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MAY 2024

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NATIONAL NEWS

Three Indian literary works added to UNESCO's Memory of the World register

- Ramcharitmanas, Panchatantra, and Sahrdayaloka-Locana have been inscribed in UNESCO's 2024 Memory of the World Committee for Asia and the Pacific (MOWCAP) Regional Register.
- This is the first time India's three nominations were accepted in a single cycle.
- UNESCO's Memory of the World (MoW) was launched in 1992 to protect and preserve the world's documentary heritage. It intends to raise awareness and democratise access to these literary pieces.
- The Ramcharitmanas was composed by Goswami Tulsidas in the Awadhi language in the 16th century and is considered one of the greatest works of Hindu literature.
- The Panchatantra, written by Pandit Vishnu Sharma, is a compilation of animal fables in poetry and prose.
- The Sahrdayaloka-Locana includes texts and discussions on poetics, dramaturgy and theatrical insights. It dates back to the 9th and 10th centuries AD.

Key Points

- UNESCO's Headquarters — Paris, France
- UNESCO's Director General — Audrey Azoulay

Rajasthan High Court issues directives to prevent child marriage

- In response to a Public Interest Litigation (PIL) on child marriage, the Rajasthan High Court issued a directive to reduce the practice in the state.
- The court has highlighted that the sarpanchs and panchayat members will be held accountable for any child marriages that occur within their authority.
- The court, citing the Rajasthan Panchayati Raj Rules 1996, orders aggressive measures to end the practice and warns of punitive penalties under the Prohibition of Child Marriage Act 2006.
- The Prohibition of Child Marriage Act of 2006 in India mandates that girls and boys marry at the ages of 18 and 21, respectively.

Key Points

- Rajasthan's capital — Jaipur
- Chief Minister — Bhajan Lal Sharma
- Governor — Kalraj Mishra

Indian government to train 1,500 civil servants in Bangladesh in the next five years

- India will train 1,500 civil servants in Bangladesh by conducting a mid-career capacity-building programmes on good governance initiatives over a period of the next five years.
- Both sides agreed on renewing the existing MoU, which envisages capacity-building programmes for 1,500 Bangladesh civil service officers at India's National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG) from 2025 to 2030.
- The NCGG and the Bangladesh Ministry of Public Administration have collaborated in conducting capacity-building programmes for Bangladeshi civil servants since 2014.

Key Points

- Bangladesh's capital — Dhaka
- Prime Minister — Sheikh Hasina
- President — Mohammed Shahabuddin

64 Great Indian Bustards found in desert park sanctuary, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan

- The annual waterhole census was conducted in the National Desert Park, Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, which found the presence of 64 Great Indian Bustards. They are critically endangered animals.
- In the year 2022, 42 GIBs were recorded using the same technique.
- GIB is the state bird of Rajasthan and is also known as Godawan. They primarily inhabit dry grasslands.

National Archives of India (NAI) acquires a private paper collection of Rafi Ahmad Kidwai

- NAI has recently acquired the private paper collection of the late Rafi Ahmad Kidwai.
- This includes original correspondences between Kidwai and other eminent leaders of India, including Pt. Nehru, Sardar Patel, Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, and P.D. Tandon.
- The acquisition of these papers by the NAI will strengthen its efforts towards preserving and making available the rich and varied private papers of eminent Indian personalities from all walks of life.
- Rafi Ahmad Kidwai was a politician and Indian freedom fighter.

- NAI is an attached office of the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. It was established as the Imperial Records Department in Kolkata on March 11, 1891. It was shifted to New Delhi in 1911.

BRO to begin the Shinku La tunnel work by mid-september

- The Border Roads Organisation (BRO) will begin work on the Shinku La tunnel in mid-September.
- It will be a 4.1 km long tunnel located at an altitude of 15,800 feet.
- It is expected to be completed in four years and will become the world's highest tunnel, surpassing China's Mila tunnel at 15,590 feet.
- The tunnel will provide all-weather connectivity from Manali to Leh via the Nimmu-Padam-Darcha axis. It will further enhance military mobility and logistics support for deployed forces in the Ladakh sector.

Key Points

Director General of BRO	— Lt. Gen. Raghu Srinivasan
Parent organisation	— Ministry of Defence

Japan and Nagaland to construct Kohima Peace memorial commemorating World War II

- The Japanese government has come forward to construct a memorial and eco-park commemorating World War II. The Battle of Kohima was fought between Japanese and British Indian forces from April 4 to June 10, 1944.
- The Ambassador of Japan to India, Suzuki Hiroshi and Nagaland Chief Minister Neiphiu Rio inaugurated the Kohima Peace Memorial.

The Supreme Court exempts lawyers from liability under the Consumer Protection Act.

- The Supreme Court ruled that advocates cannot be held liable under the Consumer Protection Act of 1986 for deficiency in service.
- A complaint to this effect against an advocate was not maintainable before a consumer forum.
- The court also indicated that its 1996 decision that held medical professionals accountable under the Consumer Protection Act may need to be revisited. It suggested that the definition of 'services' under the Act, which includes the medical sector, be reexamined.

Key Points

Chief Justice of India	— Dhananjaya Yeshwant Chandrachud
Location of Supreme Court	— New Delhi

Spices Board issues guidelines to exporters to prevent ethylene oxide contamination

- The Spices Board has issued detailed guidelines for exporters on preventing Ethylene Oxide (ETO) contamination in spices after Singapore and Hong Kong recalled some packaged spice products exported from India.
- It advised exporters against using ETO as a sterilising agent to reduce microbial contamination in spices consignments and suggested alternatives such as steam sterilisation and irradiation.
- The Spices Board has also provided the Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) for ETO permitted in major markets, including the EU, the UK, the US, Singapore, Switzerland and Turkey in the guidelines.
- CODEX—the international standard-setting body under WHO and FAO—has not fixed any MRLs for spices.
- According to the Spices Board, India exported spices worth \$3.95 billion in 2022–23. If China and the EU, the two major markets for Indian spices, also adopt stricter scrutiny, the total potential loss to India's spice exports would be 58.8%.
- The guidelines also proposed measures to prevent microbiological cross-contamination, appropriate packaging, careful transportation to ensure protection from any of the external adverse environmental factors and careful handling of samples for testing.

Key Points

Spices Board of India's headquarters	— Kochi, Kerala
Chairperson	— A G Thankappan
Parent ministry	— Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Label claims on packaged food could be misleading: Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR)

- The ICMR, through its Hyderabad-based National Institute of Nutrition (NIN), has recently highlighted potential misleading claims on packaged food labels.
- Health claims on packaged food are designed to catch consumers' attention and convince them that the product is healthy.

- The 'date of manufacture' and 'use-by date' indicate that the product's quality and safety could deteriorate and consumption beyond that date would increase the risk of food poisoning.
- On the label, 'serving size' is one of the most important pieces of information because all of the nutrition information shown is based on the referred serving size.
- The guidelines also advice people to check the net weight of the packet, which is the total amount of product contained in the packet.
- Often perceived as healthy, these products might be high in fats, hidden sugars like maltitol and fructose, and refined cereals, potentially leading to high caloric intake.

Key Points

ICMR's Director General,	—	Rajiv Bahl
ICMR		
ICMR's headquarters	—	New Delhi

Government to spend ₹ 2 crore per kilometre on China Border roads

- The government is likely to spend over ₹ 2 crore on each kilometre of road to be constructed along the China border in Uttarakhand and Sikkim under the Vibrant Village Programme (VVP).
- There are at least 168 villages along the border with China that do not have any road connectivity.
- In the past five months, the Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has sanctioned 113 roads under the VVP in Arunachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Sikkim, to improve connectivity in areas along the China border. While 105 roads have been sanctioned in Arunachal Pradesh, five roads in Uttarakhand and three roads in Sikkim have also been approved.

India inks ten-year deal to operate Iran's Chabahar port

- India signed a ten-year contract with Iran to develop and operate Chabahar port in Iran.
- India has been developing the port in Chabahar on Iran's south-eastern coast along the Gulf of Oman as a way to transport goods to Iran, Afghanistan and central Asian countries, bypassing the ports of Karachi and Gwadar in Pakistan.
- U.S. sanctions on Iran, however, slowed the port's development.

Key Points

Iran's capital	—	Tehran
Supreme leader	—	Ali Khamenei

Nagaland govt forms Political Affairs Committee on Naga political issue

- The Nagaland government has constituted a 'Political Affairs Committee' (PAC) comprising ministers and legislature party leaders of all political parties in the state Assembly to find an inclusive solution to the Naga Political issue.
- The PAC comprises the council of ministers and the legislature party leaders of all political parties in the current Nagaland Legislative Assembly (NLA).
- The PAC has been approaching both the Centre and the Naga political groups to listen to the voice of the people and arrive at the final solution.
- The Government of India and Naga political groups have entered a ceasefire since 1997.
- After almost 70 rounds of talks, the Centre entered into a Framework Agreement with NSCN-IM in 2015 and also signed the Agreed Position with the Working Committee of Naga National Political Groups (WC NNPGs) in 2017.
- In October 2019, the then Centre's Interlocutor for Naga Peace Talks and Governor of Nagaland, R N Ravi, declared that talks had concluded. However, the Centre has not accepted the NSCN-IM's persistent demand for a separate flag and constitution of the Nagas delaying the final solution. On the other hand, the Working Committee of the Naga National Political Groups (WC NNPGs) have declared that they are willing to accept the solution and continue the talks for the remaining demands.

Key Points

Nagaland's capital	—	Kohima
Chief Minister	—	Neiphiu Rio
Governor	—	La. Ganesan

New Catfish Species 'Glyptothorax Punyabratai' discovered in Arunachal Pradesh

- The Indian Council of Agricultural Research-National Bureau of Fish Genetic Resources (ICAR-NBFGR) has announced a groundbreaking discovery in the pristine waters of Arunachal Pradesh, India.
- A new species of catfish, *Glyptothorax punyabratai*, has been unearthed by ICAR-NBFGR researchers in the Brahmaputra river drainage system.

