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INDIA TESTS FIRST MIRV-CAPABLE AGNI ICBM

On May 8, 2026, India test-fired its first MIRV-capable Agni-class intercontinental ballistic missile from APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the Odisha coast, with a notified danger corridor of approximately 3,560 km.

Key Highlights

- Carried a Multiple Independently-targetable Re-entry Vehicle (MIRV) payload; suspected Hypersonic Glide Vehicle (HGV) integration
- Places India in the elite club – US, Russia, UK, France, China – with operational MIRV ICBM capability
- Strengthens credible minimum deterrence under India's No First Use (NFU) doctrine
- Strategic Forces Command (SFC) to operationalise the system

APJ Abdul Kalam Island (formerly Wheeler Island), Odisha. Danger corridor: ~3,560 km. MIRV = Multiple Independently-targetable Re-entry Vehicle. India joins US, Russia, UK, France, China as operational MIRV nations. Indian nuclear doctrine: No First Use (NFU), credible minimum deterrence. SFC (under Strategic Nuclear Command) operationalises strategic assets.

NEW CDS AND NAVY CHIEF ANNOUNCED

On May 9, 2026, the Government of India announced the appointment of Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani (Retd) as the next Chief of Defence Staff and Secretary, Department of Military Affairs, and Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan as the next Chief of the Naval Staff – both assuming office on May 31, 2026.

Key Points

- Outgoing CDS: Gen Anil Chauhan (in office since 2022 – specifically September 30, 2022)
- Outgoing CNS: Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi
- CDS post created in 2019; first CDS was Gen Bipin Rawat (Dec 2019-Dec 2021)
- Comes amid the push for theatre command restructuring (Integrated Theatre Commands)

In existence since 2020, created January 1, 2020, after CCS approval (Dec 2019). First CDS: Gen Bipin Rawat (died Dec 2021); second CDS, in office since 2022: Gen Anil Chauhan (Sept 30, 2022 onwards). The CDS is a 4-star officer and Secretary, Department of Military Affairs (DMA) – but does NOT command operational troops. Theatre commands: under planning – Northern, Western, Maritime envisaged.

FOURTH INDIA-AFRICA FORUM SUMMIT (IAFS-IV) ANNOUNCED

India and the African Union Commission jointly announced the Fourth India-Africa Forum Summit (IAFS-IV), to be held in New Delhi from May 28 to 31, 2026 – the first such summit since IAFS-III in 2015.

Key Highlights

- Theme: “IA SPIRIT – India Africa Strategic Partnership for Innovation, Resilience and Inclusive Transformation”
- Previous summits: IAFS-I (Delhi, 2008); IAFS-II (Addis Ababa, 2011); IAFS-III (Delhi, 2015)
- Partner organisation: African Union Commission (AUC); African Union admitted to G20 (2023) under India’s presidency
- Parallel events: Business Dialogue, Track-2 dialogue, India-Africa Music & Dance Festival

Apex forum for India-Africa multilateral engagement. IAFS-I: 2008, Delhi; IAFS-II: 2011, Addis Ababa; IAFS-III: 2015, Delhi (41 African Heads of State/Government). IAFS-IV: May 28-31, 2026, Delhi. African Union joined G20 as permanent member during India’s G20 Presidency, Sept 2023. India-Africa trade: ~USD 100 billion (2023-24).

EAM JAISHANKAR CONCLUDES THREE-NATION CARIBBEAN TOUR

External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar concluded his three-nation Caribbean tour on May 10, 2026, covering Jamaica, Suriname, and Trinidad & Tobago, reaffirming India’s engagement with the Indo-Caribbean diaspora and CARICOM partners.

Key Highlights

- Jamaica (May 5-6): bilateral and diaspora engagement
- Suriname (May 6-7): 9th India-Suriname Joint Commission Meeting in Paramaribo; six-point roadmap (people-to-people, development, defence, project delivery, trade & tourism, digital/AI)

- Trinidad & Tobago (May 8-10): visit to Nelson Island with PM Kamla Persad-Bissessar – the 1845 Girmitiya landing site
- Handed over Made-in-India laptops, an agro-processing facility, and a Prosthetics Centre

3 countries – Jamaica, Suriname, Trinidad & Tobago. 9th India-Suriname Joint Commission Meeting: Paramaribo. Nelson Island, T&T: 1845 Girmitiya landing site. CARICOM: 15-member Caribbean Community; HQ Georgetown, Guyana. Girmitiyas: Indian indentured labourers transported 1834-1917 to British/Dutch colonies. PM of T&T: Kamla Persad-Bissessar.

