

NATIONAL

▪ **PM Modi Inaugurates India's First Vertical-Lift Sea Bridge**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the New Pamban Bridge in Tamil Nadu, India's first vertical-lift sea bridge. The bridge connects connecting the Island of Rameswaram Island with Mandapam on the mainland. According to the Ministry of Railways, the 2.07-kilometer-long bridge, spanning the Palk Strait in Tamil Nadu, stands as a testament to India's engineering prowess and visionary infrastructure development.

▪ **Haryana Declares Two Harappan Sites as Protected Monuments**

The Haryana government has declared Mitathal and Tighrana in Bhiwani district as protected archaeological sites. Dating back over 4,400 years, these Harappan-era settlements offer insights into ancient agriculture, urban planning, crafts, and trade. The sites are now legally protected under the Haryana Ancient and Historical Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1964, to prevent encroachment and ensure preservation.

▪ **“One State, One RRB” Policy to Reshape Rural Banking**

The Indian government will implement the “One State, One RRB” policy to consolidate 43 Regional Rural Banks into 28, aiming to boost efficiency and reduce internal competition. Led by the Finance Ministry, the move builds on earlier mergers that brought down the number from 196. The policy is expected to strengthen RRBs, improve service delivery, and enhance rural credit flow.

▪ **West Bengal Secures GI Tags for 7 Traditional Products, Showcasing Cultural Richness**

West Bengal has earned GI tags for seven new products, including the iconic *Nolen Gurer Sandesh* and *Baruipur guavas*, highlighting the state's diverse cultural and culinary heritage. This brings the total GI-tagged items from the state to 33. Among the newly recognized items are: Nolen Gurer Sandesh, Kamarpukur's White Bonde, Murshidabad's Chhanabora, Bishnupur's Motichur, Radhunipagal Rice, Malda's Nistari Silk Yarn. These GI tags will help preserve these cultural treasures while promoting them on global platforms and boosting the local economy.

▪ **Haryana Becomes First State to Offer 20% Police Job Quota for Agniveers**

Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini announced a 20% reservation for Agniveers in state police jobs under the Agnipath Scheme, making Haryana the first state to guarantee such support.

Additional measures include affordable loans for self-employment and priority in gun licenses for private security jobs, ensuring better post-service opportunities for Agniveers.

- **RBI Cuts Repo Rate to 6% in FY25's First Policy Review**

In its 54th meeting held from April 7–9, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC), chaired by Governor Shri Sanjay Malhotra, unanimously decided to cut the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6%. The Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) rate was reduced to 5.75%, and the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) and Bank Rate were lowered to 6.25%. The policy move signals RBI's focus on boosting economic momentum in the new financial year.

- **Uttarakhand Launches 'Bhagirath' App to Boost Public Participation in Water Conservation**

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami launched the Bhagirath mobile app under the Jal Sanrakshan Abhiyan 2025, encouraging citizens to report endangered local water sources. Aligned with the theme “Dhara Mera, Naula Mera, Gaon Mera, Prayas Mera,” the initiative focuses on conserving vital water bodies like Naulas and Dharaas through community involvement and sustainable water management.

- **India Launches First-Ever Panchayat Advancement Index to Boost Rural Governance**

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has released the inaugural Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) baseline report for FY 2022–23, assessing over 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats on nine development themes aligned with Sustainable Development Goals. With Gujarat and Telangana leading in “Front Runner” Panchayats, the index promotes data-driven planning and accountability at the grassroots level. Of the validated Panchayats, most were categorized as “Aspirants,” while none achieved the top “Achiever” status, highlighting scope for growth in rural governance.

- **India Launches National Critical Mineral Mission to Boost Green Energy Drive**

To support its green energy transition, India has launched the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) in 2025. Led by the Geological Survey of India (GSI) and overseen by the Ministry of Mines, the mission targets reducing import reliance and building domestic capacity for critical minerals vital to technologies such as EVs, solar panels, wind turbines, and battery storage. NCMM emphasizes exploration, processing, and recycling of these minerals to enhance India's strategic autonomy and global competitiveness in the renewable energy sector.

