

Weekly One Liners 29th April to 05th of May 2024

Alok Shukla Wins Prestigious Goldman Environmental Prize 2024

Alok Shukla, a renowned environmental activist and convenor of Chhattisgarh Bachao Andolan, has been selected for the **prestigious 2024 Goldman Environmental Prize**. Also known as the “**Green Nobel Prize**,” this annual award honours grassroots environmental champions worldwide for their outstanding contributions to environmental protection.

Winners of the 2024 Goldman Environmental Prize

This year, seven people from six inhabited regions of the globe have been selected for the annual Goldman Environmental Prize. They are :

Serial no.	Winner	Country	Region
1	Marcel Gomes	Brazil	South and Central America
2	Murrawah Maroochy Johnson	Australia	Islands & Island Nations
3	Alok Shukla	India	Asia
4	Teresa Vicente	Spain	Europe
5	Andrea Vidaurre	United States of America	North America
6	Nonhle Mbuthuma and Sinegugu Zukulu	South Africa	Africa

Protecting the Hasdeo Arand Forest

Shukla’s recognition stems from his relentless efforts to safeguard the Hasdeo Arand Forest, considered the lungs of Chhattisgarh. In 2010, the government auctioned two coal blocks in this area to private companies for mining. To counter this threat, Shukla founded the Hasdeo Aranya Bachao Sangharsh Samiti and mobilized local tribal communities.

Through sustained activism and pressure, Shukla succeeded in compelling the government to reverse its policy of auctioning 21 proposed coal mines in the Hasdeo Aranya area, ultimately leading to the cancellation of the proposed auction in 2022.

Global Recognition for Environmental Leadership

The Goldman Environmental Prize, established in 1989 by American couple Richard and Rhoda Goldman, aims to honor grassroots environmental leaders, draw international attention to environmental problems, and encourage action. This year, seven individuals from six inhabited regions of the globe have been selected for the prestigious award.

Previous Indian Winners

Alok Shukla joins the ranks of seven previous Indian recipients of the Goldman Environmental Prize, including renowned activists like Medha Patkar (1992), M.C. Mehta (1996), Rashida Bee and Champa Devi Shukla (2004), Ramesh Agarwal (2014), and Prafulla Samantara (2017). These remarkable individuals have fought tirelessly for environmental justice, land rights, and sustainable development across various parts of India.

Grassroots Environmental Activism

The Goldman Environmental Prize defines grassroots leaders as individuals involved in local efforts where positive change is created through community or citizen participation. Shukla’s recognition highlights the critical role played by grassroots activism in protecting the environment and preserving natural resources for future generations.

As Alok Shukla receives this prestigious award, his efforts serve as an inspiration for environmental champions around the world, reminding us of the power of collective action and the importance of protecting our planet’s precious ecosystems.

Eminent Personalities Honoured with Prestigious Pandit Lacchu Maharaj Award

Noted Hindi film superstars **Hema Malini** and **Saira Banu**, along with other prominent personalities from the fields of art and culture, will be honoured with the prestigious Pandit Lacchu Maharaj Award. The award ceremony will take place on **31 August 2024** in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh.

10 eminent personalities to be awarded the Lacchu Maharaj award

The Lacchu Maharaj Award, Instituted in memory of the famous kathak exponent Lacchu Maharaj, was not given after 2014. Thus, the Pandit Lacchu Maharaj Ballet Foundation has decided to honour 10 personalities this year. No award has been announced for the year 2020 due to COVID-19. The awardees are:



Serial Number	Awardee	Award for Year	Belongs to Place	Exponent of Dance form
1	Uma Sharma	2015	New Delhi	Kathak
2	Rama Vaidyanathan	2016	New Delhi	Kathak
3	Uma Dogra	2017	Jaipur	Kathak
4	Hema Malini	2018	Mumbai	Kathak, Film actress
5	Saira Banu	2019	Mumbai	Kathak, Film actress
6	Sandhaya Puricha, Chairman of Sangeet Natak Akademi	2018	Mumbai	Bharatanatyam Exponent
7	Dr. Malabika Mitra	2021	Kolkata	Kathak
8	Prachi Shah	2022	Mumbai	Kathak, Film actress
9	Ashim Bandhu Bhattacharya	2023	Mumbai	Kathak
10	Pandit Rajendra Gangani	2024	Jaipur	Kathak

Recognizing Artistic Brilliance

Other notable awardees include **Sandhaya Puricha**, Chairman of Sangeet Natak Akademi (2018), a Bharatanatyam exponent; **Dr. Malabika Mitra** (2021), a Kathak maestro; **Prachi Shah** (2022), a Kathak dancer and film actress; and **Ashim Bandhu Bhattacharya** (2023), a Kathak exponent.

Honoring the Legacy of Lacchu Maharaj

The Pandit Lacchu Maharaj Award is named after the legendary Kathak exponent, Lacchu Maharaj (1907-1978), who was born Baij Nath Prasad in Lucknow. He is renowned for choreographing Kathak dance sequences in iconic films like Mahal, Mughal-e-Azam, and Pakeezah, as well as numerous ballets.