ICGS ACHAL COMMISSIONED AT GOA SHIPYARD

On May 9, 2026, ICGS Achal – the 5th of 8 Adamyia-class Fast Patrol Vessels – was commissioned into the Indian Coast Guard at Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL).

Key Specifications

- Length 51 m; over 50% indigenous content
- Propulsion: 2 x 3000 kW diesel engines; top speed 27 knots
- Endurance: 1,500 nautical miles; complement 5 officers + 34 crew
- Stationed at Vadinar, Gujarat – Coast Guard Region (North West)
- Commissioned by Shri A Anbarasu, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Defence

5th of 8 Adamyia-class FPVs; GSL build. 51 m; >50% indigenous; 27 knots; 1,500 nm. Stationed at Vadinar (Gujarat) – Coast Guard Region North West. ICG: Established 1978 under the Coast Guard Act 1978; functions under Ministry of Defence. Coast Guard regions: NW (Gandhinagar), W (Mumbai), NE (Kolkata), E (Chennai), A&N (Port Blair).

JWST DIRECTLY IMAGES SURFACE OF SUPER-EARTH KUA'KUA

A study published in Nature Astronomy on May 4, 2026 reports the first direct surface composition imaging of a rocky exoplanet – LHS 3844 b (informally named “Kua’kua”) – by NASA’s James Webb Space Telescope (JWST).

Key Findings

- LHS 3844 b: ~49-50 light-years away; ~30% larger than Earth, ~2x Earth’s mass

- Tidally locked; orbital period ~0.5 Earth days; dayside temperature ~725 deg C (1340 deg F)
- Dark basalt-like surface (volcanic rock); no detectable atmosphere
- “Kua’kua” = butterfly in an indigenous Costa Rican language

Rocky super-Earth; distance ~49-50 light-years; ~30% larger than Earth; ~2x Earth mass; tidally locked; orbital period 0.5 days; dayside ~725 deg C; basalt surface; no atmosphere. First direct surface composition study of a rocky exoplanet. Instrument: JWST (launched in 2021, on Dec 25, 2021; L2 Lagrange point). Publication: Nature Astronomy, May 4, 2026.

SUPREME COURT PROPOSES PERMANENT WOMAN VICE-PRESIDENT POST IN SCBA

On May 8, 2026, a Supreme Court bench of CJI Surya Kant and Justice K V Viswanathan proposed creating a permanent women-only second Vice-President post in the Supreme Court Bar Association (SCBA) from the 2027-28 election cycle.

Key Points

- Continues the women-only Secretary post for 2026 SCBA elections
- Builds on SC’s 33% women reservation push in bar associations
- Previously extended to Delhi HC Bar Association and Delhi district bar associations
- SCBA: oldest bar association of the Supreme Court of India, founded 1951

33% women reservation for SCBA office-bearer posts; permanent women-only Secretary post; proposed permanent women-only second VP from 2027-28. Earlier extended to Delhi HC Bar Association and Delhi district bar associations. Constitutional basis: Articles 14 (equality) and 15(3) (special provisions for women). 106th Constitutional Amendment Act 2023 reserves 33% Lok Sabha and State Assembly seats for women.

INDIA POST ROLLS OUT DIGIPIN DIGITAL ADDRESS SYSTEM

India Post’s DigiPIN digital address system has crossed key adoption milestones, with the Department of Posts confirming on May 9, 2026 that DigiPIN is now operational for service integration across all India.

Key Points

- DigiPIN: 10-character alphanumeric geo-coded address; resolves to a 4 m x 4 m grid square

- Developed by India Post in collaboration with IIT Hyderabad and ISRO
- Initial rollout, in pilot since 2025: May 27, 2025 (5-state pilot)
- Companion platform: DHruva (Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address)
- Augments – does not replace – the 6-digit PIN code (1972)

10-character alphanumeric; 4 m x 4 m grid; India Post + IIT Hyderabad + ISRO. In pilot since 2025 – initial rollout May 27, 2025 in 5 states. DHruva = Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address. PIN code: introduced August 15, 1972, by Shriram Bhikaji Velankar. PIN structure: 6 digits – 1st digit = zone; 1st two = sub-zone; 1st three = sorting district; last three = post office.

DELHI LAUNCHES ROAD RADAR FOR REAL-TIME AIR QUALITY SURVEILLANCE

On May 8, 2026, the Delhi Government launched Road RADAR (Real-time Air Pollution Detection Across Roads), a vehicle-mounted mobile air quality sensor network, inaugurated by Environment Minister Manjinder Singh Sirsa.

