

MAHITHI MONTHLY SNIPPETS

OCTOBER 2025

NAMMAKPSC SPECIAL EDITION



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KARNATAKA ISSUES

The Mayank Agarwal-led Karnataka side, which won the Vijay Hazare Trophy after a gap of five years by beating Vidarbha in the final, walked away with the biggest smiles after being rewarded Rs 50 lakh for their spoils at the Karnataka State Cricket Association annual awards ceremony at the M Chinnaswamy stadium

The Centre of Excellence for Cybersecurity-Karnataka (CySecK) inaugurated the first cohort of its Cybersecurity Finishing School at the Indian Institute of Science (IISc). The programme aims to develop a skilled cybersecurity workforce by equipping students with advanced technical expertise and industry-relevant practical skills. A total of 50 students from across Bengaluru have been selected to participate in the inaugural cohort of this intensive training initiative. The Cybersecurity Finishing School is designed to bridge the gap between academic learning and industry needs, preparing students for cybersecurity roles through hands-on training, mentorship, and exposure to real-world use cases.

The Karnataka State Film Awards 2021 recognized excellence in Kannada cinema across multiple categories. Doddahatti Boregowda won Best Film, while 777 Charlie and Bisilu Kudure secured second and third places. Yuvarathnaa was named Best Popular Film. Acting honors went to Rakshit Shetty, Archana Jois, and supporting actors Pramod and Umashree. Technical awards highlighted Raghu K M, Imtiyaz Sultan, and others. Special categories included Nada Peda Asha (regional language) and Bhairavi (special jury award).

The Bangalore International Airport Limited (BIAL) has launched a new Mitti Café outlet at Kempegowda International Airport's (KIA) Terminal 2. Mitti Café is a non-profit that fosters economic independence and dignity for adults with physical, intellectual, and multiple disabilities.

Writers Shudra Srinivas, Pratibha Nandakumar, M. Basavanna, D.B. Nayak and Vishvanath Karnad and have been honoured with the Karnataka Sahitya Academy honorary award for the year 2024. In consideration of the remarkable service given to the field of Kannada literature, 10 writers are being given the 'Sahitya Shri' award of Karnataka Sahitya Academy for the year 2024. They are: K.Y. Naranaswamy, B.M. Puttaiah, Padmalaya Nagaraj, B.U. Suma, Mamata Sagara, Sabita Bannadi, Abdul Hai Toranagal, Gurulingappa Dabale, H.S. Anupama and Amaresha Yatagal.

The 2024 Union Government groundwater study identifies five Karnataka districts, including Bengaluru Urban, as overexploited, with extraction beyond 100% (Kolar: 193.35%, Bengaluru Urban: 186.7%). Statewide groundwater has improved, averaging 68.44%, ranking 10th nationally. Measures include the 'Water is Future' (Neeriddare Nale) Project, AI-based monitoring of 41,489 lakes, and lake rejuvenation in Bengaluru, raising water tables and boosting agricultural output (vegetables +70%, flowers +80%, fruits +35%). Punjab, Rajasthan, and Dadra & Nagar Haveli lead nationally in extraction.

The Karnataka Cabinet has revised the Anna Bhagya scheme, replacing the additional 5 kg rice for BPL families with an Indira Kit containing 1 kg each of green gram, tur dal, sugar, salt, and cooking oil. The change responds to surveys showing misuse of extra rice and preference for

diversified food items. The scheme covers 1.26 crore BPL families, with kit quantity varying by family size. The modification reduces expenditure by ₹306 crore monthly.

On October 9, 2025, Karnataka approved the Period Leave Policy–2025, granting one day of paid menstrual leave per month to women employees in government, private, and industrial sectors. The policy, framed after consultations and expert recommendations, aims to support menstrual health while monitoring implementation through the Labour Department. About 60 lakh women are expected to benefit. Karnataka becomes the third Indian state with such a policy, after Bihar and Odisha. Awareness campaigns will precede implementation.

Karnataka CM Siddaramaiah launched the “Water is Future” (NEERIDARE NALE) campaign to promote water conservation and groundwater recharge. The KC Valley Project channels treated wastewater from Bengaluru to lakes in Kolar and Chikkaballapur, significantly improving groundwater levels. The state has invested heavily in lake rejuvenation and groundwater management, reclaiming 35,000 of 41,849 encroached lakes. Around 1,018 lakes are replenished annually, supporting 25 lakh acres. Overdependence on 37 lakh borewells highlights the need for sustainable water management.

Bengaluru tops Indian cities with 7,067 public sector buses, including 1,799 electric ones, carrying 48 lakh passengers daily. Karnataka leads nationally with 26,054 buses, or 3.81 per 1,000 people, far above the national average of 1.2.

The Department of School Education and Literacy will launch an ‘Admission Awareness Campaign’ next month to increase enrolment in government schools for 2026–27. Minister Madhu Bangarappa said 800 schools will be upgraded as Karnataka Public Schools (KPS) with modern facilities, arts and music classes, and free transport. KPS offers Kannada and English medium education till Class 5, and moral science lessons covering empathy, integrity, and sustainability will also be introduced.

Launched in 2023 by the former BBMP (now under the Greater Bengaluru Authority), the ‘Suraksha 75’ project aims to upgrade 75 major traffic junctions in Bengaluru to improve safety and traffic flow. With a budget exceeding ₹100 crore, work is ongoing at 28 junctions, while only Horamavu Bridge is complete. Completion is targeted for March 2026, with Outer Ring Road stretches among top priorities.

Karnataka launched ‘Mission Zero Preventable Maternal Death’ to reduce its Maternal Mortality Rate (MMR) of 57 per lakh live births. In 2024–25, 70% of 530 maternal deaths were preventable. The plan focuses on institutional strengthening, DBT-based support for PHH mothers, essential drugs like Carbetocin, and digital monitoring through K-ARC Partography. Priority districts include Ballari, Vijayanagar, Chitradurga, and Tumakuru—aligning with SDG 3.1 on reducing global MMR.

Karnataka has released a draft bill to regulate and protect domestic workers through mandatory registration, written agreements, and welfare measures. The bill defines domestic and gig workers comprehensively, mandates weekly holidays, maternity benefits, and minimum wages. It proposes a State Welfare Board and Fund financed by registration fees,

employer cess, and government grants. Violations attract penalties up to 7 years imprisonment. Public feedback is invited within one month.

The State government has amended its Motor Vehicle Rules to set up a Public Transport Fare Regulatory Committee that will function along the lines of the Karnataka Electricity Regulatory Commission, ensuring that any fare revision for State-run transport corporations is based on financial analysis and public interest. According to Transport Department officials, the committee will be headed by a retired official or judge and will study the financial health of transport corporations, including the Karnataka State Road Transport Corporation, the Bengaluru Metropolitan Transport Corporation, and other two transport corporations.