- The species, named after the esteemed founder director of ICAR-NBFGR, Dr. Punyabarata Das, honours his pioneering contributions to fisheries research.
- The discovery, detailed in the scientific journal Ichthyological Exploration of Freshwaters, outlines the collection of *Glyptothorax punyabratai* from Tung Stream, a tributary of the Tissa River.
- This discovery reinforces the critical need for sustained exploration and conservation endeavours to safeguard our natural heritage.

ISRO successfully tests 3D-printed rocket engine

- ISRO has successfully conducted a long-duration test of its PS4 engine, re-designed for production using cutting-edge Additive Manufacturing (AM) techniques. This is commonly referred to as 3D printing.
- The new engine, now a single piece, saves 97% of raw materials and reduces production time by 60%.

Key Points

NISRO's headquarters	—	Bengaluru, Karnataka
ISRO's Chairman	—	Sreedhara Somanath

Kerala temples ban oleander offering after woman's death

- Two temple administration boards in Kerala have banned the use of 'arali' (oleander) flower in the offerings to the deity (naivedyam) as well as in food given to devotees as 'prasadam' over the toxic content in it.
- The ban on the use of the flower comes nearly ten days after a woman in Alappuzha district died after suspected poisoning from the accidental consumption of oleander leaves.
- It has been proved scientifically that *Nerium oleander*, commonly known as oleander, has toxic compounds in all its parts and its ingestion will lead to vomiting, nausea, bloody diarrhoea and irregular heart rhythm.

Key Points

Kerala's capital	—	Thiruvananthapuram
Governor	—	Arif Mohammad Khan
Chief Minister	—	Pinarayi Vijayan

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

Prasar Bharati to launch Over The Top (OTT) platform by August

- By August, Prasar Bharati will launch its own Over-The-Top (OTT) streaming service. The OTT service will be an alternative to existing services like Netflix and Hotstar.
- The OTT platform will have family-friendly content that depicts Indian culture and society.
- Prasar Bharati is India's public service broadcaster. It is headquartered in New Delhi. It is a statutory autonomous body and comprises Doordarshan and Akashvani.

Key Points

CEO Prasar Bharti	—	Gaurav Dwivedi
Chairman	—	Navneet Kumar Sehgal

Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE) signs MoU with Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd. to conduct two Pilot Projects under the Drone Didi Yojana

- MSDE signed an MoU with Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd to conduct two Pilot Projects under the Drone Didi Yojana.

- The scheme aims to train 15,000 women to operate drones for agricultural purposes such as fertilising crops, monitoring crop growth and planting seeds, thereby creating new livelihood opportunities for women through imparting skills in new technology areas.
- MSDE and M&M will conduct two Pilot Projects at the National Skill Training Institute (NSTI) in Hyderabad and Noida, to skill 500 women in exclusive batches of 20 women each.

Key Points

Group CEO & MD, Mahindra Group	—	Atul Kumar Tiwari
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DD Kisan launched two AI anchors - AI Krish and AI Bhoomi

- Doordarshan Kisan has become the first government TV channel in the country to launch two AI anchors- AI Krish and AI Bhoomi.
- These news anchors are computers that can work exactly like a human. They can communicate in 50 languages and read the news 24 hours and 365 days.
- DD Kisan was established on May 26, 2015, and is dedicated to the farmers.

Cabinet approves over ₹10,300 crore for IndiaAI Mission

- The Cabinet has approved an allocation of over ₹10,300 crore for the IndiaAI Mission, marking a significant step towards bolstering India's AI ecosystem.
- This substantial financial infusion, slated over the next five years, is poised to catalyse various components of the IndiaAI Mission, including pivotal initiatives like the IndiaAI Compute Capacity, IndiaAI Innovation Centre (IAIC), IndiaAI Datasets Platform, IndiaAI Application Development Initiative, IndiaAI FutureSkills, IndiaAI Startup Financing, and Safe & Trusted AI.
- The overarching aim of this financial outlay is to ensure a structured implementation of the IndiaAI Mission through a public-private partnership model aimed at nurturing India's AI innovation ecosystem.

Manipur government launches 'School on Wheels' initiative for students in relief camps

- The Manipur government launched the 'School on Wheels' program that aims to provide education to students sheltered in relief camps across the state.
- It entails a mobile educational setup equipped with a library, computers, and sports items, accompanied by a teacher, to visit various camps.
- The program addresses the educational gap caused by the year-long ethnic conflict and subsequent displacement, particularly impacting the student population of Manipur.

Key Points

Manipur's capital	—	Imphal
Chief Minister	—	N Biren Singh
Governor	—	Anusuiya Uikey

Self-Healing Roads: NHAI explores cutting-edge technology to combat potholes

- The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is exploring an innovative solution to tackle the issue of potholes - self-healing materials for road construction.
- This innovation will enable a road to autonomously repair itself. The composite will be a mix of steel fibres and bitumen. In the event of a gap formation, the bitumen will expand to fill it, while the steel threads will assist in patching potholes.
- Besides the benefit of reducing the potholes, this technology also has the potential to prolong the road's durability and cut maintenance costs.
- NHAI might start small tests on some highways to see if these materials work well and are worth the cost.

Key Points

NHAI's Chairman	—	Santosh Kumar Yadav
Headquarters	—	Delhi
Parent organisation	—	Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

Uttarakhand launches 'Pirul Lao-Paise Pao' Campaign to combat forest fires

- The Uttarakhand government has launched the 'Pirul Lao-Paise Pao' campaign to control forest fires in the state.
- Under this campaign, the Pirul lying in the forest will be collected by the local villagers and youth, weighed and then taken to the designated Pirul collection centre.
- The collected Pirul will be weighed, and the villagers or youth will be paid ₹ 50 per kg, with the amount directly transferred to their bank accounts. The collected Pirul will be packed, processed, and sold to industries for further use.
- Pirul refers to Pine tree leaves, which have been traditionally used as bedding for domestic animals, as fertilizer when mixed with cow dung, and for packaging fruits.

Key Points

Uttarakhand's capital	—	Bhararisain (summer) and Dehradun (winter)
Chief Minister	—	Pushkar Singh Dhami
Governor	—	Gurmit Singh

Karnataka government reserves 33% for women in Government contract jobs

- The Karnataka government has mandated a 33% reservation for women in outsourced government jobs.
- This aligns with existing quotas for permanent positions and applies to jobs lasting more than 45 days and involving over 20 employees.

Key Points

Karnataka's capital	—	Bengaluru
Chief Minister	—	Siddaramaiah
Governor	—	Thawar Chand Gehlot

DAHD and UNDP sign MoU on the Digitalisation of Vaccine Cold Chain Management, Capacity Building, and Communication Planning

- The Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD), Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry

& Dairying signed an MoU with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) India on Digitalization of Vaccine Cold Chain Management, Capacity Building and Communication Planning.

- This strategic partnership aims to enhance the digitalization of vaccine cold chain management, capacity building, and communication planning in India.
- The vaccine cold chain management process will be monitored with the help of the Animal Vaccine Intelligence Network (AVIN) developed by UNDP.

Key Points

UNDP's Headquarters	—	New York, US
UNDP's head	—	Achim Steiner

Uttarakhand Tourism launches 'Nakshatra Sabha-India's first Astro tourism campaign'

- India's first astro tourism campaign 'Nakshatra Sabha' was inaugurated at the George Everest peak in Mussoorie, Uttarakhand and will continue until mid-2025.
- The Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board has joined hands with Starscapes, a leading astro-tourism company, to provide this facility.
- It will offer a range of activities, including stargazing, special solar observations, astrophotography contests, camping under the stars, and more. It aims to bring together astronomy enthusiasts, adventurers and travellers to marvel at the wonders of the cosmos.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Dubai launches 'Dubai Gaming Visa' for gamers, influencers

- Dubai has launched the Dubai Gaming Visa to attract skilled gamers, content creators, and industry professionals worldwide. Dubai is offering them long-term residency and benefits to foster their careers in the gaming sector.
- This initiative is part of the larger Dubai Program for Gaming 2033 (DPG 2033), a comprehensive strategy to transform the city into a thriving gaming hub by 2033.
- Under the DPG 2033, Dubai plans to create 30,000 new jobs in the gaming industry and contribute an estimated \$1 billion to the city's GDP by 2033.

India withdraws all military personnel from Maldives

- The last batch of Indian military personnel stationed in the Maldives were repatriated, thus completing their withdrawal from the country. This was done a day before the May 10 deadline set by Maldives' President Mohamed Muizzu.
- The relations between India and the Maldives came under severe strain after Muizzu, seen as a pro-China leader, insisted on the withdrawal of Indian military personnel operating three military platforms in the country by May 10.
- Repatriation of some 90 Indian military personnel stationed in the Maldives was a key pledge of Muizzu during his presidential campaign last year.
- The Indian military personnel were stationed in the Maldives to operate and maintain two helicopters and Dornier aircraft India gifted earlier.

- During their tenure here, they contributed to infrastructure maintenance, leveraging helicopters and other resources generously provided by the Indian administration to the Maldives.

Pakistan conducts successful training launch of 'Fatah-II' rocket system

- Pakistan conducted a successful training launch of the guided multi-launch rocket system 'Fatah-II'. It can engage targets with high precision up to a range of 400 kilometres.
- The launch of the Fatah-II Guided Rocket System was aimed at perfecting the launch drills and procedures.
- Fatah-II will be inducted in Pakistan's Artillery Divisions for stand-off, precision engagement of deep targets, and its induction would significantly upgrade the reach and lethality of the army's conventional arsenal.

Key Points

Pakistan's President	—	Asif Ali Zardari
Prime Minister	—	Shehbaz Sharif
Chief of the Army Staff (COAS)	—	General Asim Munir

UN General Assembly backs Palestinian bid for membership

- The United Nations General Assembly backed a Palestinian bid to become a full U.N. member by recognising it as qualified to join and recommending the U.N. Security Council 'reconsider the matter favourably.'