As these eminent personalities are honoured with the Pandit Lacchu Maharaj Award, it serves as a testament to the rich cultural heritage of India and the enduring legacy of artistic excellence that continues to inspire generations.

World Press Freedom Index 2024 Announced, India Ranked 159th Out of 180 Countries

In the latest edition of the **World Press Freedom Index** published annually by **Reporters Without Borders (RSF)**, India finds itself at a concerning position, **ranking 159th out of 180 countries**. This marks a slight improvement from its **previous rank of 161**, yet it still underscores significant challenges faced by journalists in the country. Surprisingly, India trails behind its neighboring nation **Pakistan**, which holds **the 152nd position**, while Sri Lanka stands at 150th place. **Norway** topped the ranking, while **Denmark** was on the second rank in World Press Freedom Index. **Sweden** ranked third on the list.

Press Freedom Index Overview

The **World Press Freedom Index** evaluates **180 countries** based on the freedom and independence journalists have to work and report. The rankings shed light on the varying degrees of press freedom across the globe. In the **Asia-Pacific region**, which ranks as the **world's second most challenging area for journalism**, several countries, including Myanmar, China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan, are among the most dangerous for media personnel. Notably, no Asian country made it to the **Index's top 15 this year**, indicating a pervasive challenge to press freedom in the region.

Press Freedom in South Asia

The **recently released 2024 World Press Freedom Index** by **Reporters Without Borders (RSF)** has once again shed light on the state of press freedom across the globe. In **South Asia**, India finds itself ranked at **159th**, while its neighbor **Pakistan stands marginally higher at 152**. **Sri Lanka**, another regional player, is **positioned at 150**. These rankings underscore the challenges journalists face in the region, where the ability to work and report independently is often compromised.

Reviving a Celebrated Tradition

The decision to honor these esteemed individuals was taken during a meeting held at Bhatkhande Sanskriti University, Lucknow, presided over by the university's Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Mandavi Singh. The meeting was attended by the secretary of the Pt. Lachhu Maharaj Ballet Foundation and senior disciple of Pandit Lachhu Maharaj, Kumkum Adarsh.

Honoring a Decade of Excellence

The Pandit Lacchu Maharaj Ballet Foundation has decided to honor ten personalities this year, as the award was not given after 2014. The esteemed awardees, spanning various years from 2015 to 2024, represent the pinnacle of artistic excellence in fields such as Kathak, Bharatanatyam, and cinema.

Celebrating Kathak Legends

Among the awardees are renowned Kathak exponents like **Uma Sharma** (2015), **Rama Vaidyanathan** (2016), **Uma Dogra** (2017), and **Pandit Rajendra Gangani** (2024). Film actresses **Hema Malini** (2018) and **Saira Banu** (2019), both accomplished Kathak dancers, will also be honored for their remarkable contributions.

Changing Dynamic in Asia-Pacific Region

The **Asia-Pacific region**, known for its complexities, presents a challenging landscape for journalists. **Myanmar, China, North Korea, Vietnam, and Afghanistan** are among the **top ten most dangerous countries for media personnel**, reflecting the precarious environment journalists operate in. Notably, this year sees none of the region's countries in the top 15 of the index, signaling a concerning trend for press freedom advocates.

Middle East and North Africa

In the **Middle East and North Africa**, press freedom concerns persist, with **nearly half of the countries facing "very serious" situations**. Countries like **Yemen, Saudi Arabia, Iran, and Syria** continue to grapple with challenges to journalistic freedom. The United Arab Emirates joins the list of countries in the red zone, highlighting widespread issues across the region.

Europe's Role and Challenges

Contrastingly, Europe, particularly within the **European Union**, boasts countries where press freedom is **considered "good."** However, challenges persist, with countries like **Hungary, Malta, and Greece** facing scrutiny for their treatment of the media. The adoption of the **European Media Freedom Act (EMFA)** reflects efforts to safeguard press freedom within the EU.

Global Trends and Concerns

The **2024 World Press Freedom Index** reveals a worrying decline in the political indicator, one of five detailed indicators in the report. States and political forces are increasingly failing to protect press freedom, leading to hostile actions against journalists. The use of artificial intelligence, particularly in disinformation campaigns, poses a significant threat, with deepfakes being utilized to influence elections.

War Against Nature and Journalist Peril

Journalists covering environmental stories also face significant risks, **with 44 journalists killed in the past 15 years** while reporting on environmental issues. This underscores the dangers associated with reporting on critical global issues and the need to protect journalists working in these areas.

