

Daily Current Affairs

Date : 04 May 2026



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Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI): Karola Panchayat Tops the State



Why in News?

- Recently, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj released the second edition of the Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI).



Key Points:

- This index assesses over 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats across the country based on more than 150 indicators spanning 9 thematic areas.
- A total of 11,037 Gram Panchayats from Rajasthan were included in this index.
- First Place in Rajasthan:** Karola Panchayat in the Jalore district secured the top position in Rajasthan.
- Note:** In the first edition of the 'Panchayat Advancement Index' (released in April 2025), Pindawal Panchayat in the Dungarpur district had secured the top position in the state.
- Objective of the Index:** To facilitate the creation of a digital platform and ecosystem for achieving the 'Sustainable Development Goals – 2030' in rural India.

This ranking has been assigned based on 9 themes, which include:

- Poverty-free and Enhanced Livelihoods Panchayat.
- Healthy Panchayat.
- Child-friendly Panchayat.

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4. Water-sufficient Panchayat.
5. Clean and Green Panchayat.
6. Panchayat with Self-sufficient Infrastructure.
7. Socially Just and Secure Panchayat.
8. Good Governance Panchayat.
10. Women-friendly Panchayat.

Rajasthan's Top 5 Panchayats in the Rankings:

S. No.	Gram Panchayat	District	PAI Score
1	Karola	Jalore	77.89
2	Kanti	Bhilwara	76.99
3	Tapu	Jodhpur	76.56
4	Lakshmipura	Tonk	76.41
5	Gega Ka Kheda	Bhilwara	75.95

Rajasthan's Bottom 5 Panchayats in the Rankings:

Gram Panchayat	District	PAI Score
Narsinghpura	Pali	14.07
Harnawa	Didwana–Kuchaman	28.22
Gerai	Karauli	29.82
Sogawas	Nagaur	30.01
Ranpur	Udaipur	30.04

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Rajasthan's Top Panchayats in the 9-Theme Based Rankings:

टी1-पंचायत में गरीबी मुक्त और आजीविका में वृद्धि	टी2-स्वस्थ पंचायत	टी3-बाल-अनुकूल पंचायत
सर्वश्रेष्ठ पंचायत	सर्वश्रेष्ठ पंचायत	सर्वश्रेष्ठ पंचायत
93.39	91.33	92.94
भीमपुर	शंख	दादिया रामपुरा
टी4-जल पर्याप्त पंचायत	टी5-स्वच्छ और हरित पंचायत	टी6-आत्मनिर्भर बुनियादी ढांचे वाली पंचायत
सर्वश्रेष्ठ पंचायत	सर्वश्रेष्ठ पंचायत	सर्वश्रेष्ठ पंचायत
89.07	94.29	88.82
सुवानिया	हिरना	सेमालिया पीलखेरा
टी7-सामाजिक रूप से न्यायपूर्ण और सामाजिक रूप से सुरक्षित पंचायत	टी8-सुशासन वाली पंचायत	टी9-महिला अनुकूल पंचायत
सर्वश्रेष्ठ पंचायत	सर्वश्रेष्ठ पंचायत	सर्वश्रेष्ठ पंचायत
88.78	90	76.39
हंसलसर	सुरनवाली	भैसाना

Other Important Points:

In these rankings, Panchayats have been categorized into 5 groups:

- Achiever (Grade A, 90–100 points)
- Front Runner (Grade A, 75–90 points)
- Performer (Grade B, 60–75 points)
- Aspirant (Grade C, 40–60 points)
- Beginner (Grade D, 0–40 points)

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Financial Approval for 'Jaipur Metro Phase-2'

Why in News?

- Recently, the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) issued a formal approval order for the Jaipur Metro Phase-2 project, amounting to ₹13,037.66 crore.

Key Points:

- This marks the first instance in Rajasthan where a project has received financial approval within a record minimum timeframe.
- It is noteworthy that this project was approved during a meeting of the Union Cabinet held on April 8, 2026, presided over by the Prime Minister.
- Total Cost of Phase-2:** ₹13,037.66 crore (As per PIB).
- Extension:** A total of 36 metro stations, spanning from Prahladpura to Todi Mod.
- Total Length:** An 41-kilometer-long North-South Metro Corridor will be constructed.
- Equity Share:** 50:50 percent contribution by the Government of India and the Government of Rajasthan.
- Implementing Agency:** Rajasthan Metro Rail Corporation Limited (RMRCL).
- Timeline:** Targeted for completion by September 2031.
- This project aligns with Rajasthan's Public Transport-Centric Development Policy-2025, the proposed Metropolitan Transport Authority reforms, and the National Sustainable Urban Transport objectives.

