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Global Press Freedom Hits Record Low in World Press Freedom Index 2026 Report

India has been ranked at 157th out of 180 countries in the latest World Press Freedom Index 2026. Press freedom has reached its weakest point in decades across the globe, according to the latest annual report by Reporters Without Borders. The group's World Press Freedom Index, which evaluates 180 countries, recorded its lowest average score in the index's 25-year history. For the first time ever more than half of the countries assessed fall into the 'difficult' or 'very serious' category.

Understanding the World Press Freedom Index

The World Press Freedom Index evaluates the all countries based on these five key indicators.

1. Political environment
2. Legal framework
3. Economic conditions
4. Social context
5. Safety of journalists

It provides the comprehensive picture of how free and safe journalism is in each individual country.

Top 10 Countries with the Best Press Freedom

For this year once again the European nations have dominated the list and they are known for strong institutions and media protections.

Top 10 Best Countries (2026)

1. Norway
2. Netherlands
3. Estonia
4. Denmark
5. Sweden
6. Finland
7. Ireland
8. Switzerland
9. Luxembourg
10. Portugal

Norway has retained the top position for the 10th consecutive year which reflects the its strong commitment to the press freedom and journalist safety.

Top 10 Countries with the Worst Press Freedom

Top 10 Worst Countries (2026)

- Azerbaijan (171)
- Russia (172)
- Turkmenistan (173)
- Vietnam (174)
- Afghanistan (175)
- Saudi Arabia (176)

- Iran (177)
- China (178)
- North Korea (179)
- Eritrea (180)

For the third consecutive years Eritrea remains the worst performing country with severe restrictions on media.

India's Rank Falls Amid Crisis

As per the report India's position showcases the continued decline over the past decade. In the year 2014 India was ranked at 140 and there have been slight fluctuations in the recent years and this trend shows the steady downfall in the press freedom conditions.

The report also highlights that India is among more than 110 countries where the legal framework governing media was weakened and raising the concerns about the ability of journalists to report freely without any fear or legal consequence.

India and Its Neighbors Comparison

India now ranks below the neighborhood countries.

- Nepal (87)
- Maldives (108)
- Sri Lanka (134)
- Bhutan (150)
- Bangladesh (152)
- Pakistan (153)

'Criminalisation of Journalism' The Key Concern For 2026

One of the most alarming observations from the 2026 index is the rise of terms called 'criminalisation of journalism.' This refers to the increasing usage of the laws to restrict or penalize journalistic work.

Major Issues Identified

- The misuse of national security laws.
- Also the use of emergency provisions and enforcement of legal tools to restrict them to reporting.
- Also growing challenges like legal harassment and pressure on independent journalists.

Global Press Freedom Hits 25-Year Low

The 2026 index has also reveals the concerning global picture as the press freedom reaching its lowest level since 2001.

Key Global Trends

- Over the 50% of countries fall under 'difficult' or 'very serious' categories.
- Also the legal indicators of press freedom have been declined in over 60% of nations.
- And protection mechanisms for journalists are becoming weak or ineffective in 80% of countries.

This indicates that the crisis is not just limited to a few regions but it is the widespread global phenomenon.



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India, Vietnam elevate ties to Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership

General Secretary of Central Committee of Communist Party of Viet Nam and President of the Socialist Republic of Viet Nam H.E. Mr. To Lam have paid the visit to India on the invitation of Honorable Prime Minister of India. This visit have taken their bilateral relationship to the next level with the announcement of an Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and visit have resulted in the signing of total 13 Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) and several announced several announcements.

Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership: What It Means

The elevation of the bilateral ties to an Enhanced Comprehensive Strategic Partnership the important diplomatic milestone between India and Vietnam. This framework aims to strengthen cooperation in the strategic sectors which includes defense, technology, economic growth, maritime security and people to people connections.

Also Vietnam’s decision to join the Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI) highlights the increasing regional cooperation. The IPOI is launched by India which focuses on maritime security, sustainable marine resources and regional stability in the Indo-Pacific region.

The strengthened partnership comes at that time when both the countries are focusing on supply chains and boost the digital infrastructure and improve the regional connectivity.

Key Agreements Signed Between India and Vietnam

Digital Payments and Financial Innovation Push

One of the most important agreements is signed during the visit was between the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the State Bank of Vietnam (SBV). This agreement focuses on operation in the financial innovation and digital payment status.

Additionally the agreement between NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) and the National Payment Corporation of Vietnam (NAPAS) will also help establish cross-border QR code based interoperability.

Rare Earth and Technology Cooperation Expands

India and Vietnam also signed the important agreement on cooperation in the rare earth elements between IREL (India) Ltd. and Vietnam’s Institute for Technology of Radioactive and Rare Elements (ITRRE).

The Rare earth elements (REEs) are critical for manufacturing electric vehicles, semiconductors, renewable energy equipment and defense technologies.

Also this agreement is strategically important as it seeks to alternatives to concentrated global supply chains.

Another major agreement was signed between the India’s Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology with the Vietnam’s Ministry of Science and Technology to strengthen their cooperation in digital technologies and the IT sector.

Healthcare and Pharmaceutical Regulation Cooperation

Also, India and Vietnam signed an agreement between the India’s Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO) and Vietnam’s Drug Administration to improve cooperation in the sector of medical products regulation.

This agreement will covers pharmaceuticals, biological products, cosmetics and medical devices. This is expected to support the smoother healthcare trade and regulatory coordination between the two countries.

As India is known worldwide as a major pharmaceutical manufacturing hub and this partnership will create new opportunities for healthcare exports and investments.

Tourism, Culture and Education Relations Strengthened

The several agreements focused on the cultural and educational collaboration.

A new Cultural Exchange Program for the period of 2026-2030 was signed to expand cultural activities, exchanges and artistic cooperation.

India has also signed tourism cooperation agreements which are aimed at promoting travel and people-to-people interaction.

Tourism cooperation is also expected to increase the cultural familiarity and economic activity between the two countries.

The agreement between the Nalanda University and the Ho Chi Minh National Academy of Politics will focuses on capacity building and training initiatives.

Mumbai and Ho Chi Minh City to Collaborate

An agreement between the Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) and the Ho Chi Minh City People’s Committee is aims to improve the cooperation in urban governance and economic development.

The partnership will help both the megacities and exchange expertise in areas of infrastructure, waste management, smart city planning and sustainable urban growth.

Cham Manuscripts Digitisation Project

Also a culturally significant agreement was signed for the digitization and preservation of Cham manuscripts of Indian origin preserved in the Vietnam.

This project will involve survey, documentation, conservation and the online dissemination of these ancient manuscripts and will strengthening historical and civilizational links between India and Vietnam.

