leadership by the Species Survival Commission (SSC) of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).
- The award has been presented for Talukdar's contribution to species Conservation on the ground and through leadership, as part of the work of the Species Survival Commission.
- He has been associated with IUCN SSC since 1991 and became the Chair of the Asian Rhino Specialist Group in 2008.

#### **Shaktikanta Das receives A+ grade in the central bank report cards 2024**

- RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das received an A+ grade in the Central Bank Report Cards 2024 for the second consecutive year.
- The award was presented by Global Finance in Washington, D.C.
- Grades were assigned on an "A+" to "F" scale, evaluating success in key areas like inflation control, economic growth targets, currency stability, and interest rate management.
- An "A" reflects outstanding performance, while an "F" indicates a clear failure.
- Since 1994, Global Finance has published the Central Bank Report Cards annually, grading central bank governors from nearly 100 key countries, territories, and regions, including the European Union and various central banks in the Caribbean and Africa.

#### **Bhubaneswar wins the 'City with the Best Public Transport System'**

- The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) conferred Bhubaneswar the 'City with Best Public Transport System' award for its Urban mobility services 'Mo Bus' and 'Mo-E Ride'.
- Mo Bus has now become the lifeline for citizens in Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Puri, Rourkela, Berhampur and Sambalpur. The revamped Mo Bus app has significantly enhanced digital ticketing.
- This is the sixth time the Odisha government initiative, managed by the Capital Region Urban Transport (CRUT), has received the Centre's recognition as one of the finest urban mobility.
- Kochi won the city with the Most Sustainable Transport System.
- Srinagar won the city with the Best Non-Motorized Transport System.
- Gandhinagar was awarded the city with the Best Safety and Security System & Record.
- Surat was awarded the city with the Best Intelligent Transport System (ITS).
- Jammu was the city with the Most Innovative Financing Mechanism.
- Bengaluru was the city with the Best Record of Public Involvement in Transport.
- Bengaluru also won the Metro rail with the Best Multimodal Integration.
- Mumbai won the best metro rail with the Best Passenger Services and Satisfaction

#### **2024 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought**

- The 2024 Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought will be awarded to María Corina Machado and President-elect Edmundo González Urrutia.
- The two are being recognised for their efforts to restore democracy and freedom in Venezuela.
- The Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, named after Soviet physicist and dissident Andrei Sakharov, is the European Union's highest human rights honour.
- It was established in 1988 and the prize recognises individuals or organisations that champion human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

#### **Aditi Anand wins prestigious UK illustration award with 'Marigolds'**

- Aditi Anand from Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) in Cambridge, England, received the award at a recent

ceremony for her artwork 'Marigolds', which will be on display at the world-famous Victoria and Albert (V&A) Design Museum in London until September 2025.

- Marigolds is set in India and addresses the theme of child labour and lost childhoods.

#### **ISRO Chief S Somnath receives the prestigious IAF World Space Award for Chandrayaan-3**

- In a momentous recognition of India's achievements in space exploration, Dr. S. Somanath, Secretary of the Department of Space and Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), has been awarded the prestigious International Astronautical Federation (IAF) World Space Award for the remarkable success of the Chandrayaan-3 mission.
- Chandrayaan-3's historic landing near the Moon's South Pole on August 23, 2023, marked India as the first nation to achieve this feat, placing it in an elite group of countries capable of lunar landings.
- The IAF World Space Award recognises outstanding contributions to space science, technology, and

exploration. This honour for Chandrayaan-3 shows the mission's significance in advancing our understanding of the Moon and paving the way for future lunar exploration endeavours.

#### **Sri Sri Ravi Shankar honoured with Fiji's highest Civilian Award**

- The South Pacific Island nation of Fiji has conferred its highest civilian honour upon Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, the global spiritual master and humanitarian leader, for his tireless contribution to the upliftment of the human spirit and connecting diverse communities in peace and harmony.
- Gurudev was given the title of 'Honourary Officer of the Order of Fiji' by the President of the Republic of Fiji, Ratu Wiliame M. Katonivere.
- Fiji has become the sixth country to confer the highest civilian award upon Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, recognising the vast scope of his humanitarian work globally through his 'The Art of Living Foundation'.