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Facts for Prelims:

Phased Expansion of Jaipur Metro Rail Corporation (Rajasthan Economic Review – 2025-26)

Phase	Description	Cost	Funding
Phase-1A (Mansarovar to Chandpole)	Operational since June 3, 2015	₹2023 crore	Fully funded by the State Government
Phase-1B (Chandpole to Badi Chaupar)	Operational since September 23, 2020. Length – 2.01 km. Note: Construction was carried out while preserving the city's heritage.	₹1126 crore	₹810 crore loan from Asian Development Bank (ADB), remaining by Rajasthan Government
Phase-1C (Badi Chaupar to Transport Nagar)	DPR prepared by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation	₹1511.07 crore	To be implemented by Rajasthan Metro Rail Corporation Limited (RMRCL) under 50:50 Joint Venture model (Metro Rail Policy 2017)

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Phase-1D (Mansarovar to 200 ft Bypass, Ajmer Road)	DPR prepared by Delhi Metro Rail Corporation. Project implementation is in progress	₹222.15 crore	To be implemented by Rajasthan Metro Rail Corporation Limited (RMRCL) under 50:50 Joint Venture model (Metro Rail Policy 2017)
Phase-2 (Prahladpura to Todi Mod)	Jaipur Metro has appointed M/s RITES Limited as traffic and transport consultant. DPR for Phase-2 (Prahladpura / Sitapura Industrial Area / Haldighati Marg / Airport / Ambabari / Vidhyadhar Nagar / Tonk Road) has been submitted by M/s RITES Limited	₹13532.92 crore	To be implemented by Rajasthan Metro Rail Corporation Limited (RMRCL) under 50:50 Joint Venture model (Metro Rail Policy 2017)

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NEWS IN SHORTS

S. No.	News
1.	<p>Wildlife Census in the State Using the Water Hole Method</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The annual wildlife census in Rajasthan was conducted on May 1 and 2, 2026 (on the occasion of Vaishakh Purnima) using the Water Hole Method.■ The 'Water Hole Method' (also known as the 'Machan Census') is a traditional and effective technique for estimating wildlife populations.■ Duration of the Event: From 5:00 PM on May 1 to 5:00 PM on May 2, 2026.



NATIONAL

ISSF Junior World Cup, 2026

Why in News?

- Indian shooters secured the top spot by winning 16 medals at the ISSF Junior World Cup, 2026, held in Cairo.



Key Points:

- Event:** Held in Cairo, Egypt, from April 19 to 27, 2026, the event featured Rifle, Pistol, and Shotgun disciplines.

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- **Participation:** 284 shooters representing 25 federations participated in the Cairo shooting meet. India fielded the largest contingent, comprising 71 athletes.

- **Rankings:**

Rank	Country/Other	Medals
1 st	India	16 medals: including 5 Gold, 6 Silver, and 5 Bronze
2 nd	Neutral Athletes	12 medals: including 3 Gold, 5 Silver, and 4 Bronze
3 rd	France	6 medals: including 3 Gold, 1 Silver, and 2 Bronze

India's Key Athletes:

- **Hemant Barman:** Hemant Barman won the Silver medal in the Men's 50m Rifle 3 Positions event, while Oleg Noskov of Kazakhstan won the Gold medal by setting a Junior World Record.
- **Vanshika Chaudhary and Chirag Sharma:** Vanshika Chaudhary and Chirag Sharma won the Gold medal in the 10m Air Pistol Mixed Team event. Meanwhile, Mohini Singh and Himanshu Rana won the Bronze medal.
- **Prachi Gaikwad:** Prachi Gaikwad won the Gold medal in the final of the Junior Women's 50m Rifle event, scoring 354.6 points. She defeated Darya Chupris in a very close contest.
- **Naren Pranav:** Naren Pranav secured the Bronze medal in the final of the Junior Men's 10m Air Rifle event with a score of 229.5 points.
- **Shiv Narwal:** Shiv Narwal won the gold medal in the Men's 10m Air Pistol event. This marks India's first gold medal in the competition.
- **Bronze Medal for India in Mixed Trap Team Event:** In the Mixed Trap Team event, Zuhaid Khan and Adya Katyal won the bronze medal. Hungary won the gold medal with a junior world record score.
- **Kanyan Rohit:** Won the silver medal in the 50m Rifle Prone event (Men's Junior).
- **Last Year's Record:** In last year's ISSF Junior World Cup stages held in Suhl and New Delhi, India won 37 medals, including 17 gold medals.