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, along with Deputy CM D K Shivakumar and Home Minister Parameshwara, distributed new navy-blue peak caps to police personnel at Vidhana Soudha, Bengaluru. Constable Kavana S M received the first cap, praising its comfort and professional look. Siddaramaiah urged police to match efficiency with their new appearance. Parameshwara said the caps enhance confidence and professionalism. About 83,000 constables will receive them soon. The CM also launched Sanmitra to strengthen the state's Anti-Narcotics Task Force.

The Karnataka government has appointed K.M. Gayatri, director of the Kannada and Culture Department, as the administrator of the Kannada Sahitya Parisat (KSP)

The Draft Detailed Project Report (DPR) for Bengaluru's Outer Ring Road (ORR) proposes a 10-lane corridor with bus priority lanes, cycling tracks, and wider footpaths over a 17.01 km stretch from K.R. Puram to Central Silk Board. Implemented by Bengaluru Smart Infrastructure Limited (BSMILE) at an estimated cost of ₹450 crore, the project aims to ease congestion, enhance bus movement, and improve pedestrian-cycling safety, marking a major urban mobility upgrade for Bengaluru.

The Karnataka state government announced the 2019 Lifetime Achievement Awards for cinema. Veteran actor, theatre personality, and politician Umashree received the Dr. Rajkumar Lifetime Achievement Award for actors. Filmmaker N. R. Nanjunde Gowda, known for Naanu Gandhi, won the Puttanna Kanagal Award for directors. The Dr. Vishnuvardhan Award went to Richard Castelino for his contribution to Kannada cinema. Raghunath C. H.'s Belli Tore – Cinema Prabhandagalu was named best book, and Gule, by Srinath S. Hadagali, won best short film.

Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) plans to establish a Security Operations Centre (SOC) at Baiyappanahalli, Bengaluru, to secure Namma Metro's IT and CCTV networks. The SOC will provide 24x7 monitoring, integrate digital and operational infrastructure, and use AI-driven tools for automated threat detection. Covering 83 stations, it will manage cyber threats, security incidents, forensic investigations, and malware assessments. The initiative enhances passenger safety, operational reliability, and aligns with India's goal of smart, secure urban infrastructure.

POLITY

India is promoting Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) to tackle a backlog of over 4.57 crore pending cases. Anchored in Article 39A, Section 89 of CPC, and the Arbitration & Conciliation Act, ADR includes mediation, pre-litigation mediation, and Lok Adalats, offering faster, cost-effective, and socially inclusive justice. It reduces court delays, protects social relationships, and aligns with India's civilisational ethos, supporting judicial reforms and improving per capita justice delivery, especially in states with high case backlogs.

SCHEMES

The Government launched the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana (PMDDKY) to boost agriculture in 100 Aspirational Agriculture Districts across 29 states/UTs, led by Uttar Pradesh (12). The scheme aims to enhance productivity, promote crop diversification, improve storage, irrigation, and credit access. Districts were chosen for low productivity, moderate cropping intensity, and poor credit access. Implemented via convergence of 36 schemes from 11 departments, monitored by 100 Central Nodal Officers, with an annual outlay of ₹24,000 crore.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled youth-focused initiatives worth ₹62,000 crore at the Kaushal Deekshant Samroh in New Delhi. Key announcements include PM-SETU, upgrading 1,000 ITIs with modern machinery and global-standard training; establishment of a Skill University named after Bharat Ratna Karpoori Thakur to promote vocational excellence; and launch of 1,200 Vocational Skill Labs in Navodaya and Eklavya schools across 34 States/UTs. These initiatives aim to strengthen education, skilling, and entrepreneurship, fostering an Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

The Union Government will map all Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) drinking water assets, including pipelines, on the PM Gati Shakti portal. The GIS-based integration, developed by BISAG-N, aims to enhance planning, monitoring, and management of rural water supply. Launched in 2019, JJM targets tap water for all rural households, while PM Gati Shakti, launched in 2021, enables multi-ministerial coordination for infrastructure projects. The integration ensures efficiency, transparency, and evidence-based decision-making in rural governance.

On September 23, 2025, the Centre amended Schedule-I of MGNREGA (2005) to mandate minimum spending on water conservation and harvesting works at the block level. The share of such projects now depends on groundwater classification by the Central Ground Water Board (CGWB)—65% in over-exploited/critical, 40% in semi-critical, and 30% in safe blocks. The move aims to ensure sustainable water management, employment generation, and improved livelihood security in rural India.

The draft National Labour and Employment Policy (Shram Shakti Niti, 2025) proposes a universal, portable social security framework integrating EPFO, ESIC, e-SHRAM, PMJAY, and state welfare schemes. Key goals include raising female labour participation to 35% by 2030, promoting green jobs, AI-enabled safety, and skill convergence. Policy provisions cover occupational safety, unified worker registration, formal employment promotion, and AI-driven governance. Implementation spans three phases (2025–post-2030) with real-time monitoring, LPEI benchmarking, and annual parliamentary reporting.



The Union government plans to promote India's solar energy initiatives abroad through the International Solar Alliance (ISA), targeting African countries and island nations. Key programmes include PM-KUSUM, focusing on 100 GW solar plants on farmer land, and PM Surya Ghar, promoting rooftop solar. Revised targets aim for 348 GW by 2026. Progress varies: standalone solar pumps (~70% installed), grid-connected pumps (16–25%). ISA provides a platform for global collaboration, showcasing India's renewable energy leadership.

The Central Government is drafting the Drugs, Medical Devices and Cosmetics Act, 2025 to strengthen India's drug quality control and surveillance. Presented by DCGI Dr. Rajeev Raghuvanshi and reviewed by Union Health Minister J.P. Nadda, the law empowers CDSCO to act against fake drugs, mandates digital licensing, upgrades testing labs, and aligns India's pharma standards with WHO norms—aiming to boost public health safety and global pharmaceutical credibility.

The Ministry of Electronics and IT (MeitY) is amending rules under the IT Act, 2000, restricting issuance of content-blocking notices under Section 79(3)(b) to senior officials only—Joint Secretary-level at the Centre and DIG-level at state police. Notices will undergo monthly review by officers of Secretary rank. The move prevents misuse by lower-rank officers and ensures responsible content regulation. Draft rules also mandate prominent labelling of AI-generated content on digital platforms, balancing freedom of expression with accountability.

The Government of India has launched the Kapas Kranti Mission with a ₹600 crore outlay to enhance high-yield, long-staple cotton production. The mission promotes High-Density Plantation (HDP) methods, adoption of modern agricultural practices, and ensures transparent pricing via the Kapas Kisan App. The Cotton Corporation of India (CCI) procures cotton at MSP, providing income security to farmers. The initiative aims to increase productivity, reduce middlemen dependence, and boost India's global cotton competitiveness.

SOCIAL ISSUES

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has increased the time period for availing premature final settlement of provident fund during unemployment as well as final settlement from the existing two months to 12 months.