Trade Target Raised to USD 25 Billion

The India and Vietnam have announced a new bilateral trade target of USD 25 billion by 2030. Both the countries are looking to expand their cooperation in sectors such as,

- Electronics and semiconductors
- Agriculture and food exports
- Pharmaceuticals
- Renewable energy
- Digital economy
- Maritime trade

To improve the agricultural trade India has announced the export of Indian grapes to Vietnam while Vietnam will export durian to India.

Why the India-Vietnam Partnership Matters

India and Vietnam shares the long standing civilizational, political and economic ties which have strengthened significantly over the last decade.

As both the countries view each other as important partners to maintaining regional stability, promoting economic growth and ensuring a free and open Indo-Pacific.

The leaders have also noted that 2026 marks the 10th anniversary of the India-Vietnam Comprehensive Strategic Partnership and they agreed to deepen cooperation across the various sectors under the shared vision of strategic convergence and the substantive cooperation.

National Affairs

- The **Andaman and Nicobar Islands** created a **Guinness World Record** by unfurling the **world’s largest underwater national flag** at **Radhanagar Beach, Swaraj Dweep (Havelock Island)** on **May 3, 2026**. The massive **Indian Tricolour**, measuring **60 x 40 metres**, was successfully deployed underwater with the support of over **200 trained divers**. Key participants included the **Indian Navy, Indian Coast Guard, Andaman and Nicobar Police, Forest Department**, and professional scuba divers. Young divers **Fateh Jahaan Singh, Lavanya Eira, and Ranvijay Singh** added emotional significance to the event. The achievement is expected to boost **scuba diving, marine tourism, and global recognition** of the islands.
- India has launched its first **Multi-Lane Free Flow (MLFF)** tolling system in **Gujarat** on the **Surat–Bharuch stretch of NH-48** at the **Chorayasi Toll Plaza**. Introduced by the **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)**, the system enables vehicles to pass toll points without stopping, making toll collection fully **automated and contactless**. On the first day, nearly **41,500 vehicles** crossed seamlessly. The system uses **Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR)** and **FASTag technology** for toll deduction. Key benefits include reduced **traffic congestion**, improved **fuel efficiency**, lower **vehicular emissions**, and greater transparency. NHAI has also introduced **E-Notice compliance rules**, including penalties for insufficient FASTag balance and possible FASTag blacklisting for non-payment.
- **Sikkim** has become India’s first **fully paperless judiciary**, as announced by Chief Justice of India **Surya Kant** during the **National Conclave on Technology and Judicial Education** in **Gangtok**. The achievement marks a major step in India’s **digital justice transformation**, enabling courts to function without physical paperwork. Under this system, citizens can use **e-filing**, access **digital records**, attend **virtual hearings**, and track cases online. The initiative aligns with the vision that **“petitions must move, not people,”** improving access to justice in remote areas.

- The **Union Health Ministry** has launched a comprehensive national framework for managing **childhood diabetes**, covering children from **birth to 18 years**. The initiative focuses on **early screening, diagnosis, treatment, and long-term care** to reduce diabetes-related complications and deaths. The newly released **“Guidance Document on Diabetes Mellitus in Children”** introduces a standardized nationwide approach integrating community screening, district hospitals, and advanced medical care. The government has promoted the **4Ts awareness model — Toilet, Thirsty, Tired, and Thinner —** to help identify **Type 1 diabetes** symptoms early.
- The **Assembly Election Results 2026** brought major political changes across several Indian states and Union Territories. In **West Bengal**, the **Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)** won **206 seats**, ending **Mamata Banerjee’s** 15-year rule as the **AITC** secured only 80 seats. In **Tamil Nadu**, actor-politician **Vijay Thalapathy’s Tamilaga Vettri Kazhagam (TVK)** emerged as the largest party with **108 seats**, ahead of **DMK** and **ADMK**. In **Kerala**, the **United Democratic Front (UDF)** defeated the **LDF**, ending a decade of Left rule. Meanwhile, the **BJP-led NDA** retained power in **Assam** with over 100 alliance seats and continued its dominance in the Northeast. In **Puducherry**, the **NDA government** led by **N. Rangasamy** successfully retained power.
- **Hazaribag district** in **Jharkhand** is set to become India’s first and only **pearl farming cluster**, supported by the government and the fisheries department to promote **scientific aquaculture** and rural employment. The initiative aims to develop Hazaribag into a model hub for sustainable and profitable pearl cultivation through modern farming techniques, market linkages, and phased expansion. A major focus is on **women empowerment**, with **self-help groups (SHGs)** receiving training and plans underway to form an all-women **Farmer Producer Organization (FPO)**. The project also integrates **pearl farming with cage fish culture** at the **Tilaiya Reservoir** to diversify farmers’ incomes. Pearl farming, involving oyster cultivation in controlled water conditions, offers strong potential for **employment, exports, and rural economic development**.
- The **Union Cabinet** approved the **Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026** on **May 5, 2026**, proposing to increase the strength of the **Supreme Court of India** from **34 to 38 judges**, including the **Chief Justice of India (CJI)**. The amendment seeks to revise the **Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956** to address the rising backlog of cases and improve judicial efficiency. Currently, the court has **33 judges apart from the CJI**, and the proposal aims to expand this to **37 judges plus the CJI**. Under **Article 124(1)** of the Constitution, Parliament has the power to determine the number of Supreme Court judges. The move is expected to ensure **faster hearings, quicker disposal of cases, and reduced workload on judges**, strengthening India’s judicial system.