## SPORTS NEWS

#### **ICC launched AI tool for Women's T20 World Cup to protect teams from 'toxic content'**

- The ICC has launched a new software as part of a social media moderation programme for the Women's T20 World Cup to help protect the cricket community from "toxic content" to safeguard the mental health of individuals and "ensure a safer, kinder and healthier online community for the sport.
- It engaged GoBubble, a software company from UK, to provide a combination of AI (Artificial Intelligence) and human resources to monitor and moderate comments on the ICC's social media accounts on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube, as well as those of players who have signed up for this.

#### **Kho Kho World Cup scheduled for 2025 in India**

- Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) and the International Kho Kho Federation have announced that the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup will take place in India in 2025.
- The event will witness the participation of 24 countries from six continents and will feature sixteen men's and as many women's teams.
- The Kho Kho World Cup aims to elevate this indigenous Indian sport to an international stage.

#### **SAFF U-17 Championship 2024**

- India won the SAFF Under-17 championship after defeating Bangladesh 2-0 in the 2024 edition's final at the Changlimithang Stadium in Thimphu, Bhutan.

#### **Women's Hockey Asian Championship 2024**

- Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar unveiled the logo and mascot for the Women's Asian Champions Trophy-2024, which will be held in Rajgir, Bihar.
- The mascot, named 'Gudiya', is inspired by the state bird of Bihar, Sparrow. The hockey stick in Gudiya's hand is the symbol of the hockey competition and the goalkeeper's glove in the hand and the defensive posture reflect the strategic qualities of alertness.
- The Women's Asian Champions Trophy-2024 is a joint venture of Hockey India and the Bihar government and will be held at the newly developed Rajgir Hockey Stadium.
- Six countries, including India, China, Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea and Japan, are participating in the championship.

#### **Carlos Alcaraz beats world no.1 Jannik Sinner to claim maiden China Open title**

- Carlos Alcaraz made a stunning comeback to beat Jannik Sinner in the men's singles final at the China Open 2024, the ATP 500 title.

- He registered a 6-7, 6-4, 7-6 win to beat the World No.1 Sinner to clinch his maiden ATP title in Beijing.

#### Asian Table Tennis Championships 2024

- The Asian Table Tennis Championships 2024 were held in Astana, Kazakhstan. India won eight bronze medals at the championship.
- The Indian men's team, Achanta Sharath Kamal, Manav Thakkar, and Harmeet Desai clinched the bronze medal after losing in the semi-finals to Chinese Taipei with a score of 3-0.
- Ayhika and Sutirtha became the first all-Indian women's doubles pair to win a medal at the Asian Championships.
- Manika Batra, Ayhika Mukherjee, and Sutirtha Mukherjee secured the country's first-ever medal in the women's team category since the competition began in 1972, though they eventually lost 1-3 to Japan in the semifinals.

#### Rafael Nadal announces retirement

- Rafael Nadal has announced his retirement from professional tennis. His last event will be the Davis Cup in Malaga, Spain.
- He won 22 Grand Slam titles including 14 at the French Open. Nadal also has a total of 92 ATP singles titles to his name, including 36 Masters titles as well as an Olympic gold medal.
- Nadal also holds the unique record of being one of three men in tennis history to complete the Career Golden Slam in singles.

#### Pankaj Advani wins Singapore Open title

- Ace Indian cueist Pankaj Advani won the coveted Songhe Singapore Open title with a 5-1 win over Jaden Ong in Singapore.
- He beat former IBSF world snooker champion Dechawat Poomjaeng of Thailand 4-3 in a thrilling quarterfinal ago reach the finals.

#### ISSF World Cup Final 2024: Akhil Sheoran wins bronze medal in 50m rifle 3 positions

- India's Akhil Sheoran clinched a bronze medal in the men's 50m rifle three positions shooting event at the ISSF World Cup Final 2024 in New Delhi.
- This was Akhil Sheoran's first medal in an ISSF World Cup Final.
- Hungary's Istvan Peni (465.3) and Czechia's Jiri Privratsky (464.2) won the gold and silver medals, respectively.

#### Neetu David, AB de Villiers and Alastair Cook inducted into ICC Hall of Fame

- Former England captain Alastair Cook, former South Africa skipper AB de Villiers and India women's cricket great Neetu David were inducted into the International Cricket Council (ICC) Hall of Fame. Cook became inductee No. 113, David 114 and De Villiers 115 in the long list of cricket legends in the Hall of Fame.
- The class of 2024 will be celebrated in Dubai during the final stage of the Women's T20 World Cup 2024 tournament. The ICC Hall of Fame was launched in 2009 as part of the cricket body's centenary celebrations to celebrate the legends of the game.

