

### 1. India-Bhutan 7th Customs Meeting Concludes in Kerala

- The **7th Customs Meeting** was held in **Munnar, Kerala** (officially renamed **Keralam**).
- The meeting was operated by the **Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC)**.
- The primary focus of the discussions was establishing and improving **anti-smuggling mechanisms**.
- Highlights strong bilateral trade dependency, as **India** accounts for around **80%** of **Bhutan's** total trade.
- Trade between the two nations is conducted via **10 notified land custom stations**.
- Out of these, **6 are in West Bengal** and **4 are in Assam**.

### 2. MeitY Announces New Rules for Online Gaming

- The **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** introduced new regulations under the **Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act 2025**.
- The new rules will become effective on **May 1, 2026**.
- A new **Online Gaming Authority of India** will be established.
- The authority will be headed by an **Additional Secretary-level officer** from **MeitY**, and will include members from the **Ministry of Home Affairs** and the **Ministry of Finance**.

### 3. Government Proposes Draft Sugarcane Control Order 2026

- The government introduced the **Draft Sugarcane Control Order 2026** to regulate the sugar industry and mill distribution.
- Proposed increasing the minimum distance between two sugar mills from **15 km to 25 km**.
- State governments have the authority to increase this distance further but cannot reduce it below **25 km**.

### 4. India's Seafood Exports Reach Record Levels

- Total seafood exports reached an estimated **₹72,325 crore** with a volume of **19.32 lakh metric tons**.
- **Frozen shrimp** emerged as the largest contributor, accounting for **₹47,900 crore**.
- The **United States of America (USA)** is the top export destination, followed by **China** and the **European Union (EU)**.
- The top 5 export ports are **Visakhapatnam, Jawaharlal Nehru Port, Kochi, Kolkata, and Chennai**.

### 5. Government Allows Blending in Aviation Turbine Fuel

- The government officially allowed the blending of **ethanol** and **synthetic hydrocarbons** in Aviation Turbine Fuel.
- Progressive blending targets have been set: **1% by 2027, 2% by 2028, and 5% by 2030**.

### 6. Central Government Approves Loan for Alliance Air Revival

- The **Central Government** approved a **₹460 crore** loan support package for the revival of **Alliance Air** operations.

### 7. India's First 3D Semiconductor Packaging Unit to be Set Up in Odisha

- **3D Glass Solutions Ltd** will set up India's first 3D semiconductor packaging unit in **Odisha**.
- The project involves a massive **₹1,943 crore** investment.
- The unit was inaugurated by **Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw** and **Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi**.

### 8. Eveready Commissions India's First Alkaline Battery Unit

- **Eveready** officially commissioned India's first alkaline battery manufacturing facility in **Jammu**.
- Unique event: This facility is documented as India's very first alkaline battery unit.

### 9. MHA Receives AI-Enabled Satellite System "Pranja"

- The **MHA (Ministry of Home Affairs)** received an indigenous AI-enabled satellite imaging system called **"Pranja"**.
- The system was developed by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation's (DRDO) Centre for Artificial Intelligence and Robotics (CAIR)**.

### 10. India's First Intracity Drone Delivery Trial Conducted in Bengaluru

- **FedEx**, partnered with the **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras' SMART Centre**, successfully conducted a drone delivery trial.
- The trial took place from **Electronic City** to **Kempegowda International Airport** in **Bengaluru**.

### 11. Samridh Gram Initiative Nominated for WSIS Prizes 2026

- The initiative is driven by the **Department of Telecommunications** under the broader **BharatNet** project.
- The initiative establishes '**Samridhi Kendras**' to offer healthcare, education, agriculture, e-commerce, and governance services via Fiber to the Home (FTTH) broadband and public Wi-Fi.
- The first center was inaugurated in **Umri village, Guna, Madhya Pradesh** by **Jyotiraditya Scindia**.

### 12. Income Tax Department Organizes "Tax Your Brain" Quiz

- Organized an inter-school quiz called "**Tax Your Brain**".
- The event involved classes 9 to 12 across **80+ Delhi-NCR schools**. • Spread awareness about **2025 tax provisions**.

### 13. CBI Launches AI Chatbot "Abhay"

- The **Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)** launched an AI-powered chatbot named "**Abhay**".
- The chatbot was officially launched by **Supreme Court Justice Surya Kant**.
- Empowers citizens to verify official legal notices and directly fight against "**digital arrest**" scams and financial frauds.