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Oscar Schmidt



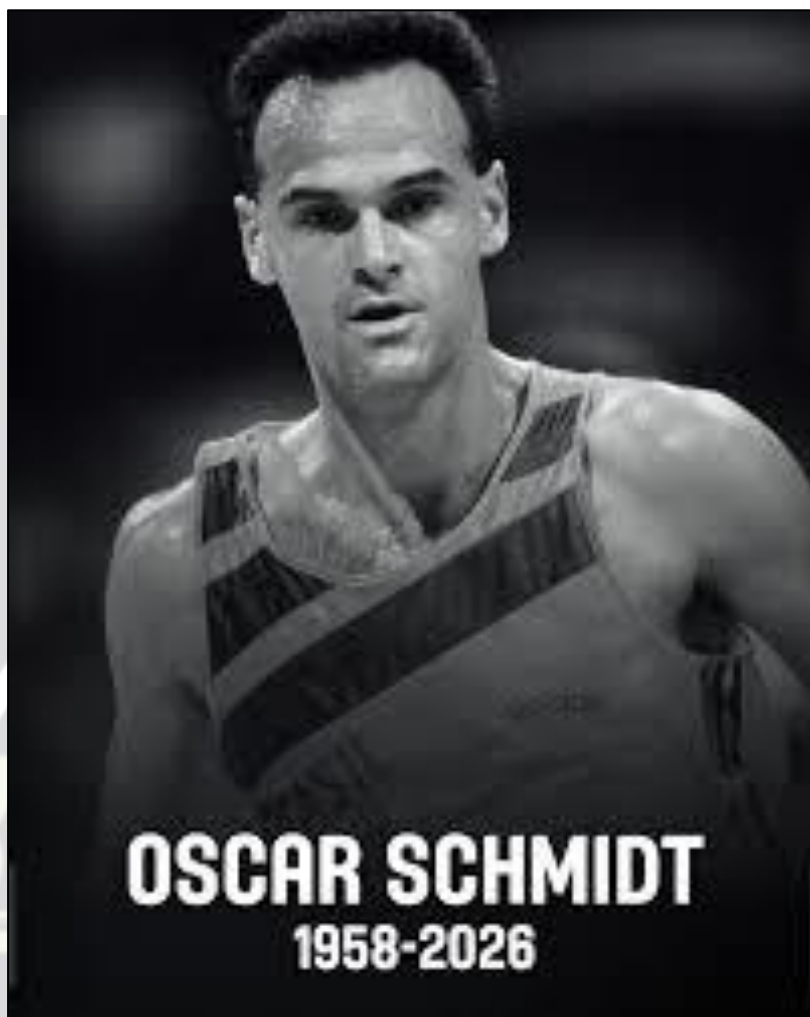
Why in News?

- Oscar Schmidt, a Brazilian player and one of the highest scorers in the history of basketball, has passed away.



Key Points:

- Schmidt retired in 2003, after a 30-year professional career spanning Brazil and Europe. In 2013, he was inducted into the Hall of Fame.
- Schmidt represented Brazil in five Olympic Games and four World Cups, holding the all-time scoring record in both competitions.
- Schmidt's unofficial world record of 49,737 points scored for both club and country was broken by LeBron James in 2024.



15th European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad, 2026

Why in News?

- India has achieved a historic milestone by winning its first-ever gold medal at the 15th European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad (EGMO), 2026, held in Bordeaux, France.



Key Points:

- Introduction:** The European Girls' Mathematical Olympiad (EGMO) is one of the most prestigious international mathematics competitions for high school students, and it is the largest competition dedicated exclusively to young women.
- Venue and Dates:** Held in Bordeaux, France, from April 9 to April 15, 2026.
- Participants:** The 2026 edition of the EGMO saw the participation of 260 students from 67 countries, including 161 participants from 41 European nations.

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India's Performance:

- The Indian team was led by Dr. Vaidehi Thatte (Team Leader), Dr. Mridul Thatte (Deputy Leader), and Aditi Muthkhod (Observer accompanying the contestants).
- **Gold Medal:** Shreya Shantanu Mundhada from Mumbai secured the gold medal. She was a member of the four-member Indian team.
- **Silver and Bronze Medals:** Sanjana Philo Chacko from Kerala won a silver medal, while Shivani Bharat Kumar from Tamil Nadu won a bronze medal.
- **India's Overall Performance:** India achieved its best-ever performance in the competition, securing the 6th rank among the 67 participating nations.
- India has been participating in the Olympiad as a guest nation since 2015.