- The **Union Cabinet**, led by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, has approved two new semiconductor projects under the **India Semiconductor Mission (ISM)** with a combined investment of over **₹3,936 crore** in **Gujarat**. The projects are expected to generate more than **2,200 skilled jobs** and strengthen India's goal of becoming a global semiconductor hub. One project by **Crystal Matrix Limited (CML)** in **Dholera** will establish India's first **Mini/Micro-LED and Gallium Nitride (GaN) semiconductor fabrication facility**, supporting advanced display technologies and smart devices. The second project by **Suchi Semicon Private Limited (SSPL)** in **Surat** will set up an **OSAT (Outsourced Semiconductor Assembly and Test)** facility with a production capacity of over **1 billion chips annually**. With these approvals, India now has **12 semiconductor projects** under ISM with investments totaling around **₹1.64 lakh crore**.
 - The **Union Cabinet**, led by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, has approved a **state-of-the-art ship repair facility** at **Vadinar, Gujarat**, with an investment of around **₹1,570 crore**. The project will be jointly implemented by the **Deendayal Port Authority** and **Cochin Shipyard Limited** to strengthen India's maritime infrastructure and reduce dependence on foreign shipyards. Located near major ports like **Mundra** and **Kandla**, Vadinar's strategic position along international shipping routes makes it ideal for servicing large vessels. The facility will include a **650-metre jetty, two floating dry docks**, and advanced marine workshops capable of repairing ships up to **300 metres long**. The project is expected to create around **290 direct** and **1,100 indirect jobs**, while supporting MSMEs and boosting India's goals under **Maritime India Vision 2030** and **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**.
 - The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, approved the **₹5,659.22 crore Mission for Cotton Productivity** for the period **2026–27 to 2030–31** to improve cotton yields, quality, sustainability, and farmer income. The mission aims to strengthen the entire cotton value chain under the government's **5F strategy — Farm to Fibre to Factory to Fashion to Foreign**. Key focus areas include developing **high-yield and climate-resilient seeds**, promoting **modern farming techniques**, improving **cotton quality and processing**, strengthening testing infrastructure, and supporting branding through **Kasturi Cotton Bharat**. The mission will cover **140 districts across 14 states** with support from **ICAR institutes, CSIR, and State Agricultural Universities**.
 - The Union Government has officially notified the creation of the new **South Coast Railway (SCoR) Zone** with its headquarters at **Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh**, and the zone will become operational from **June 1, 2026**. Formed under the **Railways Act, 1989**, the new zone has been created through the reorganization of the **East Coast Railway** and **South Central Railway**. It will include the **Guntakal, Guntur, and Vijayawada divisions** from South Central Railway, along with the reorganized **Waltair division**, which will become the **Visakhapatnam division**.
- Additionally, a new **Rayagada division** will be established under East Coast Railway.
- **PRASHAST 2.0** has been launched by the **National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** to promote **inclusive education** and support early identification of disabilities among school children. The upgraded digital platform, called **Pre-Assessment Holistic Screening Tool (PRASHAST)**, helps teachers and schools screen students for **21 types of disabilities** recognized under the **Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016**. Available in both **mobile and web formats**, the tool follows a **two-level screening process** involving teachers and special educators to identify learning and developmental challenges at an early stage. PRASHAST 2.0 is integrated with systems like **UDISE+, APAAR ID, and the Swavlamban Card Portal**, enabling better tracking and support for **Children with Special Needs (CWSN)**.
 - **Vande Mataram** has completed **150 years** since it was written by **Bankim Chandra Chattopadhyay** in **1875**. To mark the occasion, the Union Cabinet led by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** has proposed granting the song legal protection equivalent to the **National Anthem, Jana Gana Mana**, through amendments to the **Prevention of Insults to National Honour Act**. Originally written in **Sanskritized Bengali** and published in the novel **Anandamath**, Vande Mataram became a powerful symbol of India's freedom struggle and nationalist movement. Although it was recognized as the **National Song** in 1950, it currently does not have the same legal safeguards as the National Anthem.
 - The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW)** has launched the **JANANI (Journey of Antenatal, Natal and Neonatal Integrated Care)** platform to strengthen **maternal and child healthcare** through digital monitoring and integrated health records. The platform will track healthcare services across stages such as **antenatal care, childbirth, postnatal care, newborn care, young child healthcare, and family planning services**. JANANI aims to improve healthcare accessibility, continuity, and early detection of pregnancy or infant health risks by creating a centralized digital system for mothers and children. The initiative supports India's broader **digital healthcare push** under programs like the **Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission** and **e-Health records systems**.
 - CSIR-Central Road Research Institute and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited received recognition from the **India Book of Records** and **Asia Book of Records** for developing India's first **roadblock section** using **technical textile geocells** made from **end-of-life plastic waste**. The project, showcased at New Delhi, converts difficult-to-manage plastic waste into durable road infrastructure materials. These recycled **geocells**, which are honeycomb-like structures used to strengthen roads and stabilize soil, support **sustainable infrastructure** and promote the **circular economy** by reusing plastic waste productively. The initiative also highlights successful collaboration between scientific research and industry for environmentally friendly road engineering solutions.

- Union Labour Minister Mansukh Mandaviya launched a nationwide **free annual health check-up programme** for workers aged **40 years and above** under the new **Labour Codes** through the Employees' State Insurance Corporation network. Launched at the ESIC Medical College in New Delhi, the initiative focuses on **preventive healthcare, early disease detection, occupational health, and social security expansion**. Workers in hazardous industries will receive mandatory medical screenings regardless of age. The programme supports the implementation of the **four Labour Codes**, aimed at improving worker welfare, healthcare access, and formal social security coverage across India.
- Sanjay Seth will inaugurate India's first international ophthalmology research conference, AIOS-AFOU 2026, in New Delhi on **May 9–10, 2026**. Organised by Army Hospital (Research & Referral) and All India Ophthalmological Society, the conference will focus on **AI-driven diagnostics, retinal imaging, diabetic retinopathy, corneal diseases, ocular injuries, and military ophthalmology**. Leading institutions like AIIMS New Delhi and global experts including Harminder Singh Dua and Colin Siang Hui Tan will participate, promoting innovation and collaboration in advanced eye care research.
- Apara Saxena from Karnataka has earned the prestigious **International Master (IM)** title after securing all **three required IM norms** in European chess tournaments. Awarded by FIDE, the IM title is one of the highest global chess titles after Grandmaster and requires consistent performances against strong international players along with a high FIDE rating. Apara's achievement highlights India's growing dominance in world chess, driven by better coaching, online platforms, international exposure, and rising youth participation, while also strengthening Karnataka's reputation as a major centre for chess talent in India.
- India has introduced **QR-code-enabled identity cards** for Census enumerators under the upcoming **Census 2027** exercise to improve **transparency, security, and digital verification**. Citizens can verify enumerators by scanning QR codes using smartphones, helping prevent impersonation during field visits. The technology-driven Census system includes **mobile apps, centralised portals, real-time monitoring, and self-enumeration facilities**. The first phase began on **April 1, 2026**, involving nearly **30 lakh enumerators** nationwide. Conducted under the Census Act, 1948, the initiative supports India's broader push toward **digital governance, paperless administration, and efficient data collection**.
- The Supreme Court Bar Association may introduce a **permanent women-only Vice-President post** from the **2027-28 election cycle** following a proposal by the Supreme Court of India to improve **women's representation in legal leadership**. The court also restored earlier reservations for the **Secretary's post** and selected Executive Committee seats for women in the **2026-27 SCBA elections** after

objections from women advocates regarding representation significance. The proposal aims to strengthen **gender inclusivity, leadership opportunities, and participation of women lawyers** in Bar body governance and could influence similar reforms across legal institutions in India.