Key Points

- Operated by Delhi Pollution Control Committee (DPCC)
- Vehicle-mounted mobile sensors travel along Delhi roads for daily surveillance
- Targets dispersed/non-point pollution missed by fixed CAAQMS stations
- Complements Commission for Air Quality Management (CAQM) measures

Real-time Air Pollution Detection Across Roads; mobile vehicle-mounted sensors; Delhi Pollution Control Committee. Targets non-point sources. CAQM (Commission for Air Quality Management in NCR and Adjoining Areas Act, 2021) – replaced EPCA. CAAQMS = Continuous Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Stations (fixed). AQI categories: 0-50 Good; 51-100 Satisfactory; 101-200 Moderate; 201-300 Poor; 301-400 Very Poor; 401-500 Severe.

IIT MADRAS GLOBAL OPENS \$7.5M DEEP-TECH HUB IN MENLO PARK

IIT Madras Global Research Foundation announced a \$7.5 million deep-tech innovation hub in Menlo Park, California, during the SelectUSA Investment Summit (May 6-9, 2026) – the first physical centre of any IIT on US soil.

Key Points

- Total investment \$7.5 million; \$4.5 million greenfield from IITM Global
- Operational since 2026 (launched in 2026, on April 24); partner: CA Startups
- First five resident startups: Atri AI, Zerowatt, Satori XR, Greenenvironment, ePlaneCompany
- Second East Coast centre also planned

\$7.5 mn total; \$4.5 mn greenfield by IIT Madras Global Research Foundation. Operational since 2026 (launched April 24, 2026). First IIT physical centre on US soil. Launched at SelectUSA Summit, May 6-9, 2026 (US Department of Commerce). First 5 startups: Atri AI, Zerowatt, Satori XR, Greenenvironment, ePlaneCompany. Second hub planned: US East Coast.

JHARKHAND RECORDS ZERO PRIMARY DROPOUT – UDISE+ 2024-25

A NITI Aayog analysis released on May 8, 2026 using UDISE+ 2024-25 data shows Jharkhand has recorded 0% primary dropout rate – a sharp fall from 11%+ in 2022-23 and 6.41% in 2014-15.

Key Data

STAGE	EARLIER RATE	2024-25 RATE
Primary	11%+ (2022-23)	0%
Upper Primary	7.42%	1.7%
Secondary	23.2%	3.5%

- Other states reporting zero/near-zero dropout: Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh
- Caveat: data validity concerns; possible underestimation owing to reporting/method issues

Unified District Information System for Education Plus; under Department of School Education and Literacy; data via individual student tracking. Dropout = students who left school without completing the stage. Jharkhand primary dropout 2024-25: 0% (UDISE+). Other zero/near-zero: Telangana, UP, MP. Related: NEP 2020 (5+3+3+4); Right to Education Act 2009 (free, compulsory education for ages 6-14, Article 21A).

TOPIC	KEY FACT
MIRV Agni ICBM	APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha; ~3,560 km corridor; joins US/Russia/UK/France/China MIRV club
CDS & CNS	Lt Gen NS Raja Subramani (Retd) = CDS; Vice Adm Krishna Swaminathan = CNS; both from May 31, 2026
IAFS-IV	New Delhi, May 28-31, 2026; first since IAFS-III (2015); theme "IA SPIRIT"
Caribbean Tour	3 nations May 5-10, 2026; 9th India-Suriname JCM; Nelson Island Girmitya 1845
ICGS Achal	5th Adanya-class FPV; 51 m; 27 knots; Vadinar (Gujarat); GSL build
Kua'kua (LHS 3844 b)	~49-50 ly; super-Earth; tidally locked; 725 deg C dayside; JWST + Nature Astronomy May 4, 2026
SCBA Women VP	Permanent women-only 2nd VP from 2027-28; SC bench CJI Surya Kant + J. K V Viswanathan
DigiPIN	10-char alphanumeric; 4 m x 4 m grid; India Post + IIT-H + ISRO; companion DHruva
Road RADAR	Vehicle-mounted sensors; DPCC; Delhi; targets non-point pollution
IITM Menlo Park	\$7.5 mn deep-tech hub; first IIT US centre; 5 startups; operational since 2026 (April 24, 2026)
Jharkhand Dropout	Primary 0% (UDISE+ 2024-25); UP/MP/Telangana similar; NITI Aayog May 8, 2026

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