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Geography and Geology

Super El Niño



Why in News?

- Scientists have forecasted the possibility of a "Super" El Niño occurring towards the end of 2026. This has heightened concerns regarding intense heatwaves, droughts, floods, and extreme weather events.



Key Points:

Super El Niño

- This is an exceptionally severe El Niño event. It is characterized by sea surface temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean consistently rising more than 2°C above normal levels.
- El Niño constitutes the warm phase of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). During this phase, temperatures in the central and eastern equatorial Pacific Ocean rise abnormally a phenomenon that frequently tends to weaken the Indian monsoon.

Economic Developments

Financial Status of States

Why in News?

- In its monthly economic review, the Ministry of Finance has warned that several Indian states, characterized by high revenue deficits and heavy debt burdens, will face difficulties in coping with fiscal shocks.



Key Points:

- **Revenue Deficit:** This occurs when a government's regular expenditure (such as salaries, pensions, subsidies, and interest payments) exceeds its regular income derived from taxes and duties.
- **Revenue Surplus:** This implies that a state is able to meet its revenue expenditure (salaries, pensions, subsidies) using its own receipts, thereby reducing reliance on borrowing for daily expenses and, consequently, improving fiscal stability.

Fiscal Stress

- This refers to a situation where an imbalance exists between government revenue and expenditure, compelling policymakers to adjust spending, increase revenue, or resort to higher borrowing.

Causes of Fiscal Stress

- **Structural Factors:** A limited tax base, disparities in GST collections, and a heavy reliance on indirect taxes.
- **Increased Subsidies:** Rising subsidies on food, fertilizers, and fuel, coupled with growing welfare commitments.
- **Debt Burden:** High levels of borrowing and interest payments crowd out developmental expenditure.
- **Economic Shocks:** Pandemic-related expenses, volatility in global commodity prices, and climate-related disasters.
- **Compliance Deficiencies:** Tax evasion, weak enforcement, and underperformance in capital expenditure.

Impact

- **Rising Debt Burden:** Fiscal stress leads to increased indebtedness, a heavier interest burden, and reduced developmental spending, thereby heightening the risk of a downgrade in credit ratings.
- **Depletion of Fiscal Resources:** Fiscal pressures diminish the government's fiscal space and constrain investment in infrastructure and social sectors.
- **Macroeconomic Instability:** Heavy government borrowing drives up interest rates, thereby crowding out private sector investment.
- **Weak Social and Developmental Outcomes:** Fiscal pressures can constrain expenditure on health, education, and welfare, potentially exacerbating inequalities across various sectors.

- **Inter-generational Burden:** Excessive borrowing shifts the burden of debt repayment onto future generations, thereby heightening long-term debt sustainability risks particularly if economic growth slows down.

Statistics Related to the Fiscal Position of States

Revenue Surplus vs. Deficit States

- **States with Revenue Surplus:** Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana.
- These states are capable of financing their regular expenditures (salaries, pensions, subsidies) using their own revenue.
- Eight Indian states Gujarat, Jharkhand, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Odisha, Uttarakhand, Bihar, and Goa have successfully maintained their fiscal deficits at 3% of their Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) or lower.
- This aligns with the fiscal discipline norms recommended by the Finance Commission.
- The 16th Finance Commission (2026–31), chaired by Arvind Panagariya, has also recommended a fiscal deficit limit of 3% for states.
- **States with Revenue Deficits:** Punjab, Kerala, West Bengal, Andhra Pradesh, Rajasthan, Himachal Pradesh.
- These states struggle due to high fixed expenditures, such as pension payouts and interest payments.
- **Debt Levels Across States:** Punjab is the most indebted state (at 45.1% of GSDP), followed by Himachal Pradesh (40.5%), and Rajasthan and Andhra Pradesh (36%).
- Odisha and Gujarat carry relatively lower debt burdens, signaling their robust financial health.

Indian Governance and State System

E-Courts Mission

Why in News?

- The Chief Justice of India has declared Sikkim as the country's first paperless State Judiciary.