The Supreme Court set up a committee under former Delhi High Court judge Justice Asha Menon to formulate, among others, an equal opportunity policy for transgender individuals and to suggest measures for inclusive medical care and protection for gender non-conforming and gender-diverse persons.

NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) and DP World have launched the "We Rise" (Women Entrepreneurs Reimagining Inclusive and Sustainable Enterprises) initiative under WEP's Award to Reward (ATR) programme. It aims to help Indian women entrepreneurs scale globally through trade facilitation, mentorship, and partnerships. About WEP: Launched by NITI Aayog in 2018 and transitioned into a public-private partnership in 2022, the Women Entrepreneurship Platform serves as a national aggregator to strengthen India's women entrepreneurship ecosystem. It addresses six key needs — finance, market

linkages, training, mentoring, legal assistance, and business development services — to drive women-led development.

The FSSAI has banned the use of the term 'ORS' (Oral Rehydration Solution) in commercial beverage names to prevent consumer deception and child health risks. The move, following 8 years of advocacy by Dr. Sivaranjini Santhosh, targets drinks with excess sugar falsely marketed as ORS. The decision strengthens food safety under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006, ensuring authentic medical ORS use remains protected.

Saudi Arabia has officially abolished the decades-old kafala labour sponsorship system, a controversial practice long criticised by international labour and human rights groups as a form of modern-day

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) plans to liberalise withdrawals while mandating that 25% of the balance remain intact. Data shows nearly half of members have less than ₹20,000 at final settlement, with 95% making premature withdrawals, often upon unemployment. Most members earn ₹15,000 or less monthly, limiting savings and pension eligibility. New reforms simplify withdrawal categories, increase withdrawal frequency for education, marriage, and illness, and aim to protect long-term retirement security.

During UK PM Keir Starmer's India visit, a 125-member delegation, including 14 vice-chancellors, underscored the UK's interest in India's education sector. PM Modi announced that nine UK universities will soon open campuses in India under NEP 2020, which promotes the internationalisation of education. Governed by UGC's 2023 regulations, this move aims to enhance quality, research, and access while raising concerns about regulation, affordability, and parity with Indian institutions.

The Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI) has banned the use of the term 'ORS' in beverage brand names to prevent consumer confusion and protect children's health. ORS (Oral Rehydration Solution) is a medical solution used to treat dehydration in children. The ban follows 8 years of advocacy by Dr. Sivaranjini Santhosh and aligns with FSSAI's mandate under the Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006 to ensure food safety and public health.

The Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has liberalised withdrawals while introducing a 25% minimum balance requirement. Premature withdrawals have left nearly half of members with less than Rs 20,000 at final settlement, affecting retirement security and pension eligibility. Withdrawal categories are reduced to essential needs, housing, and special circumstances, with flexible annual limits. Members can withdraw 75% immediately after leaving a job and 100% after one year of unemployment, aiming to balance liquidity with long-term financial preparedness.

A pilot bamboo plantation project has been initiated for the Kolam tribal community under the Green India Challenge (GIC) to ensure sustainable bamboo supply and revive traditional crafts. Located in Mullagutta 2, Adilabad on 5 acres of donated land, the project strengthens tribal livelihoods, cultural preservation, and environmental conservation. The Kolam, a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG) in Telangana and nearby states, rely on bamboo

for livelihood and artisanal work, making this initiative a model for community-based natural resource management.

ECONOMY

The RBI kept repo rate unchanged at 5.5% with a neutral stance, while unveiling reforms to deepen financial markets and internationalise the rupee. Key steps include allowing banks to finance M&As, extend rupee loans to neighbouring countries, and invest idle balances in Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVAs) into corporate bonds. Lending caps for large borrowers were eased, and infrastructure financing made cheaper. These moves aim to enhance liquidity, strengthen rupee credibility, and boost India’s global financial influence.

The National Payments Corporation of India and fintech firm Razorpay have collaborated with Microsoft-backed OpenAI to introduce AI-driven payments on ChatGPT. The pilot will evaluate how the service can be expanded across verticals and how UPI can be used to enable AI agents with payment credentials “to autonomously complete transactions on behalf of users in a safe, secure, and user-controlled manner,”

India’s gold imports surged 108% to \$9.6 billion in September 2025, driven by festive demand and record-high global prices amid trade tensions. Imports rose to 102 tonnes, up 65% from last year. The spike pushed the trade deficit to a 13-month high of \$32.15 billion. Overall exports grew 6.7% to \$36.38 billion, but imports climbed faster to \$68.53 billion. Experts urged boosting domestic manufacturing to curb import dependency.

The Tiruppur knitwear cluster in Tamil Nadu, known as India’s leading garment export hub, is facing a severe economic crisis. The downturn follows the US decision to impose a 50% tariff on Indian textile imports about two months ago.

The RBI’s Economic & Policy Research Department updated the Rangarajan Committee (2014) poverty line using HCES 2022-23 data. Poverty declined sharply—especially in Odisha and Bihar (~40 percentage points). Himachal Pradesh recorded the lowest rural poverty (0.4%) and Chhattisgarh the highest (25.1%). RBI used a new price index based on the original Poverty Line Basket (PLB), not CPI. India’s focus now shifts toward Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI).

The reduction of Goods and Services Tax (GST) on renewable energy products from 12% to 5% has boosted public interest in installing solar panels in homes and offices. Vendors report a 10% rise in enquiries and bookings. Many customers, especially under the PM Surya Ghar Yojana, resumed plans after the GST cut. The price drop—around ₹13,000–₹15,000 for a 5kW setup—has also attracted industries, encouraging faster adoption of solar and green energy solutions across Karnataka.

Japan has launched the world’s first yen-pegged stablecoin, JPYC, blending traditional finance with digital innovation. Issued by JPYC Inc., the digital currency is fully backed by Japanese Government Bonds and domestic savings. The company aims to issue 10 trillion yen in three years, with no transaction fees initially. JPYC seeks to promote low-cost transactions, support startups, and enhance global interoperability, marking Japan’s entry into the rapidly growing Asian stablecoin market.

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ENVIRONMENT

The Philippines will host Southeast Asia's first coral larvae cryobank at the University of the Philippines Marine Science Institute. The initiative, part of a regional network, aims to freeze coral larvae at -196°C using vitrification to safeguard biodiversity and restore reefs. Located within the Coral Triangle, home to 75% of global coral species and supporting 120+ million people, this cryobank acts as a genetic insurance policy against reef collapse amid threats like bleaching, climate change, and pollution.

Severe droughts in Peru, Amazon fires, and Ecuador's hydroelectric struggles are linked to disrupted "flying rivers"—a term coined by Carlos Nobre (2006) describing atmospheric water vapor transported inland by trade winds. Amazon trees pump soil water into the air, sustaining regional rainfall. Deforestation, climate change, and land-use changes are weakening these systems, risking a rainforest-to-savanna shift. The Amazon, holding 150–200 billion tonnes of carbon and 10% of global species, is crucial for biodiversity, agriculture, and climate stability.