States in the News

- **Himanta Biswa Sarma** has submitted his resignation as the **Chief Minister of Assam** to Governor **Lakshman Prasad Acharya** at **Lok Bhawan, Guwahati**, following the Assembly election results. The Governor requested Sarma and his Council of Ministers to continue in a **caretaker capacity** until the new government is officially formed. The **BJP-led NDA** secured a landslide victory in the state, and sources indicate that Sarma is likely to continue as Chief Minister, with the oath-taking ceremony expected on **May 12, 2026**. As per constitutional convention, Chief Ministers resign after elections to allow the Governor to invite the newly elected legislative party leader to form the government. The BJP has appointed **J.P. Nadda** and **Nayab Singh Saini** as observers for selecting the legislature party leader, while ally **AGP** has extended support to Sarma's candidature.
- According to National Crime Records Bureau data, Bengaluru recorded the **highest suicide rate among major Indian cities**, with nearly **20 suicides per lakh population** during 2022–2024. The Accidental Deaths and Suicides in India report showed Bengaluru recorded **2,403 suicides in 2024**, while Delhi had higher total cases but a lower suicide rate due to its larger population. Major causes included **family problems, illness, mental health issues, economic stress, work pressure, migration stress, and social isolation**, highlighting growing urban mental health concerns and the need for better counselling and support systems.
- Suvendu Adhikari was elected as the new Chief Minister of West Bengal after Bharatiya Janata Party secured a decisive Assembly election victory, ending the 15-year rule of All India Trinamool Congress led by Mamata Banerjee. The announcement was made in Kolkata by Amit Shah during the BJP legislature party meeting. Adhikari, who joined BJP in 2020 after leaving TMC, previously defeated Mamata Banerjee in Nandigram and emerged as a key face of BJP's rise in Bengal. Reports also suggest the appointment of two Deputy Chief Ministers, including a woman leader.
- Aizawl hosted its first-ever **Regional Cooperative Reform Conference** under the vision of "**Sahkar se Samridhi**" led by Narendra Modi. Organised by the Ministry of Cooperation, the event focused on strengthening **cooperative banking, dairy, fisheries, grain storage, PACS expansion, organic farming, and market linkages** in the North-East. Representatives from all North-Eastern states and institutions like NABARD and National Dairy Development Board participated. Discussions highlighted **cooperative-led rural development, exports, women entrepreneurship, and the World's Largest Grain Storage Plan** to boost inclusive growth and local economies.

- Odisha has emerged as the top-performing state under Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Urban 2.0 in **house completion rankings** from **March 2025 to March 2026**. Under the scheme launched in **September 2024**, Odisha sanctioned **24,625 houses**, geo-tagged **23,464 sites**, started foundation work on **3,134 houses**, and completed **2,008 houses** by May 2026. The achievement highlights the state's strong implementation of **affordable urban housing, digital monitoring, geo-tagging technology, and coordinated efforts by urban local bodies** to provide pucca houses for economically weaker and middle-income families.
- Jharkhand achieved a major education milestone by recording a **0% primary dropout rate** in **2024-25**, according to NITI Aayog and Unified District Information System for Education Plus data. The state reduced primary dropout from **6.41% in 2014-15** to zero, while upper primary dropout declined from **7.42% to 1.7%** and secondary dropout from **23.2% to 3.5%**. Jharkhand ranked **fourth nationally** in secondary dropout reduction, reflecting strong progress in **student retention, school participation, and educational access**, despite challenges like teacher vacancies and out-of-school children.
- Suwendu Adhikari took oath as the **first BJP Chief Minister of West Bengal since Independence** on **May 9, 2026** at Brigade Parade Ground in the presence of Narendra Modi and senior NDA leaders. The Bharatiya Janata Party won **207 seats** in the 294-member Assembly, ending the All India Trinamool Congress government's **15-year rule**. Adhikari, who joined BJP in **2020**, earlier defeated Mamata Banerjee in Nandigram. The victory marks a major political shift in eastern India and strengthens BJP's national presence under its **"Sonar Bangla" development vision**.
- Maharashtra approved the **Compressed Biogas (CBG) Policy 2026** to promote **renewable energy, waste-to-energy systems, and sustainable waste management**, allocating **₹500 crore** for FY 2026-27. The policy aims to establish **CBG projects in every district** using **municipal solid waste and agricultural residue** to produce clean fuel through anaerobic digestion. It includes **PPP and hybrid annuity models**, viability gap funding up to **₹15 crore per project**, mandatory waste segregation, and priority utility support. Linked with schemes like SATAT and Swachh Bharat Mission, the initiative supports India's **Net-Zero 2070 goals** and circular economy efforts.
- West Bengal formed its **first-ever BJP-led government** after Suwendu Adhikari took oath as the **9th Chief Minister** on **May 9, 2026**, following BJP's massive victory of **207 seats** in the Assembly elections. The swearing-in ceremony at Brigade Parade Ground also included ministers Dilip Ghosh, Agnimitra Paul, Ashok Kirtania, Kshudiram Tudu, and Nisith Pramanik. The cabinet reflects BJP's focus on **regional, tribal, Matua, women, and North Bengal representation**, with further cabinet expansion expected soon.

International Affairs

- Health experts worldwide are raising concerns over recent **hantavirus** cases linked to **cruise ship travel**. Hantavirus is a rare but potentially deadly disease mainly spread through contact with **rodent urine, saliva, droppings, or contaminated airborne particles**. Experts warn that the enclosed environment of cruise ships may increase exposure risks and make tracing infections difficult. Early symptoms include **fever, muscle aches, fatigue, headache, nausea, and vomiting**, which can rapidly progress into **Hantavirus Pulmonary Syndrome (HPS)**, causing severe lung complications. There is currently **no specific antiviral cure**, making early diagnosis and supportive care critical.
- Air pollution has become a major global concern in **2026**, with several unexpected cities recording dangerously high **Air Quality Index (AQI)** levels. According to recent rankings, **Cobh (Ireland)** topped the list with an AQI of **208**, followed by **Dungarvan** and **Clonmel** in Ireland, while cities like **Kashgar (China), Bikaner, Patna, Aurangabad, and Muzaffarpur (India)** also reported unhealthy pollution levels. Experts attribute the rise to factors such as **weather stagnation, reduced wind flow, construction dust, vehicular emissions, industrial activity, and desert dust particles**. In India, rapid urbanization and traffic congestion are worsening air quality in several cities.
- The **Santa Marta Climate Conference 2026**, jointly hosted by **Colombia** and the **Netherlands** in April 2026, brought together representatives from around **50 countries** to accelerate global action against **fossil fuel dependence and climate change**. Organized as an alternative to slower **UN COP climate negotiations**, the conference focused on faster and stronger commitments for the **clean energy transition**. Key discussions included preparing national roadmaps for **phasing out fossil fuels, promoting renewable energy cooperation, and aligning trade and investment with low-carbon goals**. Major participants included **Germany, France, Brazil, Nigeria, and Nepal**. France announced plans to phase out **coal by 2030, oil by 2045, and natural gas by 2050**.
- India and the **European Union (EU)** have launched a **₹169 crore joint initiative** to strengthen **EV battery recycling capacity** under the **India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC)**. The project focuses on addressing key challenges in the rapidly growing **electric vehicle ecosystem**, including resource security and environmental sustainability. Supported by leaders such as **Ajay Kumar Sood** and **Hervé Delphin**, the initiative aims to develop advanced recycling technologies for recovering critical minerals like **lithium, cobalt, and nickel** from used lithium-ion batteries. Key features include **high-efficiency material recovery processes, digital battery collection systems, pilot demonstration projects, and a joint pilot recycling line in India**. Funded through the EU's **Horizon Europe** program and India's **Ministry of Heavy Industries**, the initiative supports the development of a **circular economy** and strengthens long-term clean energy and EV sustainability goals.