Key Points:

- A fully paperless judiciary is a system wherein all judicial processes are conducted through digital mediums rather than on paper such as digital files, e-filing, online hearings, digital case tracking, etc.
- This digital transformation of the courts is being undertaken under the 'E-Courts Mission Mode Project'.
- **'E-Courts Mission Mode Project'**
- This is an India-wide initiative aimed at computerizing and digitizing the judiciary to provide effective and accessible justice services.
- **Inception:** It was launched in 2007, under the National e-Governance Plan.
- **Implementing Authority:** Its implementation is carried out by the Department of Justice, Government of India, under the guidance of the e-Committee of the Supreme Court of India.



USTR Special 301 Report



Why in News?

- India has been retained on the 'Priority Watch List' of the 'Special 301 Report.' This signifies that concerns regarding the protection and enforcement of Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) in India persist.



Key Points:

Special 301 Report

- Issuer:** It is issued by the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) under the Trade Act of 1974.
- This report identifies countries that, according to the USTR, do not provide adequate and effective protection for Intellectual Property Rights or fail to ensure fair and equitable market access for U.S. IPR holders.
- This report is not legally binding; however, it is utilized as a tool to exert pressure during trade negotiations.

ENVIRONMENT & ECOLOGY

The Microplastic Pollution Crisis in India

Why in News?

- A recent study by the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research–National Environmental Engineering Research Institute (CSIR-NEERI) warns that India's decades-old waste dumps are emerging as major sources of microplastic pollution.



Key Points:

- **Microplastics:** These are tiny synthetic plastic particles, typically measuring less than 5 millimeters in size. They are formed either through the breakdown of larger plastics or are directly manufactured for industrial use.

Types:

- **Primary Microplastics:** These are plastics that are artificially manufactured in small sizes (such as microbeads and industrial pellets).

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- **Secondary Microplastics:** These are formed through the breakdown of larger plastic waste. Over time, factors such as sunlight, heat, and friction cause them to gradually fragment into smaller particles.

Key Findings of the CSIR Study:

- **Proliferation:** Leachate seeping from landfills and seasonal winds transport microplastics into groundwater, agricultural land (soil), urban areas, and coastal ecosystems.
- These tiny yet toxic particles pose direct risks to local agriculture, drinking water supplies, the food chain, and human health.
- **Primary Contributing Factors:** Polyethylene and polypropylene are the most frequently detected types of plastics. They contaminate the soil, thereby impacting food production.
- **Policy Gaps:** Current initiatives, such as the Swachh Bharat Mission, lack specific mechanisms to monitor microplastic emissions during the management of landfills.
- **Governance Deficiencies:** The absence of a standardized monitoring framework for India hinders effective regulation and evidence-based waste management practices.

Initiatives to Address Legacy Landfills in India

- **Swachh Bharat Mission (SBM-U 2.0):** This initiative focuses on the scientific management of waste and the remediation of legacy (old) landfills.
- Under the Dumpsite Remediation Accelerator Program, legacy dumpsites have been identified, and over 61% of these old waste sites have already been remediated.

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- **Waste Management Rules:** The Solid Waste Management Rules (2016/2026), Plastic Waste Management Rules (2016), and E-Waste Management Rules (2022) promote waste segregation, recycling, and the Extended Producer Responsibility (EPR) mechanism.
- **GOBAR-Dhan Scheme:** This scheme promotes the conversion of biodegradable waste into biogas and organic manure to reduce the burden on landfills.
- **Legacy Waste Bioremediation:** Municipal bodies are reclaiming old dumpsites through biomining and bioremediation.
- **Ban on Single-Use Plastics (2022):** Under this initiative, a ban has been imposed on certain identified single-use plastic items to curb plastic pollution.

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🕒 SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY 🕒

Project 17A Vessels

📣 Why in News?

- INS Mahendragiri has been handed over to the Indian Navy. It is the sixth vessel of the Nilgiri-class (Project 17A) and the fourth to be constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited.



📌 Key Points:

- The other vessels under Project 17A are: Dunagiri, Taragiri, Udaygiri, Himgiri, and Nilgiri.

Project 17A

- Modern frigates are being constructed under Project 17A. These are multi-purpose warships capable of undertaking various missions.

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- They have been designed by the Warship Design Bureau and their construction has been overseen by the Warship Overseeing Team (Mumbai).
- P17A ships are equipped with advanced weapon and sensor suites compared to the P17 (Shivalik-class) vessels.
- They are capable of engaging in three dimensions of warfare: surface attacks, aerial attacks, and anti-submarine operations.
- These vessels are equipped with Combined Diesel or Gas (CODOG) propulsion plants. These systems comprise one diesel engine and one gas turbine.

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