The NCRB 2023 Accidental Deaths and Suicides report recorded 6,444 deaths from natural forces, led by lightning (2,560 deaths; 39.7%). Snake bites killed 10,144 people, while animal attacks caused 1,739 deaths. Odisha (1,351), Uttar Pradesh (852), and Madhya Pradesh (789) reported the most casualties. Lightning-prone states include MP, Bihar, Odisha, UP, and Jharkhand. Though overall natural force deaths fell 20% from 2022, fatalities due to heat stroke (+10%) and cold exposure (+1.8%) rose.

The Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying will launch the National Camel Sustainability Initiative (NCSI) to address India's declining camel population, now just 2.52 lakh (2019), concentrated in Rajasthan and Gujarat. Drafted with FAO inputs, the policy aims at conservation, sustainable breeding, transport, e-markets, and awareness campaigns (e.g., World Camel Day, June 22). Linked with the National Livestock Mission (NLM), it involves multiple ministries to restore the economic, cultural, and ecological roles of camels in desert ecosystems.

The Union Home Ministry has approved Phase-2 of the Urban Flood Risk Management Programme (UFRMP) to strengthen disaster resilience in 11 cities including Jaipur, Guwahati, Patna, and Vishakhapatnam. Implemented under National Disaster Management Fund (NDMF) with 90:10 Centre-State funding, it combines structural measures (drainage upgrades, flood walls, erosion control, interlinking water bodies) and non-structural measures (early warning systems, real-time monitoring, capacity building). The programme seeks to mitigate urban flood risks, safeguard lives, and promote sustainable urban development.

A new species of wasp named *Nesolynx banabitanæ* was recently discovered in Salt Lake, West Bengal.

India's only mud volcano at Baratang, Andaman and Nicobar Islands, erupted on October 2, 2025, after over 20 years of dormancy, producing a 3–4 metre mud mound over 1,000 sq. metres. Baratang, 150 km from Port Blair, is a popular tourist spot. Mud volcanoes emit mud,



water, and gases but no lava. Nearby Barren Island, an active volcanic island, had minor eruptions in September 2025. Tourist movement is suspended; authorities are monitoring the site.

Horticultural scientist G. Karunakaran received the Dr. Kalayya Krishnamurthy National Award 2024 from the University of Agricultural Sciences, Bengaluru, on its 60th Foundation Day. As Principal Scientist at ICAR-IIHR, he popularised dragon fruit cultivation, identified the Siddu jackfruit variety, and developed fruit crops for arid conditions. His work spans crop improvement, value addition, and community-based fruit value chains. With over 26 years of service, he has published 40+ research papers, 3 books, and 12 technical bulletins.

India will conduct its first National Red List Assessment of nearly 11,000 plant and animal species to evaluate extinction risks scientifically. Following IUCN Red List methodology, the survey aims to standardize species conservation status, create 300 certified assessors, and publish National Red Data Books by 2030. Funded with ₹95 crore by the government, it is overseen by the Zoological Survey of India and the Ministry of Environment, supporting India's commitments under CBD and KM-GBF.

The Government of Tuvalu has officially become the 90th State Member of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) recently.

Recently, *Hygrocybe pellucida*, a rare fungi species, was sighted for the first time in Telangana's Kawal Tiger Reserve.

Delhi's air quality deteriorated to the 'poor' category (AQI 211) — the first in four months — prompting Stage 1 of the Graded Response Action Plan (GRAP). The Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) activated this plan to curb worsening pollution. GRAP, introduced in 2017 by the MoEFCC and implemented by CAQM since 2021, prescribes graded emergency measures based on AQI levels to manage air quality in the Delhi-NCR region.

In 2018, Barnawapara Wildlife Sanctuary (Balodabazar, Chhattisgarh) began a five-year blackbuck reintroduction project after the species was locally extinct for 50 years due to poaching and habitat loss. About 77 blackbucks were translocated from Delhi and Bilaspur zoos. Today, ~190 blackbucks are in the sanctuary, with 100 released in the wild. Efforts included controlled enclosures, disease management, and habitat improvement. Future plans aim to extend the program to Gomardha Wildlife Sanctuary.

India is preparing to inaugurate its first-ever 132-metre cable glass bridge, Bajrang Setu, in Rishikesh. Estimated to cost around ₹70 crore, the bridge is poised to become an architectural and spiritual landmark, seamlessly merging modern design with divine symbolism. Once open, it will be the first cable suspension bridge with glass flooring in India and only the second of its kind in Asia.

Six new butterfly species have been discovered in Arunachal Pradesh's Siang Valley by researchers from ATREE and the Litin Community Conservation Society. Found at 1,300 metres, the species — including the Litin Onyx, Narrow-banded Royal, Tibetan Duke, Tibetan Sergeant, Tibetan Junglequeen, and Mountain Columbine — were previously known only

from Southeast Asia and Tibet. Their discovery in India highlights the Brahmaputra River's vital role in maintaining faunal continuity between Tibet's Metok region and Arunachal Pradesh.

A rare sighting of a striped hyena (*katte kiruba*) was recorded at Kali Tiger Reserve, Karnataka, by forest officials. The individual may have strayed from Dharwad forests, as hyenas are uncommon in the Western Ghats. Officials are monitoring via camera traps and sightings to collect data. Kali's semi-evergreen forests are atypical hyena habitats. The sighting is significant for biodiversity monitoring, potential range expansion, and understanding predator-prey dynamics in the Western Ghats.

Birdwatchers recorded the first-ever sighting of the Indian Scops-Owl (*Otus bakkamoena*) near the Daroji Sloth Bear Sanctuary, Karnataka. This nocturnal, insect-eating owl, found in forests and scrublands across India, Nepal, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, and Iran, has a stocky body, round head, and bright yellow eyes. Though IUCN-listed as Least Concern, its reliance on forested habitats makes it vulnerable. The sighting highlights the sanctuary's biodiversity significance and emphasizes habitat conservation for lesser-known species.

For the first time, mosquitoes have been reported in Iceland, previously one of the only mosquito-free regions alongside Antarctica. Citizen scientist Björn Hjaltason discovered the species *Culiseta annulata* on October 16, 2025, confirmed by the Icelandic Institute of Natural History. The invasion is attributed to climate change and human-mediated transport. Implications include potential mosquito-borne diseases and ecological disruption, as rising temperatures allow cold-tolerant mosquitoes to survive and adapt in previously inhospitable habitats.

The National Critical Minerals Mission (NCMM), through the National Critical Minerals Stockpile (NCMS), aims to secure rare earth elements (REEs) and other critical minerals vital for green technologies. India seeks to reduce dependence on China, maintain a two-month reserve, and support domestic REE processing and magnet production. Led by the Ministry of Mines with public-private participation, NCMS strengthens strategic autonomy, mitigates supply chain risks, and underpins the Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat initiatives.