- Jeremiah Manele lost a **no-confidence vote** in the Parliament of Solomon Islands on **May 7, 2026**, by **26-22 votes**, ending his coalition government amid political instability. The crisis began after cabinet resignations and coalition partners withdrew support. Opposition leader Peter Shanel Agovaka accused the government of poor governance, lack of transparency, and weak financial accountability. Parliament was adjourned for the Governor-General to begin selecting a new Prime Minister. The development is geopolitically significant due to the country's growing ties with China in the strategically important Pacific region.
- India inaugurated its Pavilion at the 61st La Biennale di Venezia in Venice, Italy, showcasing the exhibition **"Geographies of Distance: remembering home"** under the leadership of Gajendra Singh Shekhawat. Curated by Amin Jaffer and supported by Ministry of Culture, Nita Mukesh Ambani Cultural Centre and Serendipity Arts, the pavilion explores **memory, migration, identity, ecology, and belonging** through works of five Indian artists. The exhibition strengthens India's **cultural diplomacy**, promotes **contemporary Indian art globally**, and highlights the country's growing presence on international cultural platforms.
- Indore will host the **BRICS Agriculture Ministers' Meeting in June 2026** under India's BRICS Presidency, bringing together ministers from BRICS nations — Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. The meeting will focus on **food security, climate-resilient agriculture, digital farming, AI in agriculture, sustainable irrigation, agricultural trade, and farmer welfare**. India aims to showcase its advances in **smart farming and agricultural innovation** while strengthening global cooperation on food systems. Hosting the summit also enhances Indore's international profile as a major centre for **agriculture, trade, and smart city development**.
- International Olympic Committee has lifted restrictions on Belarus ahead of the Los Angeles 2028 Summer Olympics, allowing Belarusian athletes and teams to participate officially in international competitions, opening ceremonies, and medal events. However, Russia remains suspended, with Russian athletes permitted only as **neutral competitors** without national symbols and under strict eligibility conditions. The suspension of the Russian Olympic Committee continues due to concerns over the Ukraine conflict and anti-doping issues raised by World Anti-Doping Agency. Meanwhile, World Athletics has decided to continue restrictions on both Russian and Belarusian athletes.
- India has advanced a renewed **MSME cooperation agenda** under its **BRICS Chairship 2026** by organising the first SME Working Group Meeting on **April 24, 2026**. Led by the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, the virtual meeting focused on **MSME access to finance, fintech-driven credit ecosystems, digital lending, financial inclusion, and**

cross-border trade payments. Discussions under the BRICS Partnership on the New Industrial Revolution highlighted the role of MSMEs in **employment, innovation, exports, and inclusive growth**. India will also host the inaugural **BRICS MSME Forum** to strengthen policy coordination and institutional cooperation among BRICS nations.

Agreements/MoUs Signed

- IndiaAI has signed an MoU with Indian Council of Medical Research to promote **AI-driven healthcare innovation** in India. The partnership will integrate IndiaAI's digital infrastructure with ICMR's biomedical research expertise to develop **ethical, scalable, and research-based healthcare AI solutions**. Under the agreement, anonymised healthcare datasets and AI tools developed through the **MIDAS framework** will be hosted on the **AIKosh platform**, improving access for researchers and startups. IndiaAI will also provide **high-performance computing infrastructure** to support AI applications in **disease prediction, medical imaging, healthcare analytics, and drug research**, strengthening India's push for responsible AI governance in healthcare.

Banking/Economy/Business News

- Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** has warned that advanced AI models like **Anthropic's Mythos** could create serious cybersecurity threats for financial institutions. These AI systems can rapidly identify and exploit vulnerabilities in banking infrastructure, reducing the response time available to banks. Modern banking systems, including **core banking software, mobile apps, APIs, cloud services, and payment systems**, are highly interconnected, making them vulnerable to AI-driven attacks. The government has advised banks to strengthen **IT security**, improve **data protection**, and coordinate with **CERT-In** and the **Indian Banks Association**. Globally, institutions like **JPMorgan Chase, Microsoft, and Google** are developing AI-based defenses. Despite risks, AI tools also offer benefits such as **faster threat detection** and automated security testing.
- India has allowed **100% Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** in the **insurance sector** under the **automatic route** through amendments to the **Foreign Exchange Management (Non-debt Instruments) Rules, 2019**, notified on **May 2, 2026**. The reform permits foreign investors to fully own insurance companies and intermediaries without prior government approval. Eligible entities include **insurance brokers, TPAs, consultants, surveyors, and insurance repositories**. The move aims to attract **global capital, technology, and expertise** while strengthening India's insurance ecosystem. Investments will remain regulated by the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** and companies must comply with the **Insurance Act, 1938**. However, the **LIC** will continue to have a separate **20% FDI cap** under the automatic route.