- UNGA adopted a resolution with 143 votes in favour and nine against - including the U.S. and Israel - while 25 countries abstained. It does not give the Palestinians full U.N. membership but simply recognises them as qualified to join.

Key Points

President of UNGA	—	Dennis Francis
Headquarters	—	New York, US

Venezuela becomes the first country to lose all its glaciers in South America

- Venezuela has become the first country in modern history to lose all its glaciers after climate scientists downgraded its last one to an ice field.
- The Humboldt, or La Corona, in the Andes, is Venezuela's only remaining glacier. According to the International Cryosphere Climate Initiative (ICCI), a scientific advocacy organisation, it had become 'too small to be classed as a glacier'.
- Venezuela has lost at least six other glaciers in the last century.
- With global average temperatures rising due to climate change, ice loss is increasing, helping to raise sea levels around the world.
- While there is no global standard for the minimum size a body of ice must be to qualify as a glacier, the US Geological Survey says a commonly accepted guideline is around 10 hectares.

Key Points

Venezuela's capital	—	Caracas
President	—	Nicolás Maduro

Japan and U.S. sign agreement to develop hypersonic missile interceptor

- The United States and Japan signed a cooperative agreement to co-develop a hypersonic missile defense capability designed to neutralise hypersonic threats in the glide phase of flight.
- Hypersonic missiles fly at more than five times the speed of sound and have irregular trajectories, making them difficult to intercept. This will reportedly cost more than \$3 billion.
- The interceptors will be designed to fit into the U.S. Navy's Aegis ballistic missile defense-equipped destroyers.
- The weapon will fire from the standard vertical launching system and be integrated with the modified Baseline 9 Aegis Weapon System that detects, tracks, controls and engages hypersonic threats.

Key Points

Japan's Prime Minister	—	Fumio Kishida
Japan's capital	—	Tokyo
USA's capital	—	Washington DC
President	—	Joe Biden

Majestic Sei whales reappear in Argentina's coast after 100 years

- After over a century of absence, the Majestic Sei whales have returned to the waters off Argentina's Patagonian coast due to a ban on commercial whaling.
- Sei whales belong to the baleen whale family and are characterised by their sleek, streamlined bodies, typically bluish-grey. These whales are known for their distinctive tall, curved dorsal fin and their relatively small, pointed flippers.
- Sei whales can reach lengths of up to 62–66 feet and weigh up to 28–45 metric tons. They feed on small fish and plankton by filtering water through their baleen plates.

Georgia adopts 'foreign agents' law after overriding presidential veto

- Georgia's parliament adopted the highly controversial 'foreign agents' bill. The legislation was adopted on May 14 but was vetoed by the country's president.
- The so-called 'foreign agents' law now requires organisations, including media outlets, non profits and other non-governmental organisations receiving more than 20% of their funding from abroad to register as bodies 'pursuing the interests of a foreign power.'

Key Points

Georgia capital	—	Tbilisi
President	—	Salome Zourabichvili
Prime Minister	—	Irakli Kobakhidze

FLiRT 2024: New group of Covid variants spreads in US

- FLiRT, a group of new Covid-19 variants from the Omicron JN.1 lineage, is rapidly spreading in the United States, causing concern about a summer infection wave.
- FLiRT refers to a group of new SARS-CoV-2 variants that have emerged from the Omicron JN.1 lineage and are rapidly spreading across the U.S. The most prominent FLiRT variant is KP2, which has become the dominant strain in the U.S. and accounts for around 25% of new COVID-19 cases as of April 2024.

- The FLiRT variants, especially KP2, appear to have increased transmissibility compared to previous Omicron sub-variants.
- The symptoms associated with FLiRT infection mirror those of other Omicron sub-variants, including sore throat, cough, fatigue, nasal congestion, runny nose, headache, muscle aches, fever and potential loss of taste or smell.

Scientists develop 'all-in-one' vaccine that may protect against a broad range of coronaviruses

- Scientists from the world's leading universities have developed an all-in-one vaccine that they hope can protect humans against a broad range of coronaviruses, including ones that are yet to emerge.
- This vaccine works by training the body's immune system to recognise specific regions of eight different coronaviruses, including SARS-CoV-2 which caused the COVID-19 outbreak and several that are currently circulating in bats and have the potential to jump to humans and cause a pandemic.
- Multiple antigens are included in these chains, which train the immune system to target specific regions shared across a broad range of coronaviruses.

EU adopts first law devoted to tackling violence against women

- European Union countries backed the bloc's first law devoted to combating violence against women.
- The law aims to protect women in the EU from gender-based violence, forced marriages, female genital mutilation and online harassment.
- The law criminalises cyber stalking, cyber harassment and cyber incitement to hatred or violence across the EU. It sets minimum sentences, ranging from one year to five years in prison, depending on the crime.
- Under the rules, if the victim is a child, spouse or ex-spouse, the punishment can be more severe.

Key Points

Countries in the European Union — 27
President of the EU Council — Charles Michel

Scientists discover world's deepest blue hole in Mexico

- Scientists have revealed the Taam Ja' Blue Hole in Mexico's Chetumal Bay as the deepest known blue hole on Earth with a depth of 1,380 feet.
- It surpasses the Sansha Yongle Blue hole with a depth of 480 feet.

Spain becomes 99th member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA)

- Spain has become the 99th member of the International Solar Alliance following Panama, by handing over the Instrument of Ratification.
- ISA was launched on the sidelines of the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Paris in 2015 by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and then French President François Hollande
- It aims to work for the efficient consumption of solar energy to reduce dependence on fossil fuels.

Key Points

ISA's headquarters — Gurugram, Haryana
Director General — Dr. Ajay Mathur

World's first 6G device launched in Japan

- A Japanese consortium has unveiled the prototype of what is touted to be the world's first high-speed 6G device, promising data transfer rates at lightning speed.
- The purported 6G device boasts an astounding data transmission rate of 100 gigabits per second (Gbps), dwarfing the capabilities of current 5G technology by a staggering factor of 20.
- Utilising the 100 gigahertz (GHz) frequency indoors and the 300 GHz band outdoors, this prototype showcases the potential for unprecedented connectivity speeds.

FINANCE, ECONOMY AND BANKING

India is the only country that records positive growth among the top five World steel producers in April 2024

- According to the World Steel Association, India is the only country among the world's top five crude steel producers to record positive growth in April 2024.

- The world's crude steel production was 155.7 million tonnes in April 2024, a 5.0% decrease as compared to April 2023. However, India recorded a growth rate of 3.9% in April 2024 as compared to April 2023. It was an increase of 3.9% compared to April 2023.

- India is the second largest producer of crude steel in the world after China.

Sri Lanka inks 20-year power purchase deal with Adani Green

- The Sri Lankan government approved an agreement with Gautam Adani-led Adani Green Energy for the development of wind power stations in Mannar and Poonerin.
- Under the power purchase agreement, the company will be paid 8.26 cents per kilowatt-hours (kWh) for the electricity generated from the wind power stations.

IRDAI sets a three-hour time limit for insurers to clear cashless claims

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has made some major changes in the regulatory norms for health insurance policies. It has issued a comprehensive Master Circular on Health Insurance Products repealing 55 circulars.
- All the entitlements in a health insurance policy available to a Policyholder have been brought to one place in the Master Circular.
- It has made it mandatory for medical insurance firms to authorise cashless hospitalisation within 1 hour of a request being made, and within 3 hours for a final approval at discharge. The new rules are to be implemented by 31st July.

Key Points

IRDAI's headquarters	—	Hyderabad, Telangana
Chairperson	—	Debasish Panda

RBI board approves record surplus transfer of ₹ 2.11 lakh crore to government for FY24

- RBI's Central Board of Directors has approved the transfer of ₹ 2.11 lakh crores as surplus to the government for the financial year 2023–24.
- This is the highest-ever yearly surplus transfer to the government by the Indian central bank.
- The surplus transfer to the government for the financial year 2023–24 is based on the Economic Capital Framework (ECF) adopted by the RBI on August 26, 2019, as per the recommendations of the Bimal Jalan committee.
- The sharp jump in the surplus amount could be attributed to higher income from the forex holding of the central bank, among other factors.

Key Points

RBI's Headquarters	—	Mumbai, Maharashtra
Governor	—	Shaktikanta Das
Established	—	April 1, 1935

IREDA incorporates a subsidiary in GIFT City, Gujarat

- Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) has incorporated a subsidiary at the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in GIFT City, Gujarat.
- IREDA Global Green Energy Finance IFSC Limited was officially incorporated on May 7, after receiving the no objection letter from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in February 2024, to set up the finance company in IFSC GIFT City.
- IREDA, under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), is a Non-Banking Financial Institution engaged in promoting, developing and extending financial assistance for setting up projects relating to new and renewable sources of energy and energy efficiency/conservation.

Key Points

Chairman & managing Director of IREDA	—	Pradip Kumar Das
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RBI brings back 100 Tonnes of gold from the UK to India

- RBI brought back 100 tonnes of gold from the vault of the Bank of England, UK to India. This is a major shift in the Economic Policy of the RBI, as it will now hold most of its Gold in its vault.
- It is a strategic move aimed at optimising the management of its reserves. Storing gold domestically could save the RBI money on storage fees paid to foreign custodians like the Bank of England.
- Historically, during the 1990–91 foreign exchange crisis, India pledged part of its gold reserves to the Bank of England to secure a \$405 million loan. Although the loan was repaid by November 1991, the RBI chose to keep the gold in the UK for logistical reasons. Gold stored abroad can be easily used for trading, entering into swaps, and earning returns.
- Before this move, the RBI held approximately 500 tonnes of gold abroad and 300 tonnes within India. With the repatriation of 100 tonnes, the distribution of gold reserves has now achieved a balanced 50–50 split, with 400 tonnes each in India and abroad.