National Affairs

- Invest India predicts that India's ecommerce sector will skyrocket to **\$325 billion by 2030**, with rural India driving much of the growth. This surge is fueled by factors such as increased internet penetration, affordable internet services, and a rising number of smartphone users. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- A report by the **Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI)** highlights India's escalating dependence on Chinese imports, with the import bill surging to over \$101 billion in 2023-24 from around \$70 billion in 2018-19. Over the past fifteen years, China's share of India's industrial goods imports has risen significantly, reaching 30%, while imports from China have outpaced **India's total imports by 2.3 times**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

States in the News

- The **government of Tamil Nadu** has launched a three-day survey of the **Nilgiri Tahr**, the state's iconic animal. This initiative aims to better understand and conserve this **endangered species** that faces numerous challenges, including **habitat loss** and **poaching**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Maharashtra Day**, also known as **Maharashtra Divas**, is celebrated every year on **May 1st** to commemorate the **formation of the state in 1960**. Maharashtra was carved out of the Bombay Presidency and declared a separate state on this historic day. Present-day Gujarat constitutes the other part of the former Bombay state. The division was a result of the States Reorganisation Act of 1956, which aimed to reorganize states based on linguistic boundaries, following massive protests for linguistic states. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Gujarat Day**, celebrated on **May 1st**, commemorates the formation of the **vibrant state of Gujarat on May 1st, 1960**. This annual occasion reflects Gujarat's rich cultural heritage, resilience, and contributions to India's cultural mosaic. With a history steeped in tradition and progress, Gujarat Day serves as a reminder of the state's journey towards independence and its ongoing pursuit of growth and prosperity. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Uttarakhand government** has **suspended** the manufacturing **licenses of 14 products from Patanjali Ayurved, founded by Baba Ramdev**, citing misleading advertisements about their efficacy. This move comes amid ongoing scrutiny and legal proceedings against Ramdev for non-compliance with directives to cease misleading advertising. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

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2024**
Complete Bilingual
Test Series

- The **Union Ministry of Home Affairs** has granted approval to the Uttar Pradesh Government's proposal to **rename eight railway stations in Amethi district**. Spearheaded by BJP Amethi MP Smriti Irani, this decision aims to preserve the cultural identity and heritage of the region by honoring local temples, saints, idols, and freedom fighters through the new station names. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

International Affairs

- The **Iranian Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC)** has introduced a **new kamikaze drone resembling Russia's Lancet drone**. This drone, yet to be named publicly, is designed for targeted attacks, akin to those witnessed in the Ukraine conflict. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Iraq's parliament recently passed a stringent law criminalizing same-sex relationships**, imposing a **maximum 15-year prison sentence**. The legislation, titled the Law on Combating Prostitution and Homosexuality, reflects a concerning trend of increased scrutiny and persecution of LGBT individuals in Iraq. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Humza Yousaf, Scotland's first Muslim First Minister** and leader of the Scottish National Party (SNP), has announced his resignation amid political turmoil. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Sri Lanka, amidst a financial crisis stemming from a severe shortage of dollars, has taken a significant step by partially lifting import restrictions. This move aims to rejuvenate the economy, which has been struggling since March 2020. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Dubai is embarking on an ambitious endeavor to construct the **world's largest airport, Al Maktoum International Airport**, boasting an unprecedented capacity to accommodate 260 million passengers annually, with 400 terminal gates and five parallel runways. **Spearheaded by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum**, the project signifies Dubai's commitment to innovation and global connectivity. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Paleontologists from Argentina** have revealed the unearthing of a novel medium-sized herbivorous dinosaur, **Chakisaurus nekul**, which thrived approximately 90 million years ago during the Late Cretaceous period in **present-day Patagonia**. The finding, detailed in the journal Cretaceous Research, sheds light on a remarkable creature known for its speed and unique tail anatomy. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a triumphant display of dominance, **Paris Saint-Germain** secured their record **12th Ligue-1 title in the 2023-24 season**. The club's relentless pursuit of excellence saw them claim victory for the third consecutive year, further solidifying their stature as a powerhouse in French football.

Under the astute leadership of **coach Luis Enrique**, PSG showcased their prowess with a commanding performance throughout the season. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- Zimbabwe has launched a new currency called the **ZiG** (short for **Zimbabwe Gold**) in an attempt to address the country's long-running **currency crisis**. The ZiG, backed by Zimbabwe's **gold reserves**, was introduced electronically in early April and has now been released in **banknote and coin form**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- China is set to launch the **Chang'e-6 lunar probe** on a **round trip to the Moon**, marking a significant advancement in their space exploration. The mission aims to gather soil and rock samples from the far side of the Moon, providing crucial insights into its early evolution and the inner solar system. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant political development, the **Solomon Islands** has elected former Foreign Minister **Jeremiah Manele** as its new prime minister, indicating that the South Pacific island nation is likely to maintain close ties with China. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **American Express** is set to inaugurate its expansive new campus in **Gurugram**, spanning nearly **one million square feet**, showcasing the company's commitment to fostering a vibrant work environment. The move signifies a strategic step in leveraging global expertise and local talent to drive innovation and value for customers worldwide. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Agreements/MoUs Signed