#### ISSF Athletes of the Year

- Olympic pistol champion Yang Ji-in and Paris 2024 Olympic gold medallist in rifle Li Yuehong have been crowned the ISSF Athletes of the Year for 2024.
- Yang Ji-in belongs to the Republic of Korea and Liu Yukun is from China.
- This was announced at the Opening Ceremony for the ISSF World Cup Final in New Delhi, India.

#### Indian Trio Wins Gold In Men's 25M Rapid-Fire Pistol at ISSF Junior World Championship

- In shooting, the trio of Mukesh Nelavalli, Raajwardan Patil, and Harsimar Singh Rattha secured victory in the men's 25-meter rapid-fire pistol team competition at the ISSF Junior World Championship in Peru.
- India remained at the top of the medal tally with a total of 16 medals, which included one silver and four bronze. China is in second place with three golds and one silver.

#### Virat Kohli becomes the fastest batter to 27000 international runs, breaks Sachin's record

- Virat Kohli became the fastest batter to reach 27,000 international runs, surpassing the legendary Sachin Tendulkar's record during the second Test against Bangladesh in Kanpur.
- He achieved the feat in his 594<sup>th</sup> innings, outpacing Tendulkar, who reached the same milestone in 623 innings back in 2007.
- Kohli now joins an elite group of cricketers who have surpassed 27,000 runs, including Tendulkar, Ricky Ponting, and Kumar Sangakkara.



### **T20 cricket confirmed as one of five new sports at LA28**

- The proposal to include cricket at the LA28 Games was approved by the International Olympic Committee's members.
- The LA Local Organising Committee (LALOG) recommended five new sports - cricket (men's and women's T20s), baseball/softball, flag football, lacrosse and squash for the LA28 games.
- All of them were approved by the IOC's executive board.

### **Virat Kohli reaches the 9000 Test runs mark.**

- Virat Kohli became only the fourth Indian batter to reach the 9000-run mark in Test cricket. He joined batting legends Sachin Tendulkar, Rahul Dravid and Sunil Gavaskar in an elite list of players who have scored 9000 or more runs in Tests.
- He reached the milestone in 197 innings, making him the slowest and the fourth Indian batter to do so.

### **New Zealand wins Women's T20 World Cup 2024**

- New Zealand created history by defeating South Africa in the final of the Women's T20 World Cup 2024. New Zealand captain Sophie Devine led the team to this win.
- Their 32-run win ensured New Zealand had a first-ever T20 World Cup trophy in Men's or Women's cricket.

### **24<sup>th</sup> National Para-Swimming Championships**

- The Office of the State Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities, in collaboration with the Department for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, the Paralympic Committee of India, and the Sports Authority of Goa, organised the 24th National Para Swimming Championships at the Olympic Pool, SAG Panaji, Goa.
- Karnataka emerged as the overall champion with 392 points, followed closely by Maharashtra (378 points) and Rajasthan (248 points).

### **Chennai Grand Masters 2024**

- Arjun Erigaisi climbed to second in the global chess rankings after his victory over Alexey Sarana at the Chennai Grand Masters 2024.
- Magnus Carlsen is the numero uno with 2831.0 rating points while Arjun is second with 2805.8, ahead of Fabiano Caruana of the United States (2805.0).

- The Chennai Grand Masters 2024, organised by MGD1 and backed by the Sports Development Authority of Tamil Nadu, showcases two divisions—Masters and Challengers. The Masters category, with an average rating of 2729, is especially competitive this year. The new Challengers division provides a platform for emerging Indian talent to compete in a prestigious tournament.

### **U23 World Championship: Chirag Chikkara becomes second Indian male wrestler to win gold**

- India's Chirag Chikkara became only the second Indian male wrestler to win Gold in the 57kg category at the U23 World Championships.
- He becomes the second Indian man, after Paris Olympics bronze medallist Aman Sehrawat, to win the gold at the U23 Championships.
- KD Jadhav won the nation's first-ever individual medal post-Independence during the 1952 Helsinki Olympics.

### **Rani Rampal announces retirement from hockey**

- Former Indian women's hockey captain Rani Rampal announced her retirement from international hockey. She represented India in over 250 international matches.
- Hockey India (HI) decided to retire Rani's jersey number 28 to honour her glorious career. She was also given ₹10 lakh by HI.

### **Maria Sharapova, American twin Bryan brothers elected into the Tennis Hall of Fame**

- Five-time Grand Slam singles champion Maria Sharapova and the record-breaking American twins Bob and Mike Bryan have been selected for the International Tennis Hall of Fame's Class of 2025.
- Sharapova made history as the first Russian woman to achieve the world No. 1 ranking in 2005.
- Meanwhile, the Bryan brothers, Bob and Mike, are widely regarded as the most successful doubles team in tennis history. The Bryans amassed a record 119 titles, including 39 ATP Masters 1000 titles and an Olympic gold medal in 2012.



## QUICK POINTS (NEWS IN SHORT)

- IndiaAI and Meta have announced the establishment of the Center for Generative AI, Srijan at IIT Jodhpur, along with the launch of the “YuvAi Initiative for Skilling and Capacity Building” in collaboration with the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), for the advancement of open source artificial intelligence (AI) in India.
- BIS has begun formulating a National Agriculture Code (NAC) based on the existing National Building Code and National Electrical Code. NAC will be a comprehensive framework designed to standardize agricultural practices across India, covering crop management, sustainability, and emerging areas. BIC aims to finalise NAC by 2025.
- Railway Protection Force, a paramilitary force under the Indian Railways has launched a ‘Digital Memorial of Valour’ where you can digitally adorn a martyr’s photo with a wreath & candle.
- Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh launched the 21<sup>st</sup> Livestock Census, to be conducted till February 2025 with a budget of ₹200 crore. The census will collect comprehensive data on various livestock species, aiding policy formation for animal health security and sector growth.
- India’s bird population, particularly vultures, has significantly declined, with species like the White-rumped Vulture facing a 98% population drop.
- The Tadoba Andhari Tiger Reserve (TATR) in Tekadi Mandavzari, Maharashtra will launch the world’s first ropeway safari.
- Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma has launched Mission Basundhara 3.0 in Guwahati to provide land rights to indigenous people.
- Bihar Industry Minister Nitish Mishra inaugurated the state’s first dry port at Bihta, a town near Patna. The dry port is being seen as the state’s big initiative to boost the export of goods being produced in Bihar.
- In a groundbreaking feat, a baby great Indian bustard was born via artificial insemination (AI) at the Sudasari Great Indian Bustard Breeding Centre in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan. This is a significant milestone, as experts say India is the first country in the world to successfully breed this critically endangered species through this method.
- India’s first ‘Writer’s Village’ was jointly inaugurated by former President Ram Nath Kovind, Uttarakhand Governor Lt. Gen. Gurmeet Singh (retd) and Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami. It is located in Thano village, about 24 km from Dehradun. The writers will get a calm and creative environment necessary for the creation of their works.
- Kaziranga National Park is India’s second butterfly biodiversity hotspot with 446 species. The Namdapha National Park in Arunachal Pradesh is at the first position.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi digitally launched a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in Ayurveda for Diabetes and Metabolic Disorders at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc) in Bengaluru.
- Telangana Government appointed Justice Shameem Akhter to head a one-man commission to conduct a detailed study on the sub-classification of Scheduled Castes for providing reservations.
- IIT Indore has created a compact, low-cost device for early breast cancer detection. The device is based on the principle of Photoacoustic Spectral Response (PASR), which combines optical and acoustic signals to detect abnormal tissue changes.
- ISRO acquired two 400 kg satellites for its Space Docking Experiment (SPADEX) mission. As part of this mission, these two satellites will be hurled into slightly different orbits by a single rocket.
- Telangana is the first state in India to start a chapter of NITI Aayog’s Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP).
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Banjara Museum in Washim, Maharashtra.
- Assam CM Himanta Biswa Sarma launches ‘Nijut Moina’ scheme, offering monthly stipends to college girls to boost education and prevent child marriages.
- Himachal Pradesh government launched an initiative ‘Sankalp’ which aims to tackle drug trafficking and support rehabilitation.
- The Karnataka government launched Shiksha Co-pilot, an Artificial Intelligence-powered digital assistant for teachers.
- South Korean River project is being used as a model for the rejuvenation of the Musi River in Telangana.