- **Meghalaya's Ryndia Silk and Khasi Handloom Receive Geographical Indication (GI) Tags**

The Government of India has awarded Geographical Indication (GI) tags to Ryndia silk and Khasi handloom, two traditional textile products from Meghalaya. This prestigious recognition enhances

the cultural heritage of the region, providing legal protection and greater market visibility for these indigenous crafts.

INTERNATIONAL

- **Bangladesh Joins Artemis Accords, Boosts Role in Global Space Exploration**

Bangladesh became the 54th country to sign the Artemis Accords, reaffirming its commitment to peaceful and transparent space exploration. At a ceremony in Dhaka, Secretary of Defense Ashraf Uddin signed the pact, while NASA's acting Administrator Janet Petro welcomed Bangladesh's participation in the Artemis Moon missions and beyond.

- **Colossal Biosciences Revives Extinct Dire Wolf After 12,500 Years in Historic Breakthrough**

In a world-first achievement, Dallas-based Colossal Biosciences has revived the extinct dire wolf using advanced DNA and CRISPR gene-editing technology. Three dire wolf puppies have been born, marking a monumental step in de-extinction science and conservation innovation.

- **Japan Builds World's First 3D-Printed Train Station in Just 6 Hours**

West Japan Railway Company (JR West) has unveiled Hatsushima Station in Arida City—the world's first 3D-printed train station—constructed in under six hours using prefabricated components by Serendix. Replacing a 1948 wooden facility, this groundbreaking project highlights the potential of 3D printing to cut costs, reduce labor, and speed up infrastructure development, especially in Japan's rural areas facing demographic challenges.

- **Mauritius Becomes First African Nation to Sign Country Partnership Framework with ISA**

Mauritius has achieved a historic milestone by becoming the first African nation and the fourth globally to sign the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) with the International Solar Alliance (ISA). This agreement will enhance cooperation on solar energy initiatives, aligning with Mauritius' sustainable development and energy security objectives.

SPORTS

- **India Shines in Debut at 2025 World Boxing Cup**

India made a stellar debut at the 2025 World Boxing Cup in Brazil, with Hitesh Gulia becoming the first Indian to win a gold medal at the event after his opponent withdrew due to injury. Abhinash Jamwal secured silver in the 65kg category, while four others clinched bronze medals.

With a total of six medals, India marked an impressive entry into the elite-level international competition organized by the newly-formed World Boxing.

- **UK Set to Host 2035 FIFA Women's World Cup as Sole Bidder**

The United Kingdom is set to host the 2035 FIFA Women's World Cup, with a joint bid from England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland confirmed as the only valid entry by FIFA President Gianni Infantino. This marks a return of the tournament to Europe since 2023 and reflects the region's rising stature in women's football, bolstered by the success of past events like UEFA Women's Euro 2022.

AWARDS

- **Sudarsan Pattnaik Wins Fred Darrington Award for Sand Art**

Renowned Indian sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik has become the first recipient of the Fred Darrington Award for Excellence in Art and Culture. He was honored for his 10-foot sculpture of Lord Ganesha promoting "World Peace," showcased at SandWorld in Dorset, UK. Pattnaik, also a Padma Shri awardee, is the first Indian to exhibit at SandWorld.

- **UP Police Wins SKOCH Award for Digital Crime-Tracking Portal**

The Uttar Pradesh Police has won the national-level SKOCH Award in the "Police & Safety" category for its 'Investigation, Prosecution and Conviction Portal.' The award recognizes the portal's role in modernizing investigations, speeding up chargesheet filings, and improving court trial efficiency through advanced digital infrastructure—ultimately strengthening public trust in the justice system.

- **Academy Awards to Introduce "Best Stunt Design" Category at 100th Oscars in 2028**

In a historic move, the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences will add a new category—Best Stunt Design—beginning with the 100th Oscars in 2028. The decision follows persistent industry advocacy and marks a major step toward celebrating the artistry and innovation of stunt work within the cinematic landscape.