On October 10, 2025, the Supreme Court directed Jharkhand to notify 314 sq km of Saranda as a wildlife sanctuary. Saranda, West Singhbhum, is a biodiversity hotspot with Sal forests, elephants, sloth bears, and elephant corridors. The case stems from a plea seeking NGT's 2022 eco-sensitive zone directive. Under the Wildlife Protection Act, 1972, pre-existing sanctuaries are deemed valid. The move balances ecological conservation, tribal rights, and mining regulation under judicial oversight.

Heatwaves have dashed hopes of a bumper saffron harvest in Kashmir, with this year's bloom estimated at only 15–20% of normal levels. Despite good rainfall and timely sowing, intense heat last year damaged saffron corms, weakening the crop. Farmers in Pampore, Khrew, and Lethpora say their fields look lush but yield few flowers. Experts blame prolonged dry spells and extreme summer temperatures for disrupting the soil's rhythm and the region's famed saffron cycle.

The IMD warned that a “Deep depression over the southeast Bay of Bengal is likely to intensify into a Cyclonic Storm” by October 27 and a Severe Cyclonic Storm by October 28. When it does hit the coast, it will be known as Cyclone Montha. The name “Montha”, suggested by Thailand, means “fragrant flower” or “beautiful flower.”

The Nature Environment and Wildlife Society (NEWS) of West Bengal’s Sundarbans received global recognition from the FAO for its Sustainable Aquaculture in Mangrove Ecosystems (SAIME) model. Integrating aquaculture with mangrove conservation, SAIME enhances climate adaptation, ecosystem health, and farmer livelihoods. Practiced over 30 hectares, it uses mangrove litter for shrimp feed, cutting costs and doubling profits. The model reduces pollution, supports carbon sequestration, and aligns with SDGs, offering a replicable, sustainable solution for mangrove-based aquaculture globally.

The IUCN’s World Heritage Outlook 4 (2025) lists India’s Western Ghats, Manas, and Sundarbans National Parks as sites of “significant concern.” It evaluates over 200 global natural World Heritage Sites, noting a decline in positive conservation outlooks from 63% (2014–2020) to 57% in 2025. Major threats in South Asia include climate change, tourism, invasive species, and infrastructure. The Western Ghats face degradation from hydropower, plantations, and exotic flora, while the Sundarbans suffer from salinity, sea-level rise, and habitat loss.

The State of Climate Action Report 2025 reveals that despite record renewable energy investments—nearly double fossil fuel spending—the world remains off-track to meet the Paris Agreement’s 1.5°C goal. Coal use reached record highs in 2024, offsetting renewable gains, while global emissions show no signs of peaking. With COP 30 in Brazil approaching, the report urges nations to enhance NDCs, phase out coal, scale up climate finance, and strengthen accountability to achieve net-zero targets.

The Coal Ministry announced that the Environment Ministry has agreed to waive environmental clearance for pilot underground coal gasification (UCG) projects. The move supports India’s target to gasify 100 million tonnes of coal by 2030. Of 41 coal blocks up for auction, 21 are suitable for UCG. The ministry also launched digital portals—CLAMP and Koyla Shakti—to improve efficiency and transparency in the coal sector.

A new study by Delhi University scientists has revealed rare anti-predator behaviours in two Indian frog species. The nocturnal apatani horned toad (*Xenophrys apatani*) from Arunachal Pradesh inflates its body, emits a distress call, and may even bite attackers. In contrast, the diurnal bicoloured frog (*Clinotarsus curtipes*) from Kerala raises its body to appear larger and ward off threats. Published in *Herpetological Notes*, this marks the first record of such defence strategies in Indian frogs.

Hurricane Melissa, which struck Jamaica with record-tying 296 kmph winds on October 28, was a beast that stood out as extreme even in a record number of monster storms spawned over the last decade in a superheated Atlantic Ocean.

On October 28, 2025, IIT Kanpur conducted a cloud seeding trial in Delhi using a Cessna 206H aircraft to induce artificial rainfall for pollution reduction in areas like Burari, Mayur Vihar,

and Karol Bagh. Cloud seeding involves dispersing particles such as silver iodide or sodium chloride into suitable clouds to enhance rainfall. Though it can temporarily lower air pollution, experts caution its effectiveness is weather-dependent, costly, and does not address core pollution sources.

The UN report “Running on Empty”, released ahead of COP-30 (Belém, Brazil), reveals that developing nations need \$310–365 billion annually by 2035 for climate adaptation—12 times more than the \$26 billion received in 2023. Funding declined from 2022 levels and falls short of the COP-26 target. The report warns that debt-based financing (58%) burdens poor nations, urging urgent action to boost climate funds under the Baku to Belém Roadmap.

SCIENCE

Bengaluru scientists at RRI, in collaboration with IISc and Canada’s University of Calgary, have developed a simplified device-independent quantum random number generator, enabling highly secure, “unhackable” digital communication. Led by Urbasi Sinha, the team uses the Leggett-Garg inequality to produce certified quantum randomness on general-purpose quantum computers without complex optical setups. This breakthrough strengthens OTPs, banking security, and encryption, bridging the gap between small-scale quantum processors and practical cybersecurity applications, positioning India as a global leader in quantum-secure communication.

The 2025 Nobel Prize in Medicine was awarded to Mary E. Brunkow, Fred Ramsdell (USA), and Shimon Sakaguchi (Japan) for discovering regulatory T-cells (Tregs) — the immune system’s “security guards” that prevent autoimmune attacks. Sakaguchi’s 1995 breakthrough showed Tregs maintain peripheral immune tolerance, while Brunkow and Ramsdell (2001) identified the *Foxp3* gene mutation linked to autoimmunity. Their work transformed immunology, advancing treatments for autoimmune diseases, cancer, and transplant complications, and laid the foundation for clinical therapies worldwide.

The 2025 Nobel Prize in Physics was awarded to John Clarke, Michel H. Devoret, and John M. Martinis for their groundbreaking research on quantum tunnelling, a phenomenon allowing particles to pass through barriers. Their mid-1980s work linked quantum theory to real-world technology, forming the foundation of quantum circuits essential to quantum computing, sensors, and cryptography. Their discoveries revolutionized digital technology, bridging fundamental quantum mechanics with modern computing and secure communication systems.

For the first time in recorded history, global renewable power generation has surpassed coal, marking a pivotal shift toward sustainable energy. According to Ember, a London-based energy think tank, solar grew 31% and wind 7.7% in the first half of the year, adding over 400 TWh collectively. The rise in renewables outpaced electricity demand, while fossil fuel output declined slightly. This milestone supports Net Zero goals, reduces carbon emissions, and drives green investment, innovation, and employment.

The South Western Railway (SWR) has begun implementing Kavach, India’s indigenously developed Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system by RDSO and Indian industry partners.

Covering 3,692 route km in two phases, it will equip 299 locomotives with Loco Kavach. Featuring Safety Integrity Level-4 (SIL-4) certification, Kavach prevents signal overshooting, enforces speed control, and avoids collisions. Using RFID and radio communication, it enhances safety, reduces human error, supports Atmanirbhar Bharat, and advances railway modernization.