- **India's Bharat 6G Alliance** is set to sign a cooperation agreement with Europe's Industry Alliance 6G, following a similar agreement with the US. This partnership aims to foster collaboration in **developing 6G technology**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking move, **NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL)** has joined hands with the **Bank of Namibia (BoN)** to introduce a real-time payment system akin to India's Unified Payment Interface (UPI) in Namibia. This partnership marks NPCI's first collaboration with a central bank for deploying the UPI stack in an international market, aiming to revolutionize digital payments in Namibia. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, **Girish Chandra Murmu, the Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG)**, has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with **Toyam Raya, Auditor General of Nepal**. This agreement aims to strengthen collaboration and facilitate the exchange of expertise in auditing practices between the **Supreme Audit Institutions (SAIs)** of both countries. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Books and Authors

- A Book Titled “The Winner’s Mindset,” Authored by Shane Watson. In his book, “**The Winner’s Mindset,**” Watson shares the insights and strategies that enabled him to conquer his fears and reach new heights in his cricketing career. While the book is not an autobiography in the traditional sense, it serves as a powerful **self-help guide**, offering readers a glimpse into the mindset that propels individuals to success. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Banking/Economy/Business News

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued comprehensive guidelines outlining the voluntary transition path for Small Finance Banks (SFBs) seeking to become Universal Banks.** These guidelines set specific eligibility criteria and procedural requirements for such a transition, aiming to ensure financial stability and operational effectiveness in the banking sector. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **The increasing reliance of India on Chinese industrial goods presents significant economic and security concerns, with China’s share in New Delhi’s imports rising from 21% to 30% over the last 15 years.** This situation demands a strategic reassessment of import strategies to foster diversified and resilient supply chains. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Hitachi Payment Services** has unveiled **new upgradable ATMs in India**, allowing banks to adapt their machines into **Cash Recycling Machines (CRMs)** as per evolving needs. Manufactured under the ‘Make in India’ initiative, these ATMs offer flexibility and efficiency to banks, potentially revolutionizing the Indian ATM industry. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued guidelines for Small Finance Banks (SFBs) seeking to transition into Universal Banks**, providing a pathway for conversion. This voluntary conversion is subject to specific criteria laid out by the RBI. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Ministry of Home Affairs has joined forces with SBI Cards and select telecom operators to address the rising issue of **one-time password (OTP) frauds**. In light of increasing phishing attacks targeting bank customers, a solution is being developed to alert individuals about potential OTP thefts. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Reserve Bank of India’s decision to increase risk weights on bank loans to higher-rated **non-banking financial companies (NBFCs)** has led to a significant uptick in quarterly **commercial paper (CP) issuances**. This, coupled with investor confidence and diversified funding sources, has propelled CP issuances by NBFCs to a four-and-a-half-year high of **₹1.2-lakh crore in January-March 2024**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- The Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA), a public sector enterprise, has been granted the coveted ‘**Navratna**’ status by the government, according to a recent filing with the stock exchanges. This prestigious designation takes the total number of **Navratna PSEs (Public Sector Enterprises)** in India to 17. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Deloitte India has revised its GDP growth forecasts for FY24 and FY25, with a significant increase in projections. The consultancy anticipates a robust **GDP growth of 7.6-7.8% for FY24**, up from the previous estimate of **6.9-7.2%**. Looking ahead to FY25, Deloitte expects GDP to expand by **6.6%**, driven by strong economic activity fueled by rising consumption expenditure. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Cred has launched an innovative UPI-based ‘**Scan and Pay**’ service, marking its entry into the offline payments sphere, challenging incumbents like PhonePe, Google Pay, and Paytm. This service allows users to make payments directly from their bank accounts using any QR code, extending convenience to large format stores such as supermarkets, fast-food joints, beauty salons, and fashion boutiques. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India has adjusted its **windfall tax on petroleum crude**, reducing it to 8,400 Indian rupees (**\$100.66 per metric ton from 9,600 rupees**, effective May 1. This decision comes after a recent increase in the tax from 6,800 rupees to 9,600 rupees per metric ton on April 16. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has **revoked the license of Acemoney (India) Limited**, a Delhi-based **non-banking financial company (NBFC)**, citing irregular lending practices. This action stems from the company’s violation of RBI guidelines regarding excessive interest charges and inadequate protection of customer information. Specifically, the RBI noted discrepancies in Acemoney’s management of risks and code of conduct in its digital lending operations through third-party apps. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