### 14. Punjab Notifies Strict Sacrilege Law

- The **Punjab** state government officially notified the **Jagat Jot Sri Guru Granth Sahib Satkar Amendment Act 2026**.
- Disrespecting the **Guru Granth Sahib** now carries a penalty of **life imprisonment** and a fine up to **₹25 lakh**.

### 15. Centre Revises DCGI Recruitment Rules

- Raised the maximum recruitment age limit for the **Drugs Controller General of India (DCGI)** from **56 to 58**.
- Capped the maximum tenure for the position at **5 years**.
- **Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi** was recently appointed as the new **DCGI**.

### 16. Milestones and Updates on Small Saving and Pension Schemes

- **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)**: Crossed **9 crore total enrollments (1.35 crore new in FY 2025-26)**. Provides **₹1,000 to ₹5,000 monthly pension** at age 60. Spouses receive 50% upon death; nominees get the principal. Extended to **2030-31**.
- **Small Saving Schemes Rates: Senior Citizen Savings Scheme & Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (8.2%), National Savings Certificate (7.7%), Kisan Vikas Patra (7.5%, doubles in 115 months), and Public Provident Fund (7.1%)**.
- **Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY)**: Completed **11 years (launched Jan 22, 2015)**. Allows **₹250 to ₹1.5 Lakh yearly investment** for girls up to 10 years. Deposits for 15 years; matures at 21 years.
- **APY** was originally launched on **May 9, 2015**, targeting the unorganized sector (ages 18 to 40).

### 17. Expansions and Installments of Major National Empowerment Schemes

- **PM SVANidhi**: Extended to **March 31, 2030**, with a **₹7,332 crore outlay**. Implemented by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** and **Department of Financial Services**. Provides collateral-free loans of **₹15k, ₹25k, and ₹50k**, plus up to **₹1600 digital cashback**.
- **PM Internship Scheme (PMIS)**: Expanded by the **Ministry of Corporate Affairs and Department of Education** to include final-year graduates and post-graduates. Age limit reduced from **21-24 to 18-24 years**. Offers **₹9,000 stipend** and **₹56,000 financial assistance** in two installments for one year.
- **PM Kisan**: The **22nd installment** was released. Provides **₹6000 annually** in three installments to landholding farmers.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission**: Extended to **December 2028** with an **₹8.69 lakh crore budget**.
- **Technology Deployment and Development and Investment Promotion (TDIP) Scheme**: Revised guidelines released by **Jyotiraditya Scindia**. Outlay of **₹203 crore (2026-2031)** focused on **5G/6G infrastructure**.
- **CM INSPIRE Scheme**: Meghalaya Chief Minister **Conrad K Sangma** launched the **Chief Minister's Incentive for Success in Prelims and Innovative Rewards for Excellence**. Benefit includes **₹5,000** for clearing UPSC Prelims, and **₹1 lakh** for Mains.
- **PM SVANidhi** was launched on **June 1, 2020**.

- **PM Kisan** was launched on **Feb 24, 2019**.
- **Jal Jeevan Mission** was originally launched in **2019**.

### 18. Government Extends Various Infrastructure and Transportation Schemes

- **Small Hydro Power Dev Scheme:** Extended from **FY26/27 to 30/31** with a **₹2584.60 crore** outlay, targeting **1500 MW**.
- **UDAN Scheme:** Extended for **10 years to FY 35/36** with a **₹28,840 crore** outlay.
- **IBFRT Scheme:** Extended to **2031** with a **₹1800 crore** outlay.
- **Water Metro System:** Approved for a **10-year duration (FY 26/27 to 36/37)** with a **₹90 crore** outlay.

### 19. State Bank of India Sets Ambitious Balance Sheet Goals for 2030

- **SBI** aims to expand its balance sheet from the current **~20%** to **25%** of India's GDP by **2030**.
- As of **Dec 2025**, the balance sheet stood at **₹71.62 lakh crore** (**₹57 lakh crore** deposits, **₹46 lakh crore** advances).
- Currently, **SBI** holds a **22% market share in deposits** and **20% in advances**.

### 20. CSR Spending by NSE Companies Surges in FY 2025

- CSR spending jumped **23% to ₹22,000 crore** in **FY 2025**.
- Top spenders: **Reliance Industries (₹139 crore)**, **HDFC Bank (₹168 crore)**, and **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) (₹960 crore)**.
- Top states receiving funds: **Maharashtra, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu**.
- CSR Mandate criteria: Net worth **>₹500 crore**, turnover **>₹1000 crore**, or net profit **>₹5 crore**.
- Eligible companies must spend **2% of average net profit** from the last three years.