Google introduces AI-powered scam call detection feature on Android

- Google will introduce the Scam Call Alert feature for its Android users. It will display an alert when users receive calls from private numbers. It is powered by Google's Gemini AI, which uses artificial intelligence to detect and alert users to potential scam calls.
- The feature is currently in development and will utilise Gemini Nano AI to detect fake calls and provide real-time alerts.
- When a fraudulent call is detected, users will receive an alert message stating that banks never ask customers to move their money to a safe place. Users will have the option to disable the alert and continue the call or end it immediately.
- Scammers often attempt to extract sensitive information such as credit card PINs and passwords during calls. Google's feature aims to alert users during such conversations. While Google has not provided extensive details about this feature, it is expected to be available to Android users by the end of the year.

Key Points

Google Founders	—	Larry Page and Sergey Brin
CEO	—	Sundar Pichai
Headquarters	—	California, US

TCS announces the creation of the Global AI Center of Excellence in Paris

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) announced the creation of a Global Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centre of Excellence in Paris.
- The new AI centre will be based in the upcoming TCS PacePort in the La Défense area of Paris, which will be inaugurated in June 2024, becoming the seventh such facility in TCS' global Pace network, following Amsterdam, London, New York, Pittsburgh, Toronto and Tokyo.
- It will leverage TCS' global ecosystem of startups, academia, and research organisations to bring the best of global capabilities to French companies.

Key Points

Chairman, CEO,	—	Mumbai
Headquarters		
TCS Chairman	—	Natarajan Chandrasekaran
CEO	—	K. Krithivasan

Quant MF gets RBI nod to hike stake in RBL Bank

- RBI has allowed Quant Mutual Fund to hike its stake in RBL Bank to 9.98%. This approval, subject to conditions

and provisions under the Banking Regulation Act, of 1949, was disclosed in a regulatory filing.

- Currently, Quant MF holds 4.68% equity share capital in RBL Bank.

Key Points

CEO & MD of Quant MF	—	Sandeep Tandon
Headquarters of RBL Bank	—	Mumbai
MD & CEO of RBL Bank	—	R. Subramania kumar

UN revises India's 2024 economic growth projection upwards to nearly 7%

- The United Nations has revised its growth rate forecast for the Indian economy in 2024 (January - December) to 6.9%.
- The latest forecast regarding the Indian economy was made in the World Economic Situation and Prospects as of mid-2024 report released on May 16, 2024.
- The United Nations Economic Analysis and Policy Division releases the World Economic Situation and Prospects.
- In its January 2024 report, it forecasted an economic growth rate of 6.2% for India in 2024. Strong public investment and resilient private consumption have been important reasons for the growth.

India's GDP to expand at 6.6% in FY25; will fuel NBFCs' growth: Moody's

- Moody's Ratings said the Indian economy is projected to expand 6.6% in the current fiscal year and said strong credit demand fuelled by robust economic growth will support the Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFC's) sector profitability.
- Moody's highlights that despite rising funding costs for NBFCs, the vigorous credit demand driven by India's economic growth will bolster the sector's profitability.
- Additionally, favourable economic conditions are expected to help NBFCs maintain asset quality even as higher interest rates increase the debt burdens of their customers.
- Moody's anticipates India's GDP to grow by 6.6% in FY25, followed by a 6.2% growth in the subsequent year.

Neobanking Startup Fi Secures NBFC Licence from RBI

- Bengaluru-based Neobank Fi has become the latest fintech startup to secure a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) license from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

- An NBFC license would allow Fi to offer loans to customers from its books, eliminating external dependencies
- Fi is a money management app that offers users a zero-balance savings account, helps plan investments in mutual funds and keeps track of expenses.

Key Points

Fi co-founder and CEO — Sujith Narayanan

Bank of Maharashtra tops among PSU banks in business growth in FY24

- State-owned Bank of Maharashtra recorded the highest growth rate last fiscal in terms of total business and deposit mobilisation among public sector lenders.
- It registered a 15.94% rise in the total business (domestic) in FY24, followed by the State Bank of India (SBI) with 13.12% growth.
- However, SBI's total business (deposits and advances) was about 16.7 times higher at ₹79,52,784 crore compared to ₹4,74,411 crore of Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) in absolute terms.
- Similarly, BoM continued to maintain its top spot in terms of growth in deposit mobilisation, with a 15.66% rise in FY24. It was followed by SBI (11.07%), Bank of India (11.05%) and Canara Bank (10.98%).
- Out of 12 public sector banks, only these four lenders could log a double-digit growth in deposits in the financial year 2023–24.
- On the asset quality side, the Bank of Maharashtra and SBI reported the lowest gross non-performing assets with 1.88% and 2.24% respectively, as of March 31, 2024.

HDFC Bank exits Protean eGov Tech, sells entire stake for ₹ 150 crore

- Private sector lender HDFC Bank sold its entire 3.20% stake in Protean eGov Technologies for Rs 150 crore through an open market transaction.
- Meanwhile, Nippon India Mutual Fund purchased 12.78 lakh shares or 3.16% stake in Protean eGov Technologies for ₹ 148 crore.

EPFO introduces auto claim settlement for education, marriage, housing

- The Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) has introduced auto-mode settlements for advance claims related to education, marriage, and housing.
- This automated system processes claims without any human intervention. The mode of claim settlement

was introduced in April 2020 for advance claims for illness. Now this limit has been enhanced to ₹ 1,00,000.

SAIL–Bhilai to set up Chhattisgarh's first 15-Mw floating solar plant

- Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP), the Chhattisgarh-based arm of the state-run Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL), will install the state's first 15-megawatt (MW) floating solar project in its Maroda-1 reservoir to improve its carbon footprint.
- The project is being implemented through NTPC-SAIL Power Supply Company Limited (NSPCL), a 50:50 joint venture company of National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) and SAIL. The solar plant will be set up in Durg district.
- The Maroda reservoir is spread across 2.1 square kilometers with a water storage capacity of 19 cubic millimetres.
- The water stored in the Maroda-I reservoir feeds the plant and township.
- The project is the first floating solar plant in Chhattisgarh and is expected to reduce the carbon dioxide emissions of BSP by 28,330 tonnes annually.

Key Points

Chairman, CEO, — Amarendu Prakash
Headquarters
Headquarters of SAIL — New Delhi

SEBI grants a three-year extension to LIC to achieve 10% public shareholding

- Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India has been granted a three-year extension by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to achieve a 10% public shareholding.
- LIC is required to increase its public shareholding to 10% on or before May 16, 2027.
- According to SEBI norms, a company must attain a 10% public shareholding within three years from the date of listing. LIC was listed on May 17, 2022.

Key Points

LIC Chairperson — Siddhartha Mohanty
SEBI's Headquarters — Mumbai, Maharashtra
SEBI's chairperson — Madhabi Puri Buch

ICICI Bank becomes the fifth Indian firm to cross ₹ 8 lakh crore mcap

- Private sector lender ICICI Bank Ltd has become the fifth Indian company and the second bank to surpass ₹ 8-lakh crore market capitalisation for the first time.

- Reliance Industries, TCS, HDFC Bank, Infosys and Bharti Airtel have so far crossed this milestone. RIL remained India's most valued firm with a market cap of ₹ 20.4 lakh crore, followed by TCS and HDFC Bank, which has a mcap of ₹ 15 lakh crore and ₹ 9.6 lakh crore.
- Infosys and Bharti Airtel have market caps of ₹ 8.16 lakh crore and ₹ 8.1 lakh crore.

Key Points

Chairman, CEO,	—	Mumbai
Headquarters		
ICICI Chairman	—	Girish Chandra Chaturvedi
MD & CEO	—	Sandeep Bakhshi

RBI says 97.76% of ₹ 2,000 currency notes returned to the banking system

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) stated that 97.76% of the ₹2000 denomination banknotes have returned to the banking system, and only ₹7,961 crore worth of the withdrawn notes are still with the public.
- On May 19, 2023, the RBI announced the withdrawal of ₹ 2000 denomination banknotes from circulation.
- The total value of ₹ 2000 banknotes in circulation, which was ₹ 3.56 lakh crore at the close of business on May 19, 2023, when the withdrawal of the high-value banknotes was announced, has declined to ₹ 7,961 crore at the close of business on April 30, 2024. Thus, 97.76% of the ₹ 2000 banknotes in circulation as on May 19, 2023, has since been returned.
- The ₹ 2000 banknotes continue to be legal tender.
- People can deposit and/or exchange ₹ 2000 banknotes at 19 RBI offices across the country. People can also send ₹ 2000 banknotes through India Post from any post office to any of the RBI Issue Offices for credit to their bank accounts in India.
- Public and private entities holding such notes were initially asked to either exchange or deposit them in bank accounts by September 30, 2023. The deadline was later extended to October 7, 2023. Deposit and exchange services at bank branches were discontinued on October 7, 2023.

HDFC Life Introduces 'No Jhanjhat Life Insurance Fatafat' campaign

- HDFC Life launched 'No Jhanjhat Life Insurance Fatafat' campaign for a seamless online insurance purchase experience in India.
- The campaign underscores the importance of addressing India's low insurance penetration and vast protection gap.

HSBC and SBI each acquire a 6.125% stake in CCIL IFSC Limited

- HSBC and State Bank of India (SBI) have made strategic investments in CCIL IFSC Limited, acquiring 6.125% stakes each, valued at ₹ 6.125 crore each.
- This move aims to bolster their presence within Gujarat International Finance Tech (GIFT) City, India's premier international financial services center.

Key Points

HSBC's Headquarters	—	London, UK
SBI's Headquarters	—	Mumbai
SBI's Chairman	—	Dinesh Kumar Khara

RBI unveils Pravaah portal, Retail Direct Mobile App and FinTech Repository

- The RBI launched three major initiatives: Pravaah portal, Retail Direct mobile app and a Fintech Repository. These initiatives are aimed at enhancing regulatory processes, facilitating retail investment, and providing comprehensive data on the fintech sector.
- Pravaah portal is a centralised, secure web-based platform that enables individuals or entities to apply online for regulatory approvals, licences, and authorisations from the RBI. The portal covers 60 application forms across different regulatory and supervisory departments of the RBI, allowing applicants to track the status of their applications and receive decisions promptly.
- Retail Direct mobile application provides retail investors with a seamless and convenient way to transact in government securities (G-Secs) on their smartphones. The app simplifies the process of buying and selling G-Secs in both the primary and secondary markets.
- The FinTech Repository aims to enhance the RBI's understanding of the Indian fintech sector by providing comprehensive data on fintech firms, both regulated and unregulated. The repository will support policymakers and industry participants by offering insights on fintech.