The 2025 Nobel Prize in Chemistry was awarded to Susumu Kitagawa, Richard Robson, and Omar M. Yaghi for pioneering work on metal–organic frameworks (MOFs). MOFs are molecular structures with large internal spaces, enabling applications such as water harvesting, carbon capture, toxic gas storage, and catalysis. Their stable and versatile frameworks allow precise material design. The laureates, working independently yet building on each other’s discoveries, have opened new avenues in materials science and environmental solutions.

The DRDO, in collaboration with the Integrated Defence Staff and Tri-Services, released Indian Radio Software Architecture (IRSA) 1.0, India’s first national standard for Software Defined Radios (SDR). IRSA provides a standardized framework for secure, interoperable radio communication, defining interfaces, APIs, execution environments, and waveform portability. Developed under the Standardization of Indigenous SDR initiative, it aligns India with global SDR frameworks (US SCA, Europe’s ESSOR, NATO STANAG) and supports India’s vision to export IRSA-compliant solutions to friendly nations.

Researchers from the University of Bath, with Oxford and Bristol, have developed a peptide molecule that prevents alpha-synuclein—the protein linked to Parkinson’s disease—from clumping into toxic forms that kill brain cells. Tested successfully in animal and worm models, the molecule restores movement and reduces protein deposits. Published in JACS Au, this breakthrough shows potential for peptide-based therapies to slow or halt Parkinson’s and related dementias, offering hope for new neurodegenerative disease treatments.

In a bid to transform STEM education, the Web Science Lab at the International Institute of Information Technology Bangalore (IIIT-B) is developing an Artificial Intelligence (AI) system called Navigated Learning for STEM Education. The initiative is supported by Gooru Learning, a California-based non-profit with over 13 years of expertise in adaptive learning technologies.

Bengaluru will soon host a 35-petaflop supercomputer developed by C-DAC, featuring over 3,000 servers. Currently in final testing, it will be launched later this year to support research in AI, quantum computing, and high-performance simulations. Part of the National Supercomputing Mission 2.0, it aims to enhance innovation and academia–industry collaboration in advanced computing.

ChatGPT-maker OpenAI announced an “Atlas” search browser

A novel monoclonal antibody named MAM01, developed by US researchers has demonstrated strong protection against malaria in an early clinical trial.

Researchers have discovered that about 100 immune proteins inside cells act as a built-in defense system against viruses. When a virus invades, it triggers these proteins to crystallize, forming a scaffold that activates caspase enzymes and causes the cell to self-destruct through pyroptosis—an inflammatory type of cell death. This rapid response prevents viral spread but can also misfire over time, contributing to ageing and inflammation. The mechanism is ancient, existing even in bacteria.

The first Hindustan Turbo Trainer-40 (HTT-40) Series Production aircraft, TH 4001 made its maiden flight. The HTT-40 is an indigenous Basic Trainer Aircraft designed and developed by HAL for the Indian Air Force.

Fiji recently became the 26th country to eliminate trachoma as a public health problem, marking a key milestone against neglected tropical diseases. Trachoma, caused by Chlamydia trachomatis, spreads via contact with eye, nose, or throat secretions and thrives in areas with poor sanitation. Early symptoms include red eyes, swollen eyelids, blurred vision, and if untreated, can cause blindness. The WHO's SAFE strategy—Surgery, Antibiotics, Facial cleanliness, and Environmental improvement—has been central to its elimination.

Google Quantum AI's Willow chip has achieved the world's first verifiable quantum advantage, performing computations 13,000 times faster than classical supercomputers using the Quantum Echoes (QEC) algorithm. This breakthrough enables replicable, experimentally verified results, bridging theory with practical application. Willow's capabilities promise advances in drug discovery, materials science, and molecular simulations, marking a transition from theoretical quantum supremacy to practical, real-world applications, recognized globally through publication in Nature.

The Maldives has become the first country globally validated by the WHO to eliminate mother-to-child transmission (MTCT) of HIV, hepatitis B, and syphilis. This "triple elimination" prevents newborn infections, reduces infant mortality, and demonstrates effective maternal health strategies. Key measures include universal antenatal care, routine screening, timely treatment, newborn vaccination, and healthcare capacity building. Maldives' achievement exemplifies how political will and strong healthcare systems can eradicate MTCT, serving as a model for other nations.

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will deploy Network Survey Vehicles (NSVs) across 23 states, covering 20,933 km of National Highways to collect and analyse road condition data for better maintenance. These specialised vehicles use laser scanners, GPS, and 360° cameras to detect cracks and potholes. Data will be uploaded to the Road Asset Management System (RAMS) developed by MoRTH, enabling scientific, transparent, and data-driven management of India's highway infrastructure.

Google DeepMind and Yale University developed C2S-Scale, a 27-billion-parameter AI model based on Gemma-2 architecture, that interprets single-cell RNA data like language. The AI proposed that Silmitasertib enhances cancer cell visibility to the immune system when interferon levels are low—a prediction validated in lab tests. Though tested only in vitro, the study highlights AI's potential to accelerate drug discovery, advance immunotherapy, and revolutionize personalized cancer treatment through faster, data-driven insights.

DEFENCE

The Indian Navy commissioned INS Androth, its second Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft (ASW-SWC), at Visakhapatnam, marking a boost to Aatmanirbhar Bharat. With 80% indigenous content, the 77-metre, 1,500-tonne vessel is equipped with advanced sensors, communication systems, and waterjet propulsion for agility in shallow waters. Designed for anti-submarine, coastal defence, surveillance, and rescue operations, INS Androth enhances India's littoral security. Named after Androth Island in Lakshadweep, it follows INS Arnala and strengthens India's naval indigenisation drive.

The Indian Coast Guard commissioned ICGS Akshar, a Fast Patrol Vessel (FPV), at Karaikal, Puducherry. Built by Goa Shipyard Limited with 60% indigenous content, Akshar is the second in the Adanya-class FPV series. Displacing 320 tonnes, it features 3,000 KW diesel engines, controllable pitch propellers, advanced automation systems, a top speed of 27 knots, and endurance of 1,500 nautical miles. Deployed under Coast Guard Region (East), it will enhance coastal surveillance, rescue, anti-smuggling, and environmental protection along India's eastern seaboard.

India approved weapons and hardware purchases worth ₹79,000 crore to boost military capabilities, including Nag missiles, amphibious Landing Platform Docks and electronic intelligence and surveillance systems. The Defence Acquisition Council, chaired by Rajnath Singh, cleared naval items such as 30-mm guns, lightweight torpedoes, EO/IR search-and-track systems and smart ammunition; army procurements including NAMIS (Nag Mk-II), mobile ELINT and high-mobility vehicles; and an Air Force Collaborative Long-Range Target Saturation/Destruction System to strengthen deterrence and operational reach.