### 21. World Bank Approves Loan for Rajasthan Highway Modernization

- The **International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)** (part of the World Bank) approved a **\$225 million (approx ₹2000 crore)** loan for the **Rajasthan Highway Modernization Project**.

### 22. RBI Launches 4th Global Hackathon 'Harbinger'

- The theme for the 4th edition is **"Secure and Inclusive Banking"**.
- It features three problem statements: **tokenizing KYC**, **offline Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)**, and **enhancing trust in digital banking**.
- Focuses on strengthening the digital banking ecosystem through the three pillars of **Identity, Integrity, and Inclusivity**.

### 23. BSE Index Services Launches Housing Finance Index

- **BSE Index Services** introduced a new metric specifically to track the housing finance sector's performance.
- Launched an index evaluating **11 housing finance companies**.
- **Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) Housing Finance** currently holds the highest weightage in the index.
- Base value of the index: **1000**.
- Base year of the index: **2015**.

### 24. Postal Life Insurance Onboarded on Bharat Connect

- **Postal Life Insurance (PLI)** has been onboarded as a biller on **Bharat Connect** by **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) Bharat BillPay**.
- Customers can now set up e-mandates for automated premium payments.
- The **State Bank of India (SBI)** acts as the **Biller Operating Unit** for this service.

### 25. Banks Launch Innovative Co-branded Cards and Joint Ventures

- **Cheq & AU Finance Bank:** Launched India's first LED-powered credit card that glows via NFC energy from POS terminals (contains no internal battery).
- **Punjab National Bank (PNB) & Karur Vysya Bank (KVB):** Launched the **PNB KVB RuPay Credit Card** on the UPI platform.
- **Karnataka Bank & Pine Labs:** Partnered for rapid POS machine services specifically for MSME/retail customers.
- **Jio Financial Services & Allianz:** Formed a **50-50 joint venture** to offer general and health insurance in India.

- **Karnataka Bank** Static facts: Founded in **1924**, HQ in **Bengaluru**, MD is **Srikrishnan Harihara Sarma**, and its Tagline is "**Your Family Bank Across India**".

### 26. High-Level Visits Strengthen India-Republic of Korea Ties

- **Prime Minister Lee Ji Myeong** visited **PM Modi**, resulting in the signing of **~25 MoUs** in sectors like shipbuilding, logistics, and energy.

- Set key goals including achieving **\$50 billion bilateral trade by 2030**, resumption of the **Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA)**, and celebrating **2028-29 as a Friendship Year**.

- **President Lee Jae-yong** also visited India (**April 19-21**), holding critical meetings on energy, AI, cyber security, and semiconductors.

- During his visit, **President Lee Jae-yong** paid his respects at **Rajghat** and visited the **Taj Mahal**.

### 27. India and Sri Lanka Strengthen Diplomatic and Naval Ties

- **Vice President CP Radhakrishnan** made a two-day visit to **Sri Lanka**, signing MoUs for healthcare and regional development.

- He formally announced the completion of **Phase 3** of the **Indian Housing Project (4,000 houses)**.

- **Sri Lanka** agreed to officially join India's **International Big Cat Alliance**.

- On the defense front, **INS Nireekshak** reached **Colombo** for the **4th edition** of the bilateral defense/naval exercise (referred to as **SLINEX 2026** and **Divex**), held from **April 21 to 27**.

### 28. Space and Defence Milestones by Pakistan and China

- **Pakistan** became the first country to send foreign astronauts (**Muhammad Zeeshan Ali** and **Khurram Dawood**) to train for **China's Tiangong Space Station**.

- **Pakistan** successfully test-fired the indigenous **Taimur** air-launched anti-ship cruise missile.

### 29. New International Visits and French Visa-Free Transit Rule

- **Austrian Chancellor Christian Stocker** made his first visit to India and Asia.

- **France** officially allowed visa-free transit for Indian nationals passing via French airports by air.

### 30. Major Environmental and Biodiversity Declarations Made

- The **Environment Ministry** declared a **400 sq. km eco-sensitive and biodiversity protection zone** around the **Barasingha Wildlife Sanctuary** in **Uttar Pradesh (UP)**.

- **Shekha Jheel Bird Sanctuary (UP)** was officially declared a new **Ramsar site**.