SBI General unveils Surety Bond Bima insurance product for infrastructure projects

- SBI General Insurance, the non-life insurance arm of India's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI), has announced the launch of the General Surety Bond Bima (Conditional & Unconditional) insurance product.
- The Surety Bond Insurance will act as a security arrangement for infrastructure projects and will insulate the contractor as well as the principal (contract awarding authority).

- The product is designed to provide protection against breach of terms and conditions by the contractors either

during the bidding stage or during the performance stage of a project.

DEFENCE NEWS

Indian army inducts first Hermes-900 Drone for surveillance along Pakistan border

- In a significant development, the Indian Army has inducted its first Hermes-900 drone, also known as the Drishti-10 drone, to enhance its surveillance capabilities along the Pakistan border.
- These drones will be positioned at the Bathinda base in Punjab.
- Adani Defence manufactured the drone for the Indian army.
- The Indian Army already operates Heron Mark 1 and Mark 2 drones.

Key Points

Chief of the Army staff — Manoj Pande
Chief of the Defence staff — General Anil Chauhan

Air Force tests Arogya Maitri Cube, the world's first air-lifted portable hospital

- The Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted a successful trial of Airdropping 'Arogya Maitri Disaster Cubes' from C-130 Hercules Aircraft using specially made parachutes by the Air Delivery Research and Development Establishment (ADRDE) Air Delivery Research and Development Establishment in Agra, Uttar Pradesh.
- The hospital was built under project BHISHM – Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri.
- Arogya Maitri Cubes is the world's first disaster hospital that can be airlifted and packed in 72 cubes. These were dropped from a height of 1500 feet and the hospital was operational within 12 minutes. The structure, designed in the form of a cube, is waterproof, lightweight, and capable of treating up to 200 patients simultaneously. It can be deployed via various means, including aircraft and drones.
- Project Bhishma was announced by PM Narendra Modi at the Global South Summit in 2022.

Key Points

Chief of the Air Staff — Vivek Ram Chaudhari

Indian Army and Punit Balan Group collaborate to develop India's first constitution park

- The Indian Army and the Punit Balan Group joined hands to inaugurate the nation's first Constitution Park in Pune.

- The Constitution Park serves as a significant initiative by the Indian Army, particularly the Southern Command, to enlighten Puneites about their civic responsibilities.
- Constitution Park is a collaborative effort between the Indian Army and the Punit Balan Group.

India-France joint military exercise 'Shakti' commenced in Meghalaya

- The seventh edition of the India-France Joint Military Exercise 'Shakti' was held at the Joint Training Node in Umroi, Meghalaya.
- Exercise 'Shakti' is a biennial training event conducted alternatively in India and France. The last edition took place in France in November 2021.
- The joint exercise focuses on operations in semi-urban and mountainous terrain. Its objectives include achieving a high level of physical fitness, rehearsing and refining drills for tactical operations, and sharing best practices.

India sets up two strategic Army tank repair facilities near China border

- The Indian Army has set up two armoured vehicle maintenance and repair facilities near the China border in Nyoma and the Daulat Beg Oldi (DBO) sector at altitudes of over 14,500 feet in the area, which is the world's highest battlefield for tanks and infantry combat vehicles along the LAC in Eastern Ladakh.
- This will support over 500 tanks and infantry combat vehicles deployed following the 2020 India-China standoff.
- The new facilities have helped the Indian Army to improve the effectiveness and serviceability of the armoured fighting vehicles, including the tanks, and infantry combat vehicles deployed in that area.

Supersonic Missile-Assisted Release of Torpedo system successfully flight-tested by DRDO

- Supersonic Missile-Assisted Release of Torpedo (SMART) system was successfully flight-tested from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- SMART is a next-generation missile-based light-weight torpedo delivery system, designed and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) to enhance the anti-submarine

warfare capability of the Indian Navy far beyond the conventional range of lightweight torpedo.

- It is a canister-based missile system consisting of several advanced sub-systems, namely two-stage solid propulsion system, electromechanical actuator system, precision inertial navigation system, etc.
- The system carries an advanced lightweight torpedo as a payload along with a parachute-based release system.

Key Points

Chairman of DRDO — Dr Samir V Kamat

IAF Helicopters undertake Bambi Bucket operations in response to forest fires in Uttarakhand

- In response to the raging fires in the Pauri Garhwal sector, the IAF provided much-needed relief by undertaking Bambi Bucket operations using its Mi17 V5 helicopters.
- These helicopters efficiently transported and released over 4,500 liters of water over the affected areas, a crucial effort made in close coordination with the Uttarakhand government.
- The swift and coordinated action by the Indian Air Force played a pivotal role in supporting the ground-based firefighting crews.

IAF contingent arrives in the US to participate in the Red Flag 24 exercise

- An Indian Air Force contingent reached the Eielson Air Force Base of the U.S. Air Force in Alaska, United States of America to participate in the upcoming edition of the multinational exercise Red Flag 24.
- Exercise Red Flag is a two-week advanced aerial combat training exercise aimed at integrating aircrew in a multinational environment.

India's First Indigenous bomber UAV unveiled in Bengaluru, Karnataka

- Flying Wedge Defence launched FWD-200B, India's first indigenous bomber unmanned aircraft. It has a payload capacity of 100 kgs and is classified as a MALE Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle. It offers medium-altitude, long-endurance capabilities.
- It has a maximum speed of 200 kts/370 kmph and an endurance capacity of 12–20 hours.
- Flying Wedge Defence is a Bengaluru-based defense and aerospace technology firm. Suhas Tejaskanda is the founder of Flying Wedge Defence.

Exercise Cyber Suraksha 2024 conducted

- Exercise Cyber Suraksha 2024 was conducted by the Defence Cyber Agency.
- It aimed to further develop the Cyber Defence Capability of all Cyber security organisations and promote synergy amongst all stakeholders.
- It focused on enhancing collaboration and integration among participants from various military and prominent national organisations.
- Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan attended 'Exercise Cyber Suraksha – 2024.'

Gagan Strike-II: The Indian Army and Indian Air Force conduct a Joint exercise in Punjab

- Kharga Corps of the Indian Army conducted a three-day joint exercise, Gagan Strike- II with the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- The primary goal of Gagan Strike-II was to refine the processes involving the Indian Army's mechanised units and to validate the employment of attack helicopters in developed terrain.
- The exercise focused on integrating Apache and ALH-WSI helicopters, Unarmed Aerial Vehicles, and the Army's special forces.

APPOINTMENTS

Name	Designation
R Shankar Raman	President, Larsen and Toubro (L&T)
Kareena Kapoor	National Ambassador for UNICEF India
Pratima Singh	Director, Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT)
Sujai Raina	Country Manager, Visa India
Shashi Bhushan Singh	Secretary of National Jute Board
Subodh Kumar	Director, Ministry of Ayush

Hitesh Sethia	MD & CEO of Jio Financial Services
Dinesh Kumar	Presiding Officer of the Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT)
Jaya Tripathi	Head – Key Relations Group, SBI General Insurance
Dileep Sanghani	Chairman of IFFCO
N Chandrasekaran	Chair, Tata Electronics
David Salvagnini	Chief Artificial Intelligence (AI) Officer, NASA
Kapil Sibal	President of Supreme Court Bar Association
Idashisha Nongrang	Meghalaya’s first woman Director General of Police (DGP)
A.Y.V. Krishna & N. Venu Gopal	Additional Directors in Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
Sanjiv Puri	President of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)
Ramesh Babu V.	Member of Central Electricity Regulatory Commission
Pradeep Natarajan	IDFC FIRST Bank’s Whole Time Director
Rushabh Gandhi	MD and CEO of IndiaFirst Life Insurance
Jetha Ahir	Chairman of the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED)
Gurcharan Singh	Commandant, National Defence Academy
Luis Abinader	President of Dominican Republic
To Lam	President of Vietnam
Lai Ching-te	President of Taiwan
Mohammad Mokhber	Acting President of Iran
Sanjay Bhalla	Chief of Personnel of the Indian Navy
Mikhail Mishustin	Prime Minister of Russia
John Swinney	First Minister of Scotland
Jose Raul Mulino	President of Panama
Jeremiah Manele	Prime Minister of the Solomon Islands
Maushumi Chakravarty	Director General of Akashvani News
Krishna Swaminathan	Vice Chief of Naval Staff
Dr. Krishna Ella	Presidency of the Indian Vaccine Manufacturers Association (IVMA).
Dinesh K Tripathi	Chief of Naval Staff
R Lakshmi Kanth Rao	Executive Director, RBI

OBITUARIES (NATIONAL)

Name	Occupation
Vinay Vir	Journalist
Uma Ramanan	Playback singer
V. Srinivas Prasad	Politician and Former Union Minister
Shaikh Abdussalam Abdurrazzaq	Urdu litterateur and academician

Sangeeth Sivan	Filmmaker
Surjit Patar	Punjabi Poet and Writer
Sushil Kumar Modi	Former Deputy Chief Minister of Bihar and Politician
Kamla Beniwal	Politician
Malti Joshi	Author
N Vaghul	Banker

OBITUARIES (INTERNATIONAL)

Name	Occupation
Paul Auster	Author
Bernard Hill	Actor
Frank Shrontz	Former Boeing CEO
Richard Slayman	First person to ever receive a genetically modified pig kidney transplant
Alice Munro	Author
Richard M Sherman	Disney Songwriter