- India's **net direct tax collections** increased by **5.12%** to over **₹23.40 trillion** in **FY26**, according to data released by the **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)**. The growth reflects a resilient tax base supported by both **corporate tax** and **personal income tax** collections, despite falling short of the government's revised estimate of **₹24.21 trillion**. Corporate tax collections stood at around **₹10.99 lakh crore**, while **personal income tax**, including **Securities Transaction Tax (STT)**, contributed **₹12.41 trillion**, remaining the largest revenue source. Meanwhile, **gross direct tax collections** rose to **₹28.12 lakh crore**, and refunds declined to **₹4.71 trillion**.
- **Rohit Jain** has assumed charge as the new **Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** for a **three-year term**, following approval by the **Government of India** and the **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** on **May 2, 2026**. He succeeds **T. Rabi Sankar** and brings over **34 years of central banking experience**, having joined RBI in **1991**. Jain previously served as **Executive Director, Chief General Manager of the Department of Supervision**, and held senior positions at RBI's New Delhi office. He has also represented India in global institutions like the **Basel Committee on Banking Supervision (BCBS)** and the **Financial Stability Board (FSB)**.
- **Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw** has reportedly identified her niece **Claire Mazumdar** as the future successor of **Biocon**, signaling a planned leadership transition at one of India's leading **biopharmaceutical companies**. Claire, currently the founder and CEO of **Bicara Therapeutics**, has extensive experience in global biotechnology and has previously worked with **Third Rock Ventures** and **Rheos Medicines**. The move reflects Biocon's focus on future-ready leadership amid rapid advancements in **biosimilars, biotechnology, and artificial intelligence**. Biocon has also announced leadership restructuring, with **Shreehas Tambe** becoming CEO of **Biocon Biologics** and **Siddharth Mittal** set to lead **Syngene International** from July 2026.
- The **National Stock Exchange of India (NSE)** has launched **Electronic Gold Receipts (EGRs)**, offering investors a regulated and digital way to invest in gold. EGRs are electronic securities issued against physical gold stored in **SEBI-accredited vaults**, combining the security of physical gold with the convenience of electronic trading. Recently, NSE announced the successful **dematerialization of a 1,000-gram gold bar** into an EGR. These receipts can be traded on stock exchanges like shares and are backed by actual gold meeting standards set by the **London Bullion Market Association (LBMA)** and the **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)**. Key benefits include **safe storage, easy liquidity, lower risk of theft, and accessibility for retail investors**. Unlike **Gold ETFs**, EGR holders can also choose to take **physical delivery of gold** by surrendering their receipts.
- **Kumar Mangalam Birla** has been appointed as the new **Non-Executive Chairman of Vodafone Idea Limited (Vi)**, effective from **May 5, 2026**. The appointment marks a major leadership transition as the telecom company focuses on strengthening its business operations and long-term revival strategy. Former Chairman **Ravinder Takkar** has stepped down from the role and will continue as the **Non-Executive Vice Chairman** of the company. Birla, Chairman of the **Aditya Birla Group**, has been closely associated with Vodafone Idea since its formation and is expected to boost investor confidence through his leadership.
- S&P Global has reduced India's **FY27 GDP growth forecast** from **7.1% to 6.6%** in the joint **"India Forward"** report with CRISIL, citing **global economic uncertainty, rising crude oil prices, rupee volatility, inflationary pressure, and the West Asia conflict**. The report warned that Brent crude surged to nearly **\$126 per barrel**, increasing risks to India's import bill and inflation outlook. Dharmakirti Joshi described rising oil prices and a weakening rupee as a **"double whammy"** for the economy, while the Reserve Bank of India projected FY27 inflation at **4.6%**.

Appointments/Resignations

- **Prasoon Joshi** has been appointed as the new Chairman of **Prasar Bharati** by the Government of India, with the announcement made on **May 2, 2026**. Known for his contributions to **literature, advertising, and cinema**, Joshi is expected to bring **innovation and creativity** to India's public broadcasting system. The **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting** highlighted his cultural understanding and leadership qualities. Union Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw** praised him as a **"rare creative spirit."** Joshi previously served as **CBFC Chairperson**, CEO of **McCann World Group India**, and trustee of **IGNCA**. **Prasar Bharati**, established under the **Prasar Bharati Act, 1990**, oversees **All India Radio, Doordarshan**, and the digital **Waves OTT platform**.
- The Government of India has appointed **R Balasubramaniam** and **Joram Aniya** as full-time members of **NITI Aayog**, expanding its core team to seven members. Approved by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, the appointments aim to strengthen policymaking with expertise in **governance, grassroots development, education, and cultural studies**. **Joram Aniya**, an academician from **Arunachal Pradesh**, is the first woman from the **Nyishi community** to earn a PhD and is known for her work on tribal culture and indigenous knowledge. **R Balasubramaniam**, founder of **SVYM** and **GRAAM**, is a noted policy expert and author. **NITI Aayog**, established in **2015**, serves as India's premier public policy think tank promoting **cooperative federalism** and policy innovation.

- **Shashi Shekhar Vempati** has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the **Central Board of Film Certification (CBFC)** for a **three-year term**, as announced by the **Ministry of Information and Broadcasting** on **May 6, 2026**. He succeeds **Prasoon Joshi**, who recently became Chairman of **Prasar Bharati**. Vempati is known for his strong background in **media, technology, broadcasting, and public communication** and previously served as the **CEO of Prasar Bharati**, where he led the modernization of **Doordarshan** and **All India Radio**. An alumnus of **IIT Bombay**, he has also contributed to initiatives in **AI, education, and science communication**, including co-founding **AI4India Org.**
- **Ramachandra Dattatray Huddar** has been appointed as the **Chairperson of the Admission Overseeing Committee (AOC)** in Karnataka on **May 8, 2026**. The AOC supervises admissions to **engineering, medical, dental, and other professional courses** to ensure transparency and regulatory oversight. Justice Huddar previously served as an **Additional and Permanent Judge of the Karnataka High Court**, besides holding key posts such as **Principal District and Sessions Judge** and **Director of the Karnataka Judicial Academy**. His appointment follows the completion of Justice B. Manohar's tenure and is expected to strengthen monitoring of professional education admissions in the state.
- **Defence Research and Development Organisation** and **Indian Air Force** successfully conducted the maiden flight trial of the **Tactical Advanced Range Augmentation (TARA)** weapon system off the Odisha coast using a **SEPECAT Jaguar** aircraft. Developed by **Research Centre Imarat**, TARA is India's first indigenous **glide weapon system** that converts conventional bombs into **precision-guided stand-off weapons**. The trial validated its **guidance, navigation, aerodynamic performance, and control systems**, enhancing India's precision strike capability, reducing dependence on imported weapons, and supporting the **Aatmanirbhar Bharat** defence initiative.
- **NS Raja Subramani** has been appointed as India's next Chief of Defence Staff and will assume office on **May 30**, succeeding **Anil Chauhan**. A former Vice Chief of Army Staff and current Military Adviser in the National Security Advisory Board, he served nearly **39 years in the Indian Army** after being commissioned into the Garhwal Rifles in 1985. His appointment is significant for ongoing **military reforms, theatreisation, defence modernisation, and stronger coordination among the Army, Navy, and Air Force**.
- **Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan** has been appointed as the next **Chief of the Naval Staff** and will assume office on **May 31, 2026**, succeeding **Dinesh K Tripathi**. Currently heading the **Western Naval Command**, he was commissioned into the Indian Navy in **1987** and is a specialist in **communication and electronic warfare**. He previously served as **Vice Chief of Naval Staff** and commanded major warships including **INS Vikramaditya** and **INS Mysore**. His appointment comes as India strengthens **maritime security, Indo-Pacific strategy, naval modernisation, and indigenous defence capabilities**.