The National Security Guard (NSG), India's elite counter-terror force, announced a new operational hub in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh, in October 2025. This addition to the existing six hubs in Mumbai, Chennai, Kolkata, Hyderabad, Ahmedabad, and Jammu aims to enhance rapid response capabilities against terrorist threats in northern India.

The Pune-based Southern Command of the Indian Army is conducting Exercise Trishul with the Navy and Air Force, featuring offensive manoeuvres in creek and desert sectors and amphibious operations off the Saurashtra coast. The joint multi-domain drill integrates ISR, Electronic Warfare, and Cyber operations. Early phases included Agni Drishti, linking land, air, space, and unmanned ISR assets, and Trinetra, focused on electromagnetic spectrum dominance and counter-UAS kill chains for combat superiority.

INTERNATIONAL ISSUES

With an aim to crack down on illegal immigration, the British government has announced that a new digital identity document will be mandatory to work in the country. The scheme will be available to all UK citizens and legal residents, saving time by ending the need for complicated identity checks, which often rely on copies of paper records. There will be no requirement for individuals to carry their ID or be asked to produce it – but the digital ID will be mandatory as a means of proving your Right to Work.



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Mongolia’s first oil refinery, funded by India’s \$1.7 billion Line of Credit, is expected to start operations by 2028—four years behind schedule. The project aims to reduce Mongolia’s reliance on Russian and Chinese oil imports by processing its own crude. Prime Minister Modi and President Khurelsukh also discussed expanding defence and border security cooperation between the two nations.

Sanae Takaichi has been elected the Japan’s first female prime minister.

Uruguay’s Senate passed a law on 15 October 2025 decriminalising euthanasia.

Recently, Saudi Arabia has decided to replace the Kafala System with a contractual model, giving migrant workers more rights and freedom to work in the kingdom. The Kafala System refers to a binding contract between migrant workers and their local sponsor, under which they can only work for the specific employer throughout the period of their residence in the country. Under the Kafala System, the employer, who is also the sponsor of the migrant workers, had an undue legal advantage over them as they were not allowed to switch jobs without the Kafala’s consent

A new global platform to confront mounting debt challenges – the Sevilla Forum on Debt was launched on October 22, 2025, at the 16th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD16) in Geneva. The Forum, a Spanish-led initiative supported by UNCTAD and the UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA), aims to serve as an open and inclusive space for dialogue and action on sovereign debt reform. The Forum marks one of the first tangible outcomes of the Fourth International Conference on Financing for Development (FfD4) held from 30 June – 3 July in Seville, Spain.

The 47th ASEAN Summit (Oct 26–28, 2025) in Kuala Lumpur gathers global leaders to address regional issues, including the Cambodia–Thailand border conflict, U.S. trade tensions, and Myanmar’s crisis. A key highlight is East Timor’s formal induction as ASEAN’s 11th member, enhancing inclusivity and regional influence. The summit also coincides with the 22nd India–ASEAN Summit. Key discussions focus on peace accords, trade relief, and strategies for strengthening stability and economic cooperation across Southeast Asia.

China’s endangered golden snub-nosed monkeys have debuted at European zoos, expanding the idea of “panda diplomacy.” Traditionally, China gifted or loaned pandas to strengthen diplomatic ties, beginning in 1957 with the Soviet Union and later evolving into long-term leases supporting conservation. Now, golden monkeys serve a similar role—enhancing soft power, scientific collaboration, and cultural exchange. However, ethical concerns remain over animal welfare and the commercialization of wildlife under diplomatic pretexts.

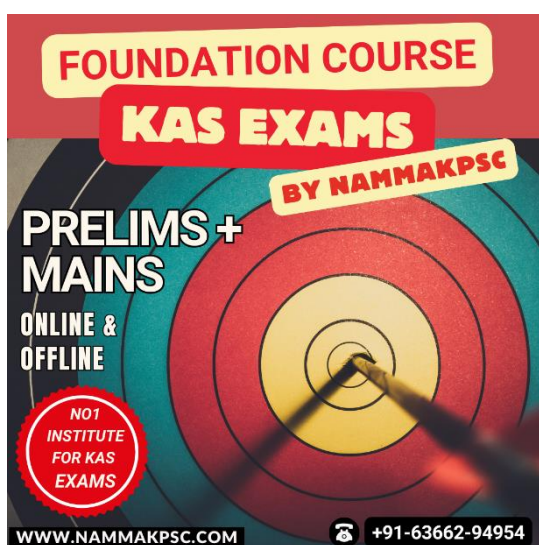
Cameroon’s Constitutional Council declared 92-year-old President Paul Biya the winner of the October 12 election with 53.66% of votes, extending his rule since 1982. His former ally, Issa Tchiroma Bakary, received 35.19%. Ahead of the announcement, clashes between protesters and security forces left at least four people dead and over 100 arrested in Douala and other cities as opposition supporters demanded credible results amid growing unrest across the central African nation.

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On September 17, 2025, India and the European Union (EU) launched a New Strategic EU–India Agenda with five pillars: prosperity, technology, security, connectivity, and enablers. A key highlight is linking the Indian Carbon Market (ICM) with the EU’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM), ensuring carbon prices paid in India are deducted from CBAM levies. The initiative promises fair climate cooperation but faces hurdles like weak ICM design, carbon price disparity, and political tensions.

The United States and South Korea finalized a new bilateral trade deal during President Donald Trump’s visit to South Korea for the APEC Summit in Gyeongju. The agreement includes a reduction in U.S. tariffs on South Korean goods from 25% to 15%, while South Korea commits to investing up to \$20 billion annually and an additional \$150 billion in U.S. shipbuilding. Despite earlier concerns over currency stability, the deal symbolizes strengthened economic and diplomatic cooperation.



The 23rd round of Corps Commander-level talks between India and China was held at Chushul-Moldo on October 25, marking the first high-level dialogue since August 19. The meeting aimed to sustain stability along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) after last year’s disengagement. Around 50,000–60,000 troops remain stationed on both sides. Both nations continue diplomatic and military discussions, enhancing surveillance, confidence-building measures, and coordination to maintain peace and prevent future border clashes.

MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

The U.K.’s Carrier Strike Group, led by HMS Prince of Wales, and the Indian Navy’s carrier INS Vikrant began the four-day Exercise Konkan-25 in the Western Indian Ocean. The drill enhances maritime and air capabilities, including anti-submarine warfare and cross-deck operations. Part of the U.K.’s global Operation Highmast, it underscores Indo-Pacific security cooperation and U.K.-India defence ties under Vision 2035. Following the exercise, British ships will visit Mumbai and Goa, and aerial drills with the Indian Air Force will further strengthen interoperability.

Indian Coast Guard and Navy conducted the exercise NATPOLREX-X off the Chennai coast to tackle marine oil spill emergencies and strengthen India’s preparedness.