- A female **melanistic leopard (Black Panther)** was translocated from **Assam** to **Indira Gandhi Zoological Park (Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh)** under an exchange program.

- India now boasts a total of **99 Ramsar sites**, with **12 located in UP**.

- The translocation happened after a gap of **40 years**.

- The top 3 largest Indian zoos are: 1) **Arignar Anna (Vandalur, Chennai)**, 2) **Nandankanan (Bhubaneswar)**, and 3) **Indira Gandhi (Visakhapatnam)**.

### 31. Maharashtra Launches Center of Excellence for Heat Resilience

- **Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis** launched a 'Center of Excellence for Heat Resilience and Sustainable Cooling' at the **Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Nagpur**.

### 32. 9th Edition of India International Water Week Launched

- The **9th edition** was launched by **CR Patil** at **Shram Shakti Bhawan, New Delhi**.

### 33. Major Appointments Across Corporate, Banking, and Judiciary

- **Corporate Appointments:**

- **John Ternus** named next **Apple CEO**, succeeding **Tim Cook** (who is retiring **Sep 2026** to remain as executive/chairperson).

- **Vibha Padalkar** reappointed as **HDFC Life MD & CEO** for 5 years.

- **Srikanth Velamakanni** appointed **NASSCOM Chairperson** (replacing **Sindhu Gangadharan**), with **Kishore Patil** as Vice Chairperson.

- **Banking Appointments:**

- **Devadatta Chand (Bank of Baroda MD & CEO)** extended for 3 years. • **Rajneesh Karnatak (Bank of India MD)** extended for 3 years.

- **Judicial Appointments:**

- **Justice Leesha Gill** (also cited as **Lisa Gill**) appointed **Chief Justice of the Andhra Pradesh High Court**, succeeding **Justice Dhiraj Singh Thakur**.
- **Bank of Baroda (BoB)** static facts: Formed in **1908**, HQ in **Vadodara**, and merged with **Dena Bank & Vijaya Bank** on **Apr 1, 2019**.

### 34. Winners Declared for Miss India 2026 and Goldman Prize

- **Miss India 2026: Sadhvi Satish Sel** (Goa) won the **61st edition** held at **Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT)**, **Bhubaneswar**. Crowned by **Nikita Porwal**, she will represent India at **Miss World 2027**. The runner-up was **Rajnandini Pawar** (Maharashtra).
- **Goldman Environmental Prize 2026**: Awarded to an all-women cohort of six leaders globally, including **Boram Kim** (Republic of Korea) representing Asia.
- The theme for Miss India 2026 was "**Daughters of the Soil**".

### 35. Ministry of Culture Launches VM Frames Competition

- An initiative to celebrate the upcoming **150th anniversary** of the national song **Vande Mataram**.
- The **Ministry of Culture** launched the **VM Frames (Vande Mataram)** filmmaking contest.
- Categories and prizes include: **Instagram Reels** (1st prize **₹1.5 lakh**), **AI-based films** (**₹5 lakh**), and **Short Films** (**₹15 lakh**).

### 36. International Sports Events Kick Off and Host Cities Announced

- **ISSF Junior World Cup**: Started in **Cairo, Egypt**. Hosted by the **Germany-headquartered International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF)**.
- **World Para Athletics Championship 2027**: The **13th edition** will be hosted in **Tashkent, Uzbekistan** in **June 2027**.

### 37. Recent Prominent Demises Across Fields

- **Nadendla Bhaskara Rao (90)**: Former **Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister**.
- **Bhagwandas Raikwar: Padma Shri awardee (2026)** from **Madhya Pradesh**.
- **Shiv Ratan Agarwal**: Founder and Chairman of **Bikaji Foods International**.
- **Nadendla Bhaskara Rao** had one of the shortest tenures as CM, serving for just **31 days in 1984**.
- **Bhagwandas Raikwar** was widely renowned for preserving **Bundeli martial arts (Akhada style)**.

### 38. Important National and International Days Observed in April

- **April 23**: Observed globally as **UN English Language Day, World Book and Copyright Day, and International Girls in ICT Day**.
- **April 24**: Observed nationally as **National Panchayati Raj Day**.
- Theme for International Girls in ICT Day: "**AI for Development: Girls Shaping the Digital Future**".
- **National Panchayati Raj Day** marks the implementation of the **73rd Constitutional Amendment Act of 1992** (which became effective on **April 24, 1993**).