Defence News

- India and Cambodia will begin the **2nd edition of the joint military exercise CINBAX-II** on **May 4, 2026**, in **Kampong Speu Province, Cambodia**, to strengthen bilateral defense cooperation. The two-week exercise will involve **120 personnel from the Indian Army**, mainly from the **Maratha Light Infantry Regiment**, and **160 troops from the Royal Cambodian Army**. The exercise focuses on enhancing **counter-terrorism capabilities, modern warfare skills, and joint operational readiness** under conditions similar to **UN peacekeeping missions**. Key training areas include **tactical combat drills, drone operations, sniper training, and mortar handling**.
- The **Indian Army** released a commemorative video on **May 7, 2026**, marking the first anniversary of **Operation Sindoor**, one of India's major cross-border counter-terror operations. Conducted on **May 7, 2025**, the operation targeted **nine terror camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir (PoK)** linked to groups such as **Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Mohammed, and Hizbul Mujahideen**. The strikes were launched in response to the **Pahalgam terror attack** of **April 22, 2025**, in which **26 Indian nationals** were killed. According to official reports, over **100 terrorists** were neutralized within about **25 minutes**. The anniversary video highlighted India's **zero-tolerance policy against terrorism**, showcasing coordinated military planning, precision strikes, and the evolving counter-terror doctrine involving the **Army, Navy, and Air Force**.

Awards and Recognitions

- Two Indian journalists, **R.K. Anand** and **Suparna Sharma**, won the **Pulitzer Prize 2026** in the category of **Illustrated Reporting and Commentary** for their investigative work on **cyber fraud and digital surveillance**. They shared the award with **Natalie Obiko Pearson** for the Bloomberg project titled **"trAPPed."** The report exposed the story of an Indian neurologist trapped in a **"digital arrest" scam**, highlighting how cybercriminals misuse technology to manipulate victims remotely. The project combined **visual storytelling, data analysis, and investigative journalism** to reveal the growing dangers of **online scams, digital exploitation, and surveillance abuse**. The award, announced on **May 4, 2026**, recognizes excellence in journalism and is administered by **Columbia University** through the prestigious **Pulitzer Prize** program.

- Soma Mandal has won the **South Asia regional title** at the **Cambridge Dedicated Teacher Awards 2026**, organized by Cambridge University Press & Assessment. She was recognized for her outstanding work in **environmental education, climate change awareness**, and promoting sustainability among students. The awards received over **12,000 nominations from 126 countries**, with only **nine regional winners** selected globally. Mandal's teaching approach focuses on practical climate solutions, student leadership, and environmental responsibility. As a winner, she will receive **₹500 worth of books**, a trophy, global recognition, and inclusion in future Cambridge textbooks.

Summits and Conferences News

- India will host the first-ever **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) Summit** on **June 1–2, 2026**, in **New Delhi**, bringing together global leaders, scientists, and conservationists to strengthen international cooperation for wildlife protection. The summit, announced by Union Environment Minister **Bhupender Yadav**, will focus on conserving the seven major big cat species — **tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar, and puma**. Guided by the theme **“Save Big Cats, Save Humanity, Save Ecosystem,”** the summit aims to promote global strategies for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem protection. A major expected outcome is the adoption of the **Delhi Declaration**, the first global declaration dedicated exclusively to big cat conservation. The **IBCA**, launched by India in **2023**, is headquartered in India and serves as a global platform for collaborative conservation, technical cooperation, and knowledge sharing among **95 big cat range countries**.

Sports News

- India's campaign in the **Thomas Cup 2026** ended with a **0-3 semifinal defeat** against **France**, forcing the team to settle for the **bronze medal**. The absence of **Lakshya Sen** due to a swollen elbow proved costly as India failed to win a single match. **Ayush Shetty** lost to **Christo Popov** 11-21, 9-21, while **Kidambi Srikanth** was defeated by **Alex Lanier** 16-21, 18-21. In the deciding match, **HS Prannoy** went down to **Toma Junior Popov** 19-21, 16-21. France created history by reaching their **first-ever Thomas Cup final**. Despite the loss, India maintained its strong global badminton presence with another Thomas Cup bronze medal.

Schemes and Committees News

- The **Union Cabinet**, led by Prime Minister **Narendra Modi**, has approved **Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS) 5.0** to provide additional financial support to businesses affected by the ongoing **West Asia crisis**. The

scheme aims to ensure business continuity and economic stability through a targeted credit flow of **₹2.55 lakh crore**, including **₹5,000 crore** earmarked for the **airline sector**. Under ECLGS 5.0, the government will provide **100% credit guarantee coverage for MSMEs** and **90% coverage for non-MSMEs and airlines** through the **National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC)**. Eligible businesses can avail additional loans up to **20% of their peak working capital**, while airlines may receive support up to **₹1,500 crore**.

- India's flagship Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana, and Atal Pension Yojana completed **11 years** on **May 9, 2026**, strengthening India's social security network. PMJJBY recorded **27.43 crore enrolments** with ₹2 lakh life cover, PMSBY crossed **58 crore enrolments** offering accident insurance up to ₹2 lakh, while APY surpassed **9 crore subscribers** providing guaranteed pensions after 60 years. Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted their role in **financial inclusion, affordable insurance, pension security, and support for low-income and unorganised workers** through simplified digital enrolment and claim systems.

Science and Technology News

- India achieved a major milestone in its private space sector with the launch of **Mission Drishti**, the country's largest privately developed **Earth observation satellite**, built by Bengaluru-based startup **GalaxEye**. The **190 kg satellite** was launched aboard **SpaceX's Falcon 9** rocket from **Vandenberg, California**. Mission Drishti features advanced **OptoSAR technology**, combining **Electro-Optical (EO)** and **Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)** systems for high-quality imaging in all weather and lighting conditions. The satellite supports applications in **defense, agriculture, disaster management, maritime security, and urban planning**. Backed by India's growing private space ecosystem and support from **IN-SPaCe**, the mission strengthens India's position in the global **satellite data and geospatial services market**.
- NASA successfully tested a **120-kilowatt magnetoplasmadynamic (MPD) plasma engine** at Jet Propulsion Laboratory, marking the **highest-power electric propulsion test in the United States**. The advanced engine uses **electromagnetic forces and lithium plasma** instead of chemical fuel, making it highly efficient for **deep-space missions**. NASA believes this technology could reduce **Mars travel time from nine months to 30–60 days**, improving astronaut safety and mission feasibility. The test also supports future **Nuclear Electric Propulsion (NEP)** systems for long-duration human exploration of Mars and other distant space missions.

- India hosted the International Organization for Standardization TC 20/SC 14 meetings on “**Space Systems and Operations**” for the first time in **New Delhi**, organised by Bureau of Indian Standards. The event at **Bharat Mandapam** saw participation from **131 delegates across 13 countries**, including experts from Indian Space Research Organisation, academia, and global space agencies. Discussions focused on **space safety, sustainability, interoperability, mission operations, and international standards**. Officials highlighted India’s growing role in the **global space economy**, supported by reforms, private participation through IN-SPaCE, and expanding commercial space activities.