DAYS AND THEMES

Date	Day	Theme
May 1	Maharashtra Divas	
May 1	International Labour Day or May Day	Ensuring safety and health at work in a changing climate
May 1	Gujarat Day	
May 2	World Tuna Day	
May 2	World Asthma Day (First Tuesday for the month of May)	
May 3	World Press Freedom Day	A Press for the Planet: Journalism in the Face of the Environmental Crisis
May 4	Coal Miner's Day	
May 4	International FireFighters' Day	
May 5	World Portuguese Language Day	
May 6	International Diet Day	Embrace Yourself: Reject Diet Culture, Love You
May 7	World Asthma Day	Asthma Education Empowers
May 7	World Athletics Day	World Mile Challenge
May 8	World Red Cross Day	I give with joy and the joy I give is a reward
May 8	World Thalassaemia Day	Empowering Lives, Embracing Progress: Equitable and Accessible Thalassaemia Treatment for All

May 10	International Day of Argania	Socio-economic development & sustainability of the Argan ecosystem
May 11	National Technology Day	School to Startups-Igniting Young Minds to Innovate
May 11	World Migratory Bird Day	Protect Insects, Protect Birds
May 12	International Nurses Day	Our Nurses Our Future, The Economic Power of Care
May 12	International Day of Plant Health	Plant Health, Safe Trade, Digital Technology
May 15	International Families Day	Families and Climate Change
May 16	International day of Living Together in Peace	United in differences and diversity
May 16	International Day of Light	Light in our Lives
May 17	World Telecommunication and Information Society Day	Digital Innovation for Sustainable Development
May 17	World Hypertension Day	Measure your Blood Pressure Accurately, Control it, Live Longer
May 17	National Endangered Species Day	Celebrate Saving Species
May 18	World's AIDS Vaccine Day	
May 18	International Museum Day	Museums for Education and Research
May 20	World Bee Day	Bee engaged with Youth
May 21	International Tea Day	
May 21	National Anti-Terrorism Day	
May 21	World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development	
May 22	International Day for Biological Diversity	Be part of the Plan
May 23	World Turtle Day	
May 25–31	International Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories	
May 28	International Everest Day	
May 29	International Day of Action for Women's Health	Mobilising in Critical Times of Threats and Opportunities
May 29	International Day of UN Peacekeepers	Fit for the future, building better together
May 30	International Day of Potato	Harvesting diversity, feeding hope
May 31	World No-Tobacco Day	Protecting children from tobacco industry interference

REPORTS, RANKINGS AND INDEX

India leads in global internet shutdowns for 6th year in a row

- According to data analysed by Access Now, a not-for-profit group that focuses on digital rights, India
- logged 116 instances of internet shutdowns in 2023, accounting for 41% of the 283 that happened globally.
- As a result, India now leads the world in such crackdowns for the sixth year in a row.

- Of the 1,458 shutdowns Access Now has recorded since 2016, India has accounted for 773 (53%).
- The internet shutdowns rose by 41% from 201 in 2022 to 283 in 2023.
- Shutdowns reportedly cost India \$1.9 billion and resulted in loss of \$118 million in foreign investment in the first half of 2023 alone.
- A single-day shutdown can push up to 379 people into unemployment in the country.
- In India, 64 shutdowns affected more than one district. This was driven by 47 shutdowns in Manipur and the statewide shutdown in Punjab in March.

World Wildlife Crime Report 2024

- The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) released the third edition of the World Wildlife Crime Report 2024 which provided a comprehensive analysis of the illegal wildlife trade from 2015 to 2021
- During this period (2015–21), the rhino (animal) and the cedar (plant) were the most affected by the global illegal wildlife trade.
- Rhino horn formed the largest portion of the illegal animal trade at 29%, followed by pangolin scales at 28% and elephant ivory at 15%.
- Cedars and other Sapindales like mahogany, holy wood, and Guaiacum were the most affected plant species at 47%.
- Among the commodities, coral pieces were found the most and comprised 16% of all seizures during 2015–2016; live specimens - 15%, while medicines made of animal products constituted 10% of all seizures.
- In 2024, the UNODC introduced a new indicator to track progress on SDG target 15.7, which aims to stop illegal wildlife trafficking.

Global Cities Index Report 2024-Delhi ranks at 350

- Delhi was ranked 350 in the 2024 Oxford Economics Global Cities Index, with Bengaluru and Mumbai at 411 and 427.
- The Global Cities Index Report is an annual report that ranks roughly 1,000 largest cities across the world, spanning 163 different countries in five crucial categories.
- The index is calculated based on scores across categories such as Economics, Human Capital, Quality of Life, Environment, and Governance. These scores are combined to generate an overall rank for each city.
- New York achieved the highest ranking in all five categories with a score of 100, followed by London and San Jose.

India surpasses Japan to become third largest solar power generator in 2023

- According to the global energy think tank Ember, rapid solar energy deployment in India pushed the country past Japan to become the world's third-largest solar power generator in 2023.
- India ranked ninth in solar energy deployment in 2015.
- Solar produced a record 5.5% of global electricity in 2023. In line with the global trend, India generated 5.8% of its electricity from solar last year.

India's toy exports see a decline to \$152.34 Million in 2023–24

- According to a report by economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), India's toy exports declined marginally to \$152.34 million in 2023–24 from \$153.89 million in 2023–24.
- However, Imports increased to USD 64.92 million in 2023–24 from USD 62.37 million in 2022–23.
- The report proposes a comprehensive strategy aimed at developing India's toy industry.

IIM Ahmedabad is India's best-performing higher institution

- The Centre for World University Rankings (CWUR) released the 2024 edition of the Global 2000 list. 64 Indian universities and institutions were featured on this list.
- Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Ahmedabad secured the top rank in India and was ranked at 410 position globally. The Indian Institute of Science was ranked at 501.
- Harvard University secured top positions for the 13th year in a row followed by MIT and Stanford, US.
- The CWUR report analyses the 62 million outcome-based data points to rank universities across the world. The list is based on four parameters- Quality of education (25%), Employability (25%), Quality of faculty (10%), and Research (40%). The report ranked 20,966 universities and the top Global 2000 list features higher education institutions from 94 countries.

4000 Gangetic Dolphins in India: Indian Wildlife Institute of India (WII)

- According to the Wildlife Institute of India, about 4,000 dolphins inhabit the Ganga and its tributaries, with Uttar Pradesh home to approximately 2,000.

- To protect these dolphins, the UP government declared a Dolphin Sanctuary in Chambal, where 111 dolphins have been recorded.
- Prime Minister Modi's Project Dolphin has raised public interest in these endangered animals.
- The Namami Gange initiative aims to stabilise and double the dolphin population by 2030, integrating pollution control, wetland conservation, and public participation. The river dolphin is a globally endangered species, thriving in various rivers like Ganga, Yamuna, and Chambal.

Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024- India ranked at 39 position

- India has climbed to the 39th position in the 2024 World Economic Forum's 'Travel & Tourism Development Index 2024'. The index was compiled in collaboration with the UK-based University of Surrey.
- The United States (US) led the rankings and India was the top performer in South Asia and among the lower-middle-income nations. Spain, Japan, France, and Australia feature are the top four countries in the 2024 list.
- India was 54th in 2021, but changes in index criteria limit its direct comparison with 2022 and 2023. India's overall Travel and Tourism Development Index (TTDI) score is 2.1% lower than its 2019 level.
- According to the index, India demonstrates high price competitiveness (18th) and possesses competitive air transport (26th) as well as ground and port (25th) infrastructure.
- India's robust natural (6th), cultural (9th), and non-leisure (9th) resources contribute to its travel appeal, with the country being one of only three to secure a top 10 ranking across all resource pillars.

Cristiano Ronaldo tops Forbes' list of highest-paid athletes again

- Cristiano Ronaldo topped Forbes' list of highest-paid athletes for the fourth time in his career. His estimated total earnings were in the region of \$ 260 million, an all-time high for a Soccer player.
- Spanish golfer Jon Rahm moved up to second following his sensational switch to Saudi-backed LIV Golf.
- Third on the list is record eight-times Ballon d'Or winner Lionel Messi, with \$135 million in earnings.

Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani secure positions among the World's Top 15 super rich

- Mukesh Ambani and Gautam Adani have made it to the top 15 world's super-rich list of the Bloomberg Billionaires Index.
- Mukesh Ambani, with a wealth of \$110 billion, is ranked twelfth on the list.
- Gautam Adani, who has a wealth of \$100 billion, has been ranked fourteenth on the list.

World Migration Report 2024

- The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) launched the World Migration Report 2024.
- It estimates 281 million international migrants worldwide. The number of displaced individuals due to conflict, violence, disaster, and other reasons has surged to the highest levels in modern-day records, reaching 117 million, underscoring the urgency of addressing displacement crises.
- India hosts the world's largest number of international migrants (18 million) residing in UAE, USA and Saudi Arabia.
- In 2022, India remained the top remittance destination, receiving more than USD 111 billion, the first country to reach and surpass the USD 100 billion mark.

EVENTS

77th annual Cannes Film Festival

- The 2024 Cannes film festival was held from May 14-25, 2024 at Cannes, France. The festival opened with French comedy film *The Second Act*.
- American filmmaker and actress Greta Gerwig served as jury president for the main competition.
- This year, the Bharat Pavilion set up by the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) under the aegis of Ministry of Information and Broadcasting

at the Cannes Film Festival was the centerpoint of a multitude of activities throughout the festival days. It was designed by the National Institute of Design, Ahmedabad. It was known as 'The Sutradhara,' resonating with this year's theme of "Create in India."

- The Pavilion acted as a platform and a catalyst for Indian filmmakers, producers, film companies to discuss projects with international film corporations, producers and buyers, through a series of meetings and panel discussions.

- It was also for the first time that India hosted the Bharat Parv in Cannes, an evening that celebrated India’s presence on the global stage as a content hub and an emerging creative economy.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Global Forum held in Seoul

- The Artificial Intelligence (AI) Global Forum was held in Seoul. The forum was co-hosted by South Korea and Britain.
- It brings together experts, researchers, and businesses from around the world to talk about AI’s progress, trends, and social issues. AI in healthcare, self-driving cars, robotics, and data security are common themes.