RBI GRADE-B
Phase-I & Phase-II
2024
Test Series

- In April 2024, India witnessed a historic milestone in its **Goods and Services Tax (GST)** revenue collection, reaching an unprecedented **Rs 2.10 lakh crore**. This marked a substantial 12.4% increase from the previous year's collections. The surge was primarily driven by a robust 13.4% growth in domestic transactions and an 8.3% rise in imports. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Indian Oil Corporation (IOC)** has announced a significant investment of **Rs 5,215 crore to develop 1 gigawatt (GW)** of renewable energy capacity in India. This strategic move aligns with IOC's broader diversification strategy beyond traditional oil and gas ventures. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Worldline ePayments** India has announced its receipt of approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a payment aggregator. This approval underscores the company's dedication to the Indian market and emphasizes its commitment to compliance within a well-regulated payments landscape. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In March, the growth of **India's core sectors slowed to 5.2% from February's 7.1%**, primarily due to the statistical effect of a high base. However, sequentially, there was a notable increase of 9.9%, marking the highest growth in a year. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **In April 2024, Unified Payment Interface (UPI)** transactions witnessed a marginal dip of **1% in volume and 0.7% in value** compared to March. Despite this, year-on-year growth remains robust, with a 50% increase in volume and 40% in value. The dip in April is attributed to the typically higher transaction volumes in March. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Government of India has signed an agreement with the Government of **Bangladesh** to renew the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for training **1500 Bangladeshi officers from 2025 to 2030**. The agreement was signed between the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), Government of India, and the Bangladeshi Ministry of Public Administration. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed monetary penalties on five co-operative banks for deficiencies in regulatory compliance. The co-operative banks that faced the central bank's action are Navsarjan Industrial Co-operative Bank Ltd, Mehsana Jilla Panchayat Karmachari Co-operative Bank Ltd, Halol Urban Co-operative Bank Ltd, Stambhadri Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd and Subramanianagar Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India's manufacturing sector has continued its robust performance into the first quarter of the new fiscal year, maintaining its momentum from the previous year's stellar showing. In April, the **HSBC India Manufacturing Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)** revealed a buoyant picture, with manufacturing activity registering its second strongest expansion since early 2021. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In the dynamic landscape of Indian startups, **former BharatPe COO Dhruv Dhanraj Bahl** steps into the world of venture capital with the launch of his **maiden fund, Eternal Capital**, with a substantial corpus of **Rs 240 crore**, including a greenshoe option. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Micron India's Sanand unit** gears up to unveil its inaugural batch of domestically manufactured **semiconductor chips in 2025**, with a focus on global exportation. Anand Ramamoorthy, the managing director, underscores the burgeoning global demand, strategic partnerships, and the diverse applications spanning various sectors, notably emphasizing agility and the scarcity of talent in niche domains such as cybersecurity. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL)** has successfully secured **USD 400 million** financing from a consortium of five leading international banks for its **750 MW solar projects in Rajasthan and Gujarat**. The financing will support the construction of these projects, expected to come online from November 2024 onwards. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Adani Green Energy Ltd (AGEL)** has successfully obtained a \$400 million finance package from a consortium of five international banks to support its ongoing solar projects in Gujarat and Rajasthan. These projects, totaling 750 MW in capacity, are slated to commence operations from November 2024 onwards. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Government of India has introduced a **Floating Rate Bond (FRB)** maturing in 2034, with the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) declaring an 8% interest rate** for the **Floating Rate Savings Bond (FRSB) 2034**. This bond offers a variable interest rate that resets every six months, reflecting market conditions. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a remarkable achievement, **ICICI Bank** has etched its name among India's top five companies by market capitalization, surpassing the **Rs 8 trillion mark**. The private lender's shares surged over 5%, propelling its market value to new heights and cementing its position as a financial powerhouse. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)** has revised **India's GDP growth projection upward to 6.6%** for the fiscal year 2024-25. This adjustment reflects the anticipation of robust growth driven primarily by increased public investment and improved business sentiment. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- Fi, a neobanking startup, backed by investors such as **Peak XV and Temasek**, has obtained a **non-banking finance company (NBFC)** license from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), enabling it to provide loans from its own books. This development aligns with the trend seen among fintech startups in recent years, where acquiring NBFC licenses facilitates direct lending and asset base establishment. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **YES Bank has partnered with ANQ** to introduce two innovative credit cards, Pi and Phi, aiming to blend traditional banking with fintech solutions. The **Pi card offers digital-only credit on UPI** for domestic transactions, while the Phi card provides physical access for both domestic and international purchases. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- HDFC Life launches the **“No Jhanjhat Life Insurance Fatafat”** campaign, aimed at simplifying and expediting life insurance purchases through its online platform. The campaign underscores the importance of addressing India’s low insurance penetration and vast protection gap. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Appointments/Resignations

- **The Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** has welcomed a new addition to its leadership team. **Sunil Kumar Yadav**, an officer from the Indian Revenue Service (IRS), has been appointed as the **Director** of the Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, the **Indian Vaccine Manufacturers Association (IVMA)** has announced the appointment of **Krishna Ella**, co-founder and executive chairman of **Bharat Biotech**, as its new **president** for the next two years, effective April 2024. Ella will take over the presidency from Adar C. Poonawala, who held the position from 2019 to March 2024. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Sarvadanand Barnwal**, an **Indian Statistical Service (ISS)** officer of the **2010 batch**, has been appointed as **Director** in the **Department of Land Resources**. The appointment was made on **Friday, April 26, 2024**, through an order issued by the **Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT)**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Justice (retired) Dinesh Kumar** took charge as the Presiding Officer of the **Securities Appellate Tribunal (SAT)** on **29 April 2024**. The government of India appointed Justice Dinesh Kumar for a **four-year term**. Before taking over as the presiding officer of SAT, Justice Dinesh Kumar was the chief justice of the **Karnataka High Court**. He retired from the post in **February 2024**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA) has granted its approval for the **appointment of Hitesh Kumar Sethia** as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of **Jio Financial Services** for a three-year period, effective from **November 15, 2023**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) has announced the appointment of Pratima Singh, an officer of the **Indian Revenue Service (IRS)**, as the Director in the Department of Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT). ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Indian political landscape has lost a seasoned leader with the passing of **V. Srinivas Prasad**, a Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) Member of Parliament (MP) and former Union Minister. Prasad, who had an illustrious career spanning five decades, breathed his last at the age of 76 in Bengaluru, Karnataka. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Shashi Bhushan Singh**, a **2010-batch Indian Railway Traffic Service (IRTS) officer**, has been appointed as the **Secretary (at the Director level) of the National Jute Board in Kolkata** under the Ministry of Textiles. The appointment, approved by the Central Government, is effective for a five-year term or until further orders. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Atanu Chakraborty’s re-appointment** as part-time **Chairman of HDFC Bank** for three years, effective from **May 5, 2024, to May 4, 2027**, has been approved by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The Board of Directors has also sanctioned his re-appointment as an Independent Director for the same tenure. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Retired Justice Sanjaya Kumar Mishra** has been appointed as the **President of the Goods & Services Tax Appellate Tribunal (GSTAT) by the Centre**. The move aims to streamline the resolution of disputes concerning businesses efficiently. The appointment, made by the Appointment Committee of the Cabinet based on the recommendation of the Search-cum-Selection Committee, comes with a salary of ₹2.50 lakh per month for a tenure of four years. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Defence News

- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** and Indian Navy have bolstered their combat capabilities with the induction of the Rampage long-range supersonic air-to-ground missile, previously utilized by the Israeli Air Force in operations against Iranian targets. The missile, known as the **High-Speed Low Drag-Mark 2** within the Indian Air Force, offers a striking range of up to 250 kilometers. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has achieved a significant milestone in enhancing India's anti-submarine warfare capabilities with the successful flight-test of the Supersonic Missile-Assisted Release of Torpedo (**SMART**) system. This next-generation **torpedo delivery system** was successfully flight-tested on **May 01, 2024**, at around 8:30 AM from Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Indian Army and the Punit Balan Group joined hands to inaugurate the nation's **first Constitution Park in Pune**. The ceremony, **led by Lt. Gen. Ajai Kumar Singh**, emphasized the importance of citizens honoring their duties outlined in the Constitution to drive India towards development by 2047. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Awards and Recognitions

- **Gina Justus**, an English High School teacher at the Sharjah Girls Branch in the United Arab Emirates (UAE), has been named the regional winner for the **Middle East and North Africa (MENA)** region at the prestigious **2024 Cambridge Dedicated Teacher Awards**. This achievement celebrates her outstanding mentorship and dedication to charity work. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Sana**, the **AI-powered news anchor** developed by the **India Today Group**, has achieved remarkable success at the prestigious **International News Media Association (INMA) Global Media Awards** held in London. This groundbreaking **AI** innovation has captured two coveted awards, solidifying its position as a **trailblazer** in the field of AI-driven journalism. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE)** honored **K.V. Kamath**, Chairman of National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development and Chairman of Jio Financial Services Ltd., with an honorary doctorate at a special convocation on April 29, 2024. The ceremony celebrated Kamath's exceptional leadership in banking, finance, and sustainable development, recognizing his significant contributions to India's financial sector and global impact. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- **Dr. Bina Modi**, Chairperson and Managing Director of Modi Enterprises – KK Modi Group, was honoured by the esteemed Vice President of India, Jagdeep Dhankar, for her 'Outstanding Contribution to the cause of **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)**'. The felicitation took place during the inauguration of the new building for the Society of Indian Law Firms (SILF), where the Vice President graced the occasion as the chief guest. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Dr. Purnima Devi Barman**, a wildlife biologist from Assam, has been recognized with the prestigious **Whitley Gold Award** for her exemplary conservation efforts aimed at protecting the endangered Greater Adjutant Stork and its wetland habitat. This accolade, often referred to as the 'Green Oscar', highlights her remarkable contributions to wildlife conservation and underscores the importance of grassroots efforts in safeguarding biodiversity. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a gesture of solidarity and recognition, **Palestinian journalists** covering the **crisis in Gaza** have been named laureates of the **2024 UNESCO/Guillermo Cano World Press Freedom Prize**. The announcement comes from the recommendation of an International Jury of media professionals, emphasizing the courage and commitment of these journalists amidst challenging circumstances. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Summits and Conferences News

- India reaffirms its commitment to safeguarding Antarctica's delicate ecosystem and advancing scientific exploration in the region. The **Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)**, Government of India, in collaboration with the **National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research (NCPOR)**, is set to host the **46th Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM 46)** and the **26th Meeting of the Committee for Environmental Protection (CEP 26)** from **May 20 to 30, 2024**, in Kochi, Kerala. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Ranks and Reports

- In a remarkable achievement, **Emeritus**, the Indian edtech startup, has secured the coveted **top spot** in **TIME Magazine's "World's Top EdTech Companies of 2024" ranking**. Founded in 2015 by Ashwin Damera and Chaitanya Kalipatnapu, Emeritus offers courses from prestigious global universities, including the University of Cambridge, Harvard Business School, and MIT Sloan, among others. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Ministry of Health and Population of Nepal has **urged residents to wear masks** due to the alarming increase in air pollution levels in the Kathmandu valley. According to IQAir, an organization that measures real-time pollution in 101 cities worldwide, **Kathmandu has been ranked as the most polluted city globally**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Sports News

- The Indian athletes continued their impressive medal-winning spree at the **21st U-20 Asian Athletics Championship 2024**, with **Harshit Kumar** clinching a gold medal in the highly competitive Hammer throw event. His outstanding throw of 66.7 meters secured India's latest gold at the prestigious event. As the third day of the championship drew to a close, the Indian contingent had amassed a total of **18 medals**, including five from the latest round of events. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Chennai Super Kings (CSK)** secured a resounding **78-run** victory over the **Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH)** on Sunday, potentially shaping the trajectory of both teams' **2024 Indian Premier League (IPL)** campaigns. This emphatic win significantly boosted **CSK's net run rate**, propelling them to the **third position** in the league standings. Conversely, SRH suffered their second consecutive defeat, slipping to the **fourth spot**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **16th edition** of the **Tata Consultancy Services World 10K Bengaluru** witnessed Kenyan runners **Peter Mwaniki** (28:15) and **Lilian Kasait** (30:56) emerging victorious in the **international elite men's and women's categories**, respectively. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The renowned Indian dairy giant **Amul** has been named the Lead Arm sponsor for the USA and South Africa cricket teams during the highly anticipated **T20 World Cup** in June. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **The International Cricket Council (ICC)** has taken strong action against West Indies player Devon Thomas by imposing a **five-year period of ineligibility** from all cricket after he admitted to breaching multiple anti-corruption codes. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Badminton World Federation (BWF)** has announced that India will host the prestigious **2025 BWF World Junior Championships** at the **National Centre of Excellence in Guwahati**. This marks a significant milestone as India will be hosting this premier badminton event for the first time since 2008, when it was held in Pune. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Science and Technology News

- In a collaborative effort between the **Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation Cell (SVEEP)** of Kamrup Election District and the **Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati**, a groundbreaking 3D-printed dummy ballot unit has been unveiled. The initiative aims to enhance voter awareness and engagement, particularly among new voters and senior citizens, by providing a practical experience of the voting process. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Important Days News

- **International Jazz Day**, celebrated annually on **April 30th**, is a global event that celebrates the power of jazz to bring people together and promote peace, unity, and intercultural dialogue. This year marks a significant milestone as the city of **Tangier, Morocco** becomes the first African host city for the global celebration. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **International Dance Day**, celebrated annually on **April 29th**, stands as a global tribute to the art of dance. Conceived by the Dance Committee of the **International Theatre Institute (ITI)**, an essential partner of UNESCO in the realm of performing arts, this day commemorates the birth of **Jean-Georges Noverre (1727–1810)**, revered as the progenitor of modern ballet. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Ayushman Bharat Diwas** is celebrated annually on **April 30** to raise awareness about the **Ayushman Bharat Yojana** and its goals. This year, it falls on **Tuesday, April 30, 2024**. The day was established by the government to highlight the scheme's objective of providing better access to **affordable and quality healthcare services**, especially for the underprivileged. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **International Labour Day**, also known as **May Day** or **Workers' Day**, is celebrated on **Wednesday, May 1st, 2024**. This annual observance honours the contributions and achievements of workers worldwide and promotes their rights and opportunities. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **World Tuna Day**, observed annually on **May 2nd**, is dedicated to raising **awareness** about the critical importance of **tuna conservation**. Tuna is popular for its numerous **health benefits**, as it provides **Omega-3 fatty acids, protein, and vital vitamins**. But, **tuna populations** face significant threats due to **overfishing** and unsustainable fishing practices. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

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- On May 3rd, the global community will come together to observe **World Press Freedom Day**, a significant event that honours the fundamental principles of press freedom and the vital role journalists play in informing and enlightening the public. This year, **World Press Freedom Day** falls on a Friday, and the theme for 2024 is **“A Press for the Planet: Journalism in the Face of the Environmental Crisis.”** ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **International Day of Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action**, observed **annually on April 4th**, serves as a poignant reminder of the ongoing threats posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW) worldwide. This day not only underscores the urgent need for collective action to address these threats but also celebrates the progress made in mine action efforts globally. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Obituaries News

- Vinay Vir, a **renowned journalist**, publisher, and editor of the Daily Hindi Milap, passed away on Saturday, April 27th, 2024, at the age of 72. He was a champion for the **Hindi language** in South India and a respected figure in the journalism community. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Renowned playback singer **Uma Ramanan**, who predominantly sang in Tamil, passed away at the age of 72 in Chennai. The veteran singer, known for her melodious voice and extensive repertoire, has left an indelible mark on the Indian music industry. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Paul Auster**, the renowned American novelist and filmmaker, has passed away at the age of 77. The prolific writer, best known for his acclaimed work “The New York Trilogy,” died on Tuesday at his home in Brooklyn, New York, due to complications from lung cancer. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Static Takeaways

- Sri Lanka Capitals: Colombo, Sri Jayawardenepura Kotte;
- Sri Lanka Currency: Sri Lankan Rupee;
- Sri Lanka Official languages: Sinhala, Tamil;
- Sri Lanka President: Ranil Wickremesinghe;
- Sri Lanka Prime minister: Dinesh Gunawardena.
- Chairman & Managing director of Power Finance Corporation: Ravinder Singh Dhillon
- Chief Justice of Rajasthan High Court: Augustine George Masih
- Chief Minister of Rajasthan: Ashok Gehlot
- Delhi Water Minister : Saurabh Bharadwaj
- Chief Scientist at CSIR-IIIM Jammu: Dr Zabeer Ahmed
- World Animal Health Organization Founded: 1924;
- World Animal Health Organization Founder: Emmanuel Leclainche;

- World Animal Health Organization Headquarters: Paris;
- Director General of the World Animal Health Organization: Dr Monique Eloit.
- Founder of Tata Group: Jamsetji Tata
- Chief minister of Madhya Pradesh: Shivraj Singh Chouhan
- Asian Cricket Council(ACC) President: Jay Shah;
- Asian Cricket Council(ACC) Headquarters: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia;
- Asian Cricket Council(ACC) Established: 1983.
- Director General of Railway Protection Force (RPF): Sanjay Chander
- WHO Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland; Director general: Tedros Adhanom.
- CRPF Founded: 27 July 1939;
- CRPF Headquarters: New Delhi;
- CRPF Founder: Parliament of India;
- Director General of CRPF: Dr. Sujoy Lal Thakur, IPS.
- 50th and current Chief Justice of India: Dhananjaya Yeshwant Chandrachud
- Minister of Law and Justice in India: Arjun Ram Meghwal
- Current Chairman of Asian Paints Ltd: Deepak Satwalekar
- Rajasthan Capital: Jaipur
- Rajasthan Chief Minister: Ashok Gehlot
- Rajasthan Governor: Kalraj Mishra
- Central Bank of Israel Establishment: 1954
- Central Bank of Israel Headquarter: Kiryat HaMemshala in Jerusalem with a branch in Tel Aviv.
- Central Bank of Israel Current Governor: Amir Yaron
- Central Bank of Israel Director General: Shulamit Geri
- Central Bank of Israel Establishment: 1954
- Central Bank of Israel Headquarter: Kiryat HaMemshala in Jerusalem with a branch in Tel Aviv.
- Central Bank of Israel Current Governor: Amir Yaron
- Central Bank of Israel Director General: Shulamit Geri
- 2023 FIDE World Champion: Ding Liren
- President of Handball Association India (HAI): Digvijay Chautala
- World Wildlife Fund Headquarters: Gland, Switzerland;
- World Wildlife Fund Founded: 29 April 1961;
- World Wildlife Fund Director General: Marco Lambertini.
- CEO of India AI: Shri Abhishek Singh
- WHO Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland; Director general: Tedros Adhanom.
- CEO of India AI: Shri Abhishek Singh
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Founded: 1988;
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Founder: Bert Bolin;
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland.

- Chief Minister of Assam: Himanta Biswa Sarma
- Mongolia Capital: Ulaanbaatar
- Mongolia Currency: Mongolian Tugrik
- Minister of Finance of Indonesia: Sri Mulyani
- Director of Indian Council of Agricultural Research: Himashu Pathak
- Indian Council of Agricultural Research establishment year: 16 July 1929
- CEO and Co-founder of Razorpay: Harshil Mathur
- CEO and Co-founder of Curlec: Zac Liew
- Razorpay Founded: 2013
- Union Minister of Textiles: Piyush Goyal
- India's first PM MITRA Park in: Virudhunagar, Tamil Nadu
- CEO of Food Safety Standard Authority of India (FSSAI): G. Kamala Vardhana Rao
- Current chairperson of FSSAI : Rajesh Bhusan
- Indian Oil Corporation Limited Chairman: Shrikant Madhav Vaidya
- World Federation of Neurology Headquarters location: London, United Kingdom;
- World Federation of Neurology Founded: July 1957;
- World Federation of Neurology President: Prof. Wolfgang Grisold.
- Chief Minister of Arunachal Pradesh: Pema Khandu
- Indian Coast Guard Founded: 1 February 1977;
- Indian Coast Guard Headquarters: Indian Coast Guard Headquarters, New Delhi.
- Chairman of Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation: Dr M.D. Patra
- Headquarters of Life Insurance Corporation of India: Mumbai
- MD and CEO of Ashok Leyland: Shenu Agarwal
- Chairperson & MD of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited: CB Ananthakrishnan
- Headquarters of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited: Bangalore, Karnataka
- Minister of Defense of Argentina: Jorge Taiana
- National Startup Day: January 16
- CEO of HCL Tech: C Vijayakumar
- The current/25th Navy Chief: Admiral R. Hari Kumar



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