Important Days News

- **International Firefighters Day 2026** will be observed on **May 4, 2026**, to honor the **courage, sacrifice, and dedication** of firefighters worldwide. Established in **1999**, the day also pays tribute to firefighters who lost their lives in the line of duty. The observance traces its origin to the **1998 Victoria, Australia wildfire tragedy**, where five firefighters died. The day coincides with the feast of **Saint Florian**, the patron saint of firefighters. Key symbols include the **red and blue ribbon**, representing fire and water, and the **‘Sound Off’ tradition** involving sirens and silence. Communities mark the day through **tributes, awareness campaigns, and fire safety programs**.
- The **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** has launched **Fire Safety Week 2026** from **May 4 to May 10, 2026**, focusing on improving fire preparedness in hospitals and public institutions. The campaign began with a nationwide pledge led by Union Health Secretary **Punya Salila Srivastava** and is based on the theme “**Safe Schools, Safe Hospitals, and a Fire-Safety Aware Society.**” Alongside the campaign, the government introduced new **National Guidelines on Fire and Life Safety in Healthcare Facilities** covering **risk assessment, emergency response, fire-resistant infrastructure, staff training, and compliance mechanisms**. Special attention has been given to high-risk hospital areas like **ICUs, NICUs, PICUs, and Operation Theatres**.
- **World Asthma Day 2026** is being observed on **May 5** with the theme announced by **GINA (Global Initiative for Asthma)**: “**Access to anti-inflammatory inhalers for everyone with asthma – still an urgent need.**” The campaign highlights the importance of **inhaled corticosteroids**, which help reduce airway inflammation, prevent severe asthma attacks, and lower hospitalization and death risks. Asthma affects over **260 million people worldwide** and causes nearly **450,000 deaths annually**, many of which are preventable with proper treatment. Common symptoms include **wheezing, shortness of breath, chest tightness, and persistent coughing**.
- **World Athletics Day 2026** is being celebrated on **May 7** to promote **fitness, sportsmanship, and healthy living**, especially among children and youth. First launched in **1996** during the centenary year of the **Atlanta Olympics**, the initiative was introduced by **Primo Nebiolo**, then President of the **International Amateur Athletic Federation (IAAF)**, now known as **World Athletics** since 2019. The day encourages participation in athletics activities such as **running, jumping, and throwing**, helping young people stay active in a digital age. Although the official theme for 2026 has not yet been announced, the focus remains on **youth empowerment, inclusivity, and physical fitness**.
- India is celebrating the **165th birth anniversary** of Rabinranath Tagore on **May 7, 2026**. Popularly known as **Gurudev**, Tagore was the first Asian to win the **Nobel Prize in Literature** in **1913** for Gitanjali. He was a poet, philosopher, educationist, composer, and the writer of India’s national anthem **Jana Gana Mana** and Bangladesh’s **Amar Sonar Bangla**.
- Tagore founded **Visva-Bharati University** at Santiniketan and promoted creativity, humanism, and nature-based education. He also renounced his British knighthood after the **Jallianwala Bagh Massacre** in protest against colonial brutality. Tagore Jayanti is celebrated with **Rabindra Sangeet, poetry recitations, cultural programs, seminars, and art performances**, especially in West Bengal and Bangladesh.
- **World Red Cross Day 2026** is being observed on **May 8** to honor the humanitarian contributions of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and commemorate the birth anniversary of **Henry Dunant**, born in **1828**. The official theme for 2026 is “**Keeping Humanity Alive,**” highlighting compassion, humanitarian service, global solidarity, and support for vulnerable communities during conflicts, disasters, and health emergencies. The Red Cross Movement, founded after the **Battle of Solferino**, now operates in over **190 countries** through organizations like the International Committee of the Red Cross and the Indian Red Cross Society. Activities on the day include **blood donation camps, health awareness drives, first-aid training, and volunteer recognition programs** worldwide.
- **World Thalassemia Day 2026** is observed on **May 8** with the theme “**Hidden No More: Finding the Undiagnosed. Supporting the Unseen.**” The day spreads awareness about **Thalassemia**, a serious inherited blood disorder affecting millions globally. It highlights the importance of **early diagnosis, prenatal screening, genetic counseling, and equal healthcare access** to reduce severe complications. The observance also honors patients and families battling the disease while promoting awareness campaigns, blood donation drives, and healthcare support programs. In India, over **1 lakh patients** and nearly **40 lakh carriers** are affected by thalassemia.



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- World Ovarian Cancer Day 2026 is observed on **May 8** with the theme **“No Woman Left Behind”**, highlighting the need for **equal access to early diagnosis, screening, treatment, and cancer care** worldwide. Led by the World Ovarian Cancer Coalition, the campaign raises awareness about **ovarian cancer symptoms** such as bloating, abdominal pain, pelvic discomfort, and frequent urination, which are often detected late. According to **GLOBOCAN 2020**, over **3.1 lakh cases** were reported globally. The initiative focuses on improving **research, healthcare infrastructure, awareness, and early detection**, especially in low- and middle-income countries.

Obituaries News

- Legendary media entrepreneur Ted Turner has died at the age of **87**, according to Turner Enterprises. Widely regarded as the pioneer of modern television journalism, Turner revolutionized global media by launching CNN on **June 1, 1980**, the world’s first **24-hour news channel**. His innovation transformed television news from scheduled bulletins into continuous live coverage of global events. Turner also reshaped cable television through channels such as Turner Broadcasting System, Cartoon Network, and Turner Classic Movies.

Static Takeaways

Aspect	Details
West Bengal	CM: Suvendu Adhikari Governor: RN Ravi Capital: Kolkata
Mizoram	CM: Pema Khandu Governor: C. H. Vijayashankar Capital: Aizawl
Russia	President: Vladimir Putin Capital: Moscow
Switzerland	President: Guy Parmelin Capital: Zurich
China	President: Xi Jinping Capital: Beijing
Portugal	President: Antonio Jose Seguro Capital: Lisbon
Vietnam	President: To Lam Capital: Hanoi
Gujarat	CM: Bhupendra Patel Governor: Acharya Devvrat Capital: Gandhinagar
Tamil Nadu	CM: Vijay Joseph Governor: R Arlekar Capital: Chennai
Supreme Court of India	CJI: Justice Surya Kant
RBI	Governor: Sanjay Agarwal
NSE	Chairperson: Srinivas Injeti
CBFC	Chairperson: Shkehar Vempati
Prasar Bharati	Chairperson: Prasoon Joshi