46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting held in Kochi, Kerala

- The 46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM-46) and the 26th Committee on Environmental Protection (CEP-26) concluded in Kochi, Kerala. It was organised by the Ministry of Earth Sciences through the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR).

- The meetings brought together over 400 delegates from 56 countries to discuss various issues related to the Antarctic region, including science, policy, governance, environmental protection and tourism management.
- The meetings focused on the theme “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam,” meaning “one Earth, one family, one future,” reflecting the Antarctic Treaty’s goals of peace, scientific cooperation, and environmental preservation.
- During the meetings, delegates reaffirmed the Antarctic Treaty (1959) and the Madrid Protocol (1991). An additional working group discussed developing a tourism framework for Antarctica. Union Minister Kiren Rijiju announced India’s plan to establish a new Antarctic research station, Maitri-II.
- The CEP-26 focused on issues such as sea ice change, environmental impact assessments, emperor penguin protection and creating an international framework for environmental monitoring. The committee adopted 17 management plans for Antarctic Specially Protected Areas (ASPAs) and updated the list of historic and monument sites.

AWARDS

2024 Pulitzer Prize Winners

- The Pulitzer Prizes for 2024 were announced by Columbia University in the United States of America. These are the most prestigious awards in the fields of journalism and arts. They were awarded for the first time in 1917.

Drama	Primary Trust by Eboni Booth
Fiction	Night Watch by Jayne Anne Phillips

Book, Drama and Music	
General Nonfiction	A Day in the Life of Abed Salama: Anatomy of a Jerusalem Tragedy by Nathan Thrall
Music	Adagio (For Wadada Leo Smith) by Tyshawn Sorey
Memoir and Autobiography	Liliana’s Invincible Summer: A Sister’s Search for Justice by Cristina Rivera Garza
Poetry	Tripas: Poems by Brandon Som
Biography	Master Slave Husband Wife: An Epic Journey from Slavery to Freedom by Ilyon Woo
History	No Right to an Honest Living: The Struggles of Boston’s Black Workers in the Civil War Era by Jacqueline Jones

Journalism	
Public Service	ProPublica (Joshua Kaplan, Justin Elliott, Brett Murphy, Alex Mierjeski and Kirsten Berg)
Editorial Writing	David E. Hoffman (The Washington Post)
Investigative Reporting	Hannah Dreier (The New York Times)
International Reporting	Staff of The New York Times
Breaking News Photography	Photography Staff of Reuters
Feature Photography	Photography Staff of Associated Press
Audio Reporting	Staff of the Invisible Institute and USG Audio

Payal Kapadia wins Grand Prix Award for her film ‘All We Imagine as Light’ at the Cannes Film Festival

- Payal film ‘All We Imagine as Light’ which centers around the lives of two nurses won the Grand Prix

award, the second-highest honour at the Cannes Film Festival. With this award, she has become the first Indian to win the prize.

- The film was granted official Indo-French co-production status by the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting, under the signed Audio-Visual treaty between India and France.
- The Festival also celebrated the work of the renowned Indian director Shyam Benegal.
- After 48 years of its release in India, Benegal's iconic film 'Manthan,' preserved at the National Film Archives of India (NFDC-NFAI) and restored by the Film Heritage Foundation, was showcased in the classic section at Cannes.

Thiruvananthapuram International Airport achieves zero waste to landfill accolade

- Thiruvananthapuram International Airport has made history by becoming the first airport in India to achieve the Zero Waste to Landfill (ZWL) accolade.
- This recognition was awarded by the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII-ITC) Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Development.
- It highlights the airport's exceptional waste management practices and commitment to sustainability. The airport achieved an impressive 99.50% diversion of waste from landfills. It has managed to completely divert 100% of its plastic waste and 100% of its municipal solid waste (MSW), which includes both wet and dry waste, from landfills.
- This achievement was made possible through the integration of a robust value chain system and the adoption of the 5R principles of sustainable waste management.
- The 5R principles are - Reduce, Reuse, Reprocess, Recycle, and Recover.
- The ZWL goal aims to divert at least 99% of generated waste from landfills, while also focusing on reducing the overall amount of waste produced.

Pawan Sindhi honoured with the Global Pride of Sindhi Award 2024

- Social worker Mr. Pawan Sindhi was bestowed with the prestigious Global Pride of Sindhi Award 2024.
- The event was attended by esteemed saints, Mahatmas, and sadhus. The occasion celebrated Mr. Sindhi's remarkable contributions to society and his dedication to serving humanity.

NHPC conferred with 'The Economic Times HR World Future Ready Organisation Award 2024-25'

- NHPC, India's premier hydropower company, has been conferred with the prestigious 'The Economic Times HR World Future Ready Organisation Award 2024-25'.
- The Award has been given to NHPC in recognition of its preparedness in the areas of upskilling of employees, Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) interventions, Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (DE&I) initiatives, constant technological upgradations, Employee Engagement processes, robust Corporate Governance strategies, etc.

Author Ruskin Bond receives Sahitya Akademi Fellowship

- Eminent English author Ruskin Bond was awarded the prestigious Sahitya Akademi Fellowship at his Mussoorie home.
- Bond was named a recipient of Akademi's highest honour in September 2021. However, due to his ill health, he could not be given the honour in person.
- He has written over 300 short stories, essays and novels and more than 30 books for children besides several other works. Some of his notable works include "Vagrants in the Valley", "Once Upon a Monsoon Time", "Angry River", "Strangers in the Night", "All Roads Lead to Ganga", "Tales of Fosterganj", "Leopard on the Mountain" and "Too Much Trouble".
- He is the recipient of the Sahitya Akademi Award in 1992, Sahitya Akademi's Bal Sahitya Puraskar in 2012, Padma Shri in 1999 and Padma Bhushan in 2019 among other prestigious awards.

Major Radhika Sen, an Indian Peacekeeper Receives UN Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award

- Major Radhika Sen, an Indian military peacekeeper serving with the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUSCO), has been awarded the prestigious 2023 United Nations Military Gender Advocate of the Year Award.
- As a gender advocate, she has helped create spaces to amplify the voices of women in local security and peace discussions.
- She is the second Indian peacekeeper to receive this award, following Major Suman Gawani in 2019.

Arti received the Amal Clooney Women's Empowerment Award

- Arti, an 18-year-old woman from the Bahraich district of Uttar Pradesh, has been honored with the prestigious Amal Clooney Women's Empowerment Award by King Charles III of the United Kingdom.
- The Amal Clooney Women's Empowerment Award, named after the renowned English barrister Amal Clooney, is sponsored by the British charity Prince Trust International.
- She was honoured for inspiring other young girls through her work with the government's Pink e-rickshaw initiative, which provides safe transport for women with a mission to drive change, quite literally. The Pink e-rickshaw scheme was launched under Uttar Pradesh's Mission Shakti to empower women.

NTPC gets global recognition for Talent Development, secures third rank at ATD BEST Awards 2024

- NTPC has secured third rank globally at the ATD BEST Awards 2024, this being the highest ranking among all Indian companies.
- Notably, NTPC is the only PSU to have received this prestigious award seven times in the past eight years.
- The ATD BEST Awards, established by the Association for Talent Development (ATD), USA, is one of the most esteemed international recognitions in the field of Learning and Development (L&D).
- It honours organisations that leverage talent development as a strategic business tool and demonstrate enterprise-wide success through effective employee development practices.
- The ranking is determined through a rigorous evaluation and assessment process conducted by international experts of high integrity and global eminence.

Jenny Erpenbeck's 'Kairos' wins the International Booker Prize

- Jenny Erpenbeck, a German author, and Michael Hofmann, her translator, have been awarded the International Booker Prize for fiction for their work on 'Kairos'.
- The novel, which explores a complex love story set against the backdrop of East Germany's final years, emerged victorious among a shortlist of five other works, selected from a pool of 149 submitted novels.
- The prize, which comes with a 50,000-pound award split between the author and translator, recognises outstanding translated fiction published in the UK or Ireland.

Purnima Devi Barman receives 'Green Oscar' Whitley Gold Award 2024

- Wildlife biologist Dr Purnima Devi Barman was conferred with the Whitley Gold Award 2024 in recognition of her outstanding efforts to protect the endangered greater adjutant stork (Hargila) and its wetland habitat.
- The Whitley Gold Award is also known as the Green Oscar. The winners are provided with GBP 50,000 in project funding over one year, along with enhanced visibility, networking opportunities, and training.
- The Whitley Awards also celebrated six other grassroots conservationists – from Guyana, Papua New Guinea, Bhutan, Cameroon, Nepal and Brazil – for their locally-led solutions to the global biodiversity and climate crises.

UNESCO Guillermo Cano Prize 2024 awarded to Palestine Journalists in Gaza

- The 2024 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize was awarded to Palestinian journalists covering the conflict in Gaza.
- This prestigious award follows the recommendation of an International Jury of media professionals.
- The ongoing conflict in Gaza has had severe repercussions for journalists, with UNESCO reporting the deaths of 26 journalists and media workers since October 7, 2023.
- The award was established in 1997 and recognises individuals who have made exceptional contributions to the defence and promotion of press freedom, especially in the face of danger.

Shrinivas R Kulkarni wins the prestigious Shaw Prize in Astronomy for 2024

- Shrinivas R Kulkarni, an Indian-origin professor, has been awarded the prestigious Shaw Prize in Astronomy for 2024.
- The award recognises ground-breaking discoveries in the field of astronomy and his work on millisecond pulsars, gamma-ray bursts, supernovae, and other variable or transient astronomical objects.

Dr Soumya Swaminathan to be awarded honorary doctorate by Canada's McGill University

- Dr. Soumya Swaminathan has been named among the ten exceptional individuals to receive an honorary degree from Canada's prestigious McGill University during the Spring 2024 Convocation ceremonies.
- She is a globally renowned leader in public health and infectious diseases.