Indian cricketer Sanju Samson has been appointed as the official ambassador for the Premier League in India

Celebrated on October 8, 2025, the 93rd Air Force Day marks the establishment of the IAF in 1932. The 2025 theme focuses on Operation Sindoor, showcasing the IAF’s operational excellence, precision strikes, and strategic air power. From its first flight on April 1, 1933, the IAF has evolved into the world’s fourth-largest air force, performing national defence,

humanitarian missions, disaster relief, and precision operations, honoring the courage, sacrifice, and professionalism of air warriors.

Mera Hou Chongba, recently celebrated in Manipur, symbolizes Hill-Valley unity. Observed on the 15th lunar day of the Mera month in the Meitei calendar, its origins trace to Nongda Lairen Pakhangba, an early ruler of Manipur. Rituals include a march to Kangla with tribal chiefs, lighting the Mera Thaomei Thanba fire, and exchanging gifts (Mera Yenkhong Tamba). The festival culminates in cultural dances and a grand feast, fostering tribal brotherhood, harmony, and participation of all indigenous communities.

In what is being seen as a prelude to its ambition of hosting the 2036 Olympics, India is set to hold the Commonwealth Games (CWG) in 2030 with Ahmedabad as the venue for the centenary edition of the event. Gujarat's largest city was recommended as the "proposed host" by the executive board of Commonwealth Sport following its meeting Wednesday. India last hosted the CWG in 2010 in Delhi — an event that was overshadowed by poor planning, delays in infrastructure completion and allegations of corruption.

The Ministry of Mines released the State Mining Readiness Index (SMRI) to benchmark States' performance and promote sustainable mining reforms across India. The index assesses parameters like auction performance, early mine operationalisation, exploration, and sustainability in non-coal mineral mining. States are grouped into three categories: A (mineral-rich), B (moderate), and C (limited resources). In SMRI 2025, top performers were Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat (A); Goa, Uttar Pradesh, Assam (B); and Punjab, Uttarakhand, Tripura (C).

The 12th-century Qila Rai Pithora complex in Delhi will host Lord Buddha's Piprahwa relics and jewels, publicly displayed in India after over a century. Discovered in 1898 at Piprahwa, Uttar Pradesh, the relics include bone fragments, crystal caskets, and gold ornaments with lotus and Triratna motifs. Repatriated from Hong Kong through a public-private partnership, this exhibition underscores India's cultural diplomacy, heritage restitution, and the global significance of Buddhist art and devotion.

Observed annually to honour 10 policemen martyred in the 1959 Chinese attack at Hot Springs, Ladakh. The patrol of 20 was ambushed; 7 captured, 10 cremated with full honours. Police guarded the 2,500-mile Indo-Tibet border pre-1959. Memorials exist at Hot Springs and the National Police Memorial, Chanakyapuri, hosting annual commemorations. Smart policing initiatives like SMART, ASUMP, CyTrain, and CCPWC enhance cybercrime prevention, modernization, and protection of vulnerable groups.

The Annual Fish Fair cum Fish Crop Competition in Manipur is held a day before the Ningol Chakouba festival. Celebrated on the second day of Hiyangei month, the festival invites married women to their parental homes for a feast, strengthening family bonds. Originating during King Nongda Lairen Pakhangba's reign, it evolved under King Chadrakirti Singh in the 19th century. Today, it remains a key cultural tradition, observed even by Manipuris settled outside Manipur.

Dr Eknath Vasant Chitnis, one of the founding architects of India's space programme and a driving force behind the country's television revolution, passed away in Pune

Indian-origin historian Sunil Amrith has been awarded the 2025 British Academy Book Prize for his acclaimed work *The Burning Earth: An Environmental History of the Last 500 Years*. The £25,000 honour recognises outstanding non-fiction writing in the humanities and social sciences, celebrating books that deepen global understanding through exceptional research.

The Union Culture Ministry's Gyan Bharatam Mission will sign MoUs with around 50 institutes nationwide to preserve, digitise, and promote India's manuscript heritage. The mission aims to create a National Digital Repository to globally share these manuscripts. Institutes are categorised as cluster centres or independent centres, responsible for conservation, cataloguing, and research. The Mission provides funding, equipment, and guidance, releasing funds in phases based on progress and verified milestones.

Advertising legend Piyush Pandey, former worldwide chief creative officer and executive chairman of Ogilvy India, passed away in Mumbai at 70 after an illness. Known for infusing Hindi and Indian culture into advertising, he created iconic campaigns such as Fevicol, Vodafone's Zoozoos, Cadbury's *Kuch Khaas Hai*, and the BJP's *Abki Baar Modi Sarkar*. Born in Jaipur in 1955, Pandey began at Ogilvy in 1982, shaping Indian advertising for over four decades with creativity and storytelling.

Indian Naval Ship (INS) Sahyadri participated in the Sea phase of JAIMEX-25 (Japan India Maritime Exercise).

Believed to have been introduced from China to Kashmir many centuries ago, chrysanthemum flowers or Gul-e-Dawood is all set to replicate the success story of tulip garden in the Valley, but, unlike tulips, the mesmerising bloom of 30 lakh flowers will spread out till harsh winters set in.

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the Mahasamadhi centenary of Sree Narayana Guru at Sivagiri Mutt, honoring his legacy of social reform and equality. Born in 1856 in Kerala, Guru challenged caste discrimination, promoted non-violence, spiritual freedom, and the philosophy of "One Caste, One Religion, One God for Mankind." He led temple reforms, founded SNDP Yogam and Sivagiri Math, supported Vaikom Satyagraha, and authored works emphasizing Advaita Vedanta and social upliftment.

The WHO Global Antibiotic Resistance Surveillance Report 2025 highlights antimicrobial resistance (AMR) as a major public health threat, with 1 in 6 bacterial infections resistant to at least one antibiotic. Gram-negative bacteria like *E. coli*, *K. pneumoniae*, and *Acinetobacter* spp. show high resistance. South-East Asia and Africa face disproportionate burdens. WHO recommends strengthening surveillance, antimicrobial stewardship, R&D of new antibiotics, responsible use, and a One Health approach to reduce AMR-related deaths by 10% by 2030.

Bengaluru Torpedoes were crowned as the champions of the Prime Volleyball League after defeating the Mumbai Meteors

Historian Sunil Amrith has been named the winner of the 2025 British Academy Book Prize for *The Burning Earth: An Environmental History of the Last 500 Years*, a panoramic account of how human ambition has transformed the planet, and how the planet, in turn, has shaped human history.

Late astrophysicist Prof. Jayant Narlikar was posthumously honoured with India's highest science award, the Vigyan Ratna Award, on October 26, 2025. Founder of IUCAA, Pune, Narlikar was celebrated for his pioneering work in cosmology and science communication. His daughter Leelavati Narlikar accepted the award. IUCAA also celebrated Prof. Surhud More's recognition with the Vigyan Yuva–Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award. Both awards are part of the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar (RVP), instituted in 2023 to honour scientific excellence.

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