- The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a loan of \$162 million to support tourism development in Himachal Pradesh.
- Urmila Chaudhary, a prominent social campaigner from Nepal, has been honoured with the prestigious Global Anti-Racism Championship Award 2024.
- The Wagh Bakri Tea Group has been honoured with the prestigious “Generational Legacy Award for Outstanding Contribution to the Indian Economy” by Hurun India.
- Dipa Karmakar, a prominent and celebrated figure in the world of gymnastics, has announced her official retirement from professional competition.
- Andres Iniesta, one of the greatest midfielders to have ever lived has announced his retirement from football at age 40.
- India was awarded the hosting rights of the ISSF Junior World Cup 2025 by the International Shooting Federation.
- Ngangom Bala Devi has etched her name in Indian football history by becoming the first Indian woman to score 50 international goals. She was playing as a forward for the Manipur Police and the Indian national team.
- Zimbabwe set a new T20I world record by scoring 344 against Gambia in the ICC Men’s T20 World Cup Sub-Regional Africa Qualifier.
- South African fast-bowling star Kagiso Rabada became the sixth South African bowler to take 300 Test wickets and the quickest in the history of Test cricket.
- Ravichandran Ashwin, India’s premier off-spinner, etched his name in the record books by becoming the leading wicket-taker in the ICC World Test Championship (WTC). He surpassed Australia’s Nathan Lyon to secure the top spot in the WTC rankings.
- The Skillhub Online Games Federation (SOGF) and International Esports Federation (IESF) joined hands to bring the first-ever international Esports championship to India in 2025.
- Russia launched a Yars intercontinental ballistic missile from Plesetsk cosmodrome in northwest Russia to Kamchatka, a peninsula in the Far East. Sineva and Bulava ballistic missiles were fired from submarines, and cruise missiles were launched from strategic bomber planes.
- Japan’s iconic Mount Fuji, known for its snowcap forming around this time of the year, is still snowless in November for the first time in 130 years, presumably because of the unusually warm temperatures in the past few weeks.
- The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) created an Ethereum-based token called NexFundAlto to enter the cryptocurrency world. This was created to expose fraudulent pump-and-dump schemes.
- Bushveld Igneous Complex (BIC) is the largest layered igneous intrusion on Earth, located in northern South Africa, spanning over 66,000 sq. km. It holds the world’s largest reserves of platinum-group metals and other minerals like iron, chromium, and titanium. Researchers discovered living microbes in 2-billion-year-old rock from the Bushveld Igneous Complex (BIC), offering insights into early Earth life and aiding the Mars life search.
- A new snake species discovered by a team of researchers in the western Himalayas, has been named after Hollywood actor and producer Leonardo DiCaprio in honour of his contribution towards conservation.
- Pakistan’s Senate passed the controversial 26th Constitution Amendment Bill that caps Pakistan’s Chief Justice’s tenure for three years.
- The European Investment Bank (EIB Global) will provide a 300 million euro (about ₹2,800 crore) loan for Bengaluru suburban railway.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Dharti Aaba Janjatiya Gram Utkarsh Abhiyan in Hazaribagh, Jharkhand. The Abhiyan aims to fill critical gaps in social infrastructure, health, education, and livelihood through 25 intervention schemes implemented by 17 central government Ministries and the Department of Government of India.
- Kerala’s Chief Minister, Pinarayi Vijayan, recently inaugurated India’s first supercapacitor manufacturing facility at Keltron Component Complex Limited (KCCL) in Kallyassery, Kannur.
- The Union Cabinet has sanctioned a ₹4,406 crore initiative to build 2,280 km of roads in Punjab and Rajasthan border areas to enhance village connectivity to main highways and markets. This forms part of broader efforts to improve border villages with infrastructure like telecom connectivity.
- The Galathea Bay port in Great Nicobar Island was designated India’s 13<sup>th</sup> major port.
- The Union Cabinet approved two railway projects covering eight districts of Andhra Pradesh, Telangana,

and Bihar. These include a new railway line connecting Amravati—the proposed new capital of Andhra Pradesh—with an investment of ₹2,245 crore. The projects will be completed within five years.

- The Union Cabinet has approved the development of the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) at Lothal, Gujarat. The Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterway (MoPSW) is setting NHMC to showcase 4,500 years old maritime heritage of India.
- The Karnataka government launched Shiksha Co-pilot, an Artificial Intelligence-powered digital assistant for teachers.
- Kaksar Bridge was renamed Capt. Amit Bhardwaj Setu to honour the sacrifice of Capt. Amit Bhardwaj during the Kargil War.
- Union Minister of Labour & Employment and Youth Affairs & Sports, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya launched “eShram – One Stop Solution” to provide seamless access to different Social Security Schemes to the unorganised workers registered on eShram.