- She joined the World Health Organisation (WHO) in 2017 as the Deputy Director-General (Programmes) and was appointed as the organization's first Chief

Scientist in March 2019, a role she served through the COVID-19 pandemic until late 2022.

SPORTS NEWS

Indian Super League (ISL) 2023–24- Mumbai city wins the title

- Mumbai City FC defeated Mohun Bagan Super Giant by 3–1 to clinched their second Indian Super League (ISL) title. Mumbai City FC was awarded a prize money of ₹ 6 crore for this win.
- Previously, they clinched their inaugural title in the 2020–21 season.
- The ISL is endorsed by FIFA and the All India Football Federation (AIFF). It was established in 2014 and boasts the participation of 12 city-based football clubs.

Kolkata Knight Riders Win IPL 2024 against Sunrisers Hyderabad

- Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR) won IPL 2024 by defeating Sunrisers Hyderabad in the final of the IPL 2024 at the MA Chidambaram Stadium in Chennai.
- This is their third title in the history of IPL.
- Sunil Narine from KKR was named as the most valuable player of IPL 2024.

Coca-Cola India announces its first-ever partnership with Hockey India, for the National Women's Hockey League

- Anandana, the Coca-Cola India Foundation, announced its first-ever partnership with Hockey India, for the National Women's Hockey League 2024. It is a three-year collaboration.
- This collaboration aligns with Coca-Cola India's commitment to sports and gender equality through its #SheTheDifference campaign.

Key Points

Director of The Coca-Cola India Foundation	—	Rajiv Gupta
Hockey India President	—	Dr. Dilip Tirkey

United Nations Declares May 25 as World Football Day

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared May 25 as World Football Day.
- On May 25, 1924, all the regions of the world were represented in the 1924 Paris Summer Olympics

football event. This year, the Summer Olympics is being held in Paris and May 25, 2024 will mark the 100th anniversary of the 1924 football event.

- To celebrate the momentous event, the United Nations unanimously agreed to celebrate 25th May as World Football Day.

T20 World Cup- Amul to sponsor USA, Sri Lanka and South Africa

- Amul has been roped in as the official sponsor of Sri Lanka at the T20 World Cup 2024. South Africa and the USA will also be sponsored by Amul.
- Amul has a history of sponsoring cricket teams during ICC tournaments, having previously collaborated with the New Zealand and the Netherlands national sides for the 2017 Champions Trophy and 2011 Cricket World Cup, respectively.

Shyaamnikhil becomes India's 85th Chess Grandmaster

- P Shyaamnikhil from Tamil Nadu has become India's 85th Grandmaster (GM). He secured the title at the prestigious 2024 Dubai Police Masters Chess Tournament.
- The Grandmaster and International Master titles are among the highest accolades in the world of chess, awarded by the esteemed World Chess Federation (FIDE).
- To become a GM, a male player must earn at least a 2500 FIDE Elo rating and achieve three Grandmaster's norms in international competitions, while women must attain a 2300 Elo rating and three Women Grandmaster's norms.

Sunil Chhetri announces retirement from international football

- Indian football team captain Sunil Chhetri will retire from international football after the FIFA World Cup 2026 qualifier against Kuwait on June 6.
- He began his journey in 2002 with Mohun Bagan. He has been instrumental in India's victories in the Nehru Cup (2007, 2009, 2012) and the SAFF Championship (2011, 2015, 2021).

- Most significantly, his contribution to India's 2008 AFC Challenge Cup win secured their first AFC Asian Cup appearance in 27 years.

West Indies player Devon Thomas banned for five years under an anti-corruption code

- The International Cricket Council (ICC) has imposed a five-year ban on West Indies player Devon Thomas after he accepted charges of breaching seven counts of the anti-corruption codes of Sri Lanka Cricket, the Emirates Cricket Board, and the Caribbean Premier League.
- The ICC announced the period of ineligibility in its capacity as the Designated Anti-Corruption Official under the relevant codes, ruling that the last 18 months of the period of ineligibility would be suspended.

Para-athlete Deepthi Jeevanji sets world record in women's 400 m T20 event

- Deepthi Jeevanji of Telangana has won the gold medal and set a new world record in the 400-meter T20 event at the World Para Athletics Championship 2024.
- She clocked a world record timing of 55.07 seconds.
- This remarkable feat also earned her a coveted quota for the Paris 2024 Paralympics.

Karnataka's Nandini Dairy to sponsor Scotland's Cricket team for T20 World Cup

- The Karnataka Milk Federation KMF, that runs the Nandini brand, is the official sponsor of the Scotland team.
- This is the first time the milk brand has gone international.

Iga Swiatek and Andrey Rublev Win Madrid Open Tennis Singles Titles

- World no.1 women's tennis players Iga Swiatek and Andrey Rublev won the women's and men's singles titles at the 2024 Madrid Open, respectively.
- This was the first Madrid Open title for Iga Swiatek of Poland, while it was the second Madrid Open title for Andrey Rublev.
- The Madrid Open Tennis was held in the Spanish capital city of Madrid from 22 April to 5 May 2024.
- The Madrid Open was a 1000-event, which means that the winners of the men's and women's titles will receive 1000 ranking points.

Brazil to host the 2027 Women's World Cup

- Brazil was declared the host of the 2027 Women's World Cup at the FIFA Congress.

- It has become the first South American country to secure the hosting rights for the prestigious tournament.

Elorda Cup 2024

- The Indian contingent won 12 medals, including 2 gold, 2 silver and 8 bronze at the Elorda cup 2024.
- Nikhat Zareen, India's top-ranked female boxer, clinched the gold medal in the 52 kg category.
- Minakshi secured the first gold medal for India in the 48 kg category final.
- Elorda Cup is an international boxing tournament organized by the Department of Physical Culture and Sports of Astana City and the Kazakhstan Boxing Federation. The third Elorda Cup was held in Astana, Kazakhstan.

Australia to host AFC Women's Asian Cup 2026

- Australia will host the AFC Women's Asian Cup 2026, featuring 12 top women's national football teams from the continent.
- Uzbekistan will host the 2029 edition of the premier women's football continental tournament.

China clinches the Thomas and Uber Cups 2024 titles

- The People's Republic of China won the 33rd Badminton World Federation (BWF) Thomas Cup 2024 after defeating Indonesia's men's team. It is China's eleventh Thomas Cup title. The BWF 2024 was held in Chengdu, China.
- The Chinese women's team defeated Indonesia 3-0 to win the Uber Cup for the 16th time.
- The Thomas and Uber Cup are held every two years and is organised by the world badminton governing body, the Badminton World Federation (BWF).
- The Thomas Cup is also known as the World Men's Badminton Team Championship. The Women's Badminton Team Championship is popularly known as the Uber Cup.

Japan won the AFC U-23 Asian Cup and qualified for the 2024 Paris Olympics

- The Japanese men's under-23 football team defeated Uzbekistan and etched their name in history by clinching the AFC U-23 Asian Cup for the second time.
- The final was held at the Jassim bin Hamad Stadium in Doha, Qatar.
- The sixth edition of the AFC U-23 Asian Cup was held in Qatar from April 15 to May 3, 2024, with 16 teams from across Asia vying for the coveted title. The tournament served as a crucial qualification event

for the upcoming Paris Olympics, with the top three teams earning automatic spots.

International Olympics Committee (IOC) launches 'Let's move India' campaign with Reliance Foundation and Abhinav Bindra

- The IOC has launched the 'Let's Move India' campaign in collaboration with Reliance Foundation and Abhinav Bindra Foundation, inviting everyone to celebrate the Olympians heading to the Paris Olympics.
- The IOC's 'Let's Move' campaign started on Olympic Day, June 23, 2023 and has witnessed participation from over 1000 athletes and more than 1.5 million people around the world taking part in physical activity.

2025 BWF World Junior Badminton Championships to be held in Guwahati

- The 2025 BWF World Junior Championships will be held at the National Centre of Excellence in Guwahati, Assam. The exact dates are yet to be announced.
- Previously, India hosted the event in 2008 in Pune.

La Liga 2024- Real Madrid clinch 36th title

- The Spanish football club Real Madrid has been crowned the La Liga 2023–24 season title after beating Cadiz 3-0.
- La Liga, or the Campeonato Nacional de Liga de Primera División, is a professional men's club-based football championship in Spain. It is the highest-ranking domestic football tournament in the country. It was started in 1929 with 10 teams.

Yuzvendra Chahal becomes the first Indian bowler to complete 350 wickets in the T20 format

- Indian leg spinner Yuzvendra Chahal etched his name in the T20 record books as he became the first Indian

bowler to complete 350 wickets in cricket's shortest format.

- Chahal reached the milestone during Rajasthan Royal's IPL 2024 match against Delhi Capitals at the Arun Jaitley Stadium in Delhi.

Japan defeated Pakistan to win the 30th Sultan Azlan Shah Trophy

- Japan secured their first Sultan Azlan Shah Hockey trophy by defeating Pakistan 4-1. The final match was held at Azlan Shah Stadium in Ipoh, Malaysia.
- This is the first time Japan won the title. Malaysia was in third place.

Doha Diamond League 2024–Neeraj Chopra finishes second

- Neeraj Chopra secured second place at the Doha Diamond League 2024 with a best throw of 88.36 m.
- Czechia's Jakub Vadlejch, the Tokyo 2020 silver medalist, won the Diamond League with his best throw at 88.38m.

Dipa Karmakar becomes the first Indian gymnast to win Gold in Asian Senior Championship

- Leading gymnast Dipa Karmakar made history by becoming the first Indian to win a gold medal at the Asian Senior Championships, clinching the title in the women's vault.
- The silver and bronze medals were bagged by Kim Son-hyang and Jo Kyong-byol, respectively, both representing the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), with scores of 13.466 and 12.966 points.
- The Asian Women's Artistic Gymnastics Championships 2024 were held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan.