

## International

### India, Bhutan sign MoU on postal cooperation.

India and Bhutan have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on postal cooperation to strengthen collaboration between India Post and Bhutan Post.

The agreement focuses on areas such as postal operations, technology development, logistics connectivity, capacity building and knowledge exchange.

Both countries also agreed to enhance cooperation in digital technologies by sharing best practices, aiming to improve efficiency and modernise postal services.

### India maintains Indus Waters Treaty in abeyance.

India has stated that the Indus Waters Treaty with Pakistan will remain in abeyance until Pakistan stops supporting terrorism.

India's Permanent Representative to the UN, P. Harish, said Pakistan must prioritise human life before raising treaty concerns.

He noted that India signed the 1960 treaty in good faith, but it was undermined by conflicts and terror incidents.

India also highlighted its commitment to water access through initiatives like the Jal Jeevan Mission.

### Switzerland suspends arms export approvals to US.

Switzerland has suspended approvals for weapons exports to the United States, citing its policy of neutrality amid the ongoing conflict involving Iran.

The Swiss Federal Council stated that no new export licences for war materials will be granted to countries involved in the conflict.

Existing licences and other exports will be reviewed, reinforcing Switzerland's commitment to neutrality and international law.

## Important Days

### World Day for Glaciers:21<sup>st</sup> March.

The World Day for Glaciers is observed on March 21 to raise awareness about the vital role glaciers play in sustaining life.

Glaciers store nearly 70% of the world's freshwater and are crucial for ecosystems, agriculture and water supply.

The day highlights the alarming impact of climate change, as rapid melting leads to water scarcity, rising sea levels and natural disasters.

It also promotes global cooperation under initiatives like the Decade of Action for Cryospheric Sciences (2025–2034) to protect glaciers for future generations.

### International Nowruz Day:21<sup>st</sup> March.

International Nowruz Day is observed on March 21, marking the Persian New Year and the arrival of spring. Recognised by the United Nations, Nowruz symbolises renewal, hope and new beginnings, coinciding with the vernal equinox.

Celebrated for over 3,000 years across regions like Iran, Central Asia and the Caucasus, it promotes unity and cultural harmony.

The word Nowruz means “new day” and reflects the transition from winter to spring, encouraging reflection, positivity and fresh beginnings.

### World Puppetry Day:21<sup>st</sup> March.

World Puppetry Day is observed globally on March 21 to promote and preserve the art of puppetry.

Initiated in 2003 by UNIMA, the day highlights puppetry as a cultural, educational and storytelling medium.

It encourages safeguarding traditional practices while promoting innovation in modern theatre.

Celebrations include performances, workshops and exhibitions worldwide. Puppetry continues to play an important role in education, social awareness and cultural exchange, making it relevant in today's society.

### World Poetry Day:21<sup>st</sup> March.

World Poetry Day is observed on March 21 to celebrate poets and the art of poetry.

Established by UNESCO in 1999, the day promotes reading, writing and sharing poetry while encouraging linguistic diversity.

It highlights poetry as a powerful medium that connects cultures and expresses human emotions.

Celebrations include poetry readings, competitions and cultural events worldwide, inspiring creativity and preserving literary traditions for future generations.

### **International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination: 21<sup>st</sup> March.**

Observed on March 21, International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination promotes equality and global action against racism.

It commemorates the Sharpeville Massacre (1960) in South Africa, where 69 peaceful protesters were killed opposing apartheid laws. The United Nations established the day to encourage anti-discrimination policies and uphold human rights.

Key frameworks like ICERD (1965) and the Durban Declaration (2001) guide global efforts to eliminate racial discrimination, promote social justice and address historical injustices such as slavery and colonialism.

### **World Sparrow Day: 20<sup>th</sup> March.**

World Sparrow Day is observed globally on 20<sup>th</sup> March to raise awareness about the declining population of sparrows.

Launched in 2010, the day highlights threats such as urbanisation, pollution and loss of nesting spaces. Sparrows play a vital role in ecological balance by controlling insects and aiding pollination. Awareness campaigns and conservation efforts encourage simple actions like installing feeders and planting native vegetation to protect these important birds.

### **National**

### **EC regulates political advertisements ahead of polls.**

The Election Commission has issued guidelines to regulate political advertisements across electronic and digital media ahead of upcoming assembly elections.

It mandates pre-certification from Media Certification and Monitoring Committees (MCMC) for all political ads on TV, radio, social media and other platforms.

Parties must also disclose campaign expenditure online, while strict monitoring of paid news has been directed.

The move aims to ensure transparency and fairness in election campaigns.

### **Online Gaming Act 2025 to curb harmful gaming.**

The Promotion and Regulation of Online Gaming Act, 2025 prohibits harmful online money gaming, related advertisements and financial transactions.

The law aims to protect users, especially youth, from addiction, financial losses and social distress caused by predatory platforms.

It promotes safer alternatives like e-sports and social gaming.

Violations can attract up to three years imprisonment and a fine up to ₹1 crore, strengthening regulation of the online gaming ecosystem.

### **NHAI to deploy AI-Based Dashcam monitoring system.**

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) will introduce an AI-powered dashcam monitoring system across about 40,000 km of highways to improve operations and maintenance. Using AI and machine learning, the system will enable real-time tracking of road conditions, identification of defects and efficient repairs.

Data collected through patrol vehicles will be analysed via a dedicated IT platform, enhancing transparency and ensuring timely maintenance.

### **AAI enhances aviation safety with system calibration.**

The Airports Authority of India (AAI) has conducted flight calibration of key air navigation systems at Birsa Munda Airport, Ranchi.

These include the Instrument Landing System (ILS), DVOR, and PAPI, which ensure accurate aircraft guidance, especially during low visibility.

The exercise, carried out by AAI's in-house experts using advanced equipment, strengthens aviation safety and operational reliability in the country.

## **Business and Economy**

### **Income Tax Rules 2026 notified.**

The Government has notified the Income Tax Rules, 2026, effective from next month, aiming to enhance compliance and simplify tax procedures.

The rules introduce stricter disclosures, improved digital reporting and updated compliance structures under the Income-tax Act, 2025.

They strengthen stock exchange transparency, expand powers for cross-border taxation and provide clearer guidelines on complex transactions. Overall, the reforms focus on transparency, standardisation and reducing tax disputes.

## **Sports**

### **Cameron McEvoy breaks 50m freestyle world record.**

Australia's Olympic champion Cameron McEvoy has set a new men's 50m freestyle world record, clocking 20.88 seconds at the China Open in Shenzhen. He broke the previous record of 20.91 seconds held by Brazil's César Cielo since 2009.

The earlier record was set during the "super suit era," when performance-enhancing swimsuits were later banned.

### **Tanvi Sharma enters semifinals at Orleans Masters.**

Indian shuttler Tanvi Sharma advanced to the women's singles semifinals of the Orleans Masters after defeating Japan's Natsuki Nidaira 21-14, 21-14.

An all-Indian quarterfinal between Malvika Bansod and Isharani Baruah ensured another semifinal spot for India. However, in men's doubles, Arjun Ramachandran and Hariharan Amsakarunan were eliminated in the quarterfinals.

### **Indian players shine at Indian Open Squash.**

India's Anahat Singh, Tanvi Khanna, Abhay Singh and Veer Chotrani advanced to the semifinals of the Indian Open Squash in Mumbai.

Anahat and Tanvi will face each other in an all-Indian women's semifinal.

In men's singles, Abhay and Veer also progressed with dominant wins.

With strong performances, India remains in a strong position to secure multiple titles on home soil.