

## 04/05/2026 Daily Current News

### 1. *Lipulekh issue:*

Context: Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri's upcoming visit to Nepal came under a shadow on Sunday with Nepal expressing "concerns" to both India and China over the next season of Kailash Manasarovar Yatra through the Kalapani-Limpiyadhura-Lipulekh region. It reiterated that the region is part of Nepal's sovereign territory.

#### About Lipulekh region and the dispute:



- ❖ It is located close to the tri-junction of India, China (Tibet) and Nepal and is situated in Uttarakhand (Pithoragarh district).
- ❖ It is a major pass of Kumaun region situated in Kali Valley
- ❖ The Kalapani region is a disputed territory claimed by both India and Nepal.
- ❖ Kalapani derives its name from the Kali (Mahakali) River.
- ❖ The Kali River acts as a natural boundary between India and Nepal.
- ❖ In Nepal, the Kali River is called the Mahakali River and holds great cultural significance.
- ❖ The main dispute revolves around the exact source of the Kali River.
- ❖ India claims the river originates in Pithoragarh district of Uttarakhand.
- ❖ Nepal claims the river originates from Limpiyadhura or Lipulekh in its Sudurpaschim Province.
- ❖ The dispute traces back to the Treaty of Sagauli (1816) between Nepal and the British East India Company.
- ❖ The treaty identified the Kali River as Nepal's western boundary with India.
- ❖ The Treaty of Sagauli did not clearly define the river's exact source or ridgeline.
- ❖ British survey maps later showed different origins of the Kali River, creating ambiguity.
- ❖ These cartographic inconsistencies led to the present India–Nepal boundary dispute.
- ❖ Nepal officially raised the Kalapani issue with India for the first time in 1998.

## 2. *Abrolhos reefs:*

Context: The Abrolhos reefs are the most biodiverse coral ecosystem in the South Atlantic. Their biodiversity has dropped by around 15% over 18 years due to marine heatwaves, a new study has found.

### **About Abrolhos reefs:**

- ❖ The Abrolhos Archipelago are a group of 5 small islands with coral reefs off the southern coast of Bahia state in the northeast of Brazil in the Atlantic Ocean.
- ❖ Renowned for unique, mushroom-shaped pinnacles called chapeirões, this area faces significant threats from climate-driven warming, ocean acidification, and sedimentation.
- ❖ The region features extensive coral reefs, algal beds, and volcanic islands, providing crucial habitat for numerous endemic species.
- ❖ The reefs are characterized by a high proportion of endemic species, including *Mussismilia braziliensis*.
- ❖ The Abrolhos Marine National Park, created in 1983, aims to protect this environment.

## 3. *Mission Drishti:*

Context: Mission Drishti, the world's first OptoSAR satellite developed by the Bengaluru-based space start-up GalaxEye has been successfully launched on Sunday aboard a Falcon 9 by SpaceX from Vandenberg, California.

### **About Mission Drishti:**

- ❖ Drishti is India's largest privately developed earth observation satellite weighing 190 kg.
- ❖ Drishti is the world's first operational satellite integrating both Electro-Optical (EO) and Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) sensors.
- ❖ The satellite provides all-weather, day-and-night imaging capabilities.
- ❖ Drishti can capture optical and radar images of the same location simultaneously.
- ❖ The technology used is called Opto-SAR technology.
- ❖ Optical images provide clear and intuitive visuals similar to normal photography.
- ❖ SAR imaging can penetrate clouds and function effectively during night and adverse weather.
- ❖ Combining EO and SAR overcomes limitations of standalone imaging systems.
- ❖ The satellite enables more reliable and continuous data acquisition.
- ❖ GalaxEye developed Drishti.
- ❖ GalaxEye was founded by alumni of Indian Institute of Technology Madras.
- ❖ Drishti was launched aboard Falcon 9 from Vandenberg Space Force Base.
- ❖ The satellite was launched as part of the CAS500-2 mission with 45 payloads.

## 4. *CINBAX-II 2026:*

Context: The Indian Army contingent departed for the second edition of India - Cambodia Bilateral Military Exercise CINBAX-II 2026.

### **About CINBAX-II 2026:**

- ❖ Exercise CINBAX-II will be held from 4–17 May 2026 at Camp Basil in Cambodia.
- ❖ The bilateral exercise is conducted under Chapter VII of the United Nations mandate for operations in sub-conventional environments.
- ❖ The Indian contingent includes 120 personnel mainly from the Maratha Light Infantry Regiment, while Cambodia has 160 personnel from the Royal Cambodian Army.
- ❖ The exercise focuses on Counter-Terrorism operations related to UN peacekeeping missions through tactical drills and validation exercises.
- ❖ Special training in drone operations, mortar handling, and sniper tactics aims to improve interoperability, coordination, and operational synergy between both armies.

### 5. **NITI Aayog:**

Context: Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the appointment of academicians Joram Aniya and R. Balasubramaniam as full-time members of NITI Aayog. Joram Aniya became the first person from Arunachal Pradesh and the first person from the Northeast to hold this position in India's policy think tank.

#### **About NITI Aayog:**

- ❖ NITI Aayog stands for National Institution for Transforming India.
- ❖ NITI Aayog was established on 1 January 2015.
- ❖ It replaced the erstwhile Planning Commission.
- ❖ NITI Aayog serves as the policy think tank of the Government of India.
- ❖ It focuses on inclusive development, cooperative federalism, and sustainable growth.
- ❖ The Prime Minister of India acts as the Chairperson of NITI Aayog.
- ❖ It includes representatives from States, Union Territories, and domain experts.
- ❖ NITI Aayog formulates long-term strategic and sectoral policies.
- ❖ It promotes cooperative federalism through Centre–State collaboration.
- ❖ It monitors and evaluates government schemes and programmes.
- ❖ NITI Aayog provides policy innovation, research, and thought leadership.
- ❖ It aims to address national challenges through evidence-based policymaking.

#### **About NITI Aayog structure:**

- ❖ NITI Aayog's Governing Council includes the Prime Minister, Chief Ministers of States, and Lieutenant Governors of Union Territories.
- ❖ The Prime Minister of India is the Chairperson of NITI Aayog.
- ❖ The Vice Chairperson of NITI Aayog is appointed by the Prime Minister.
- ❖ Up to four Union Ministers are nominated by the Prime Minister as Ex-Officio Members.
- ❖ The Governing Council is popularly known as "Team India."
- ❖ Team India includes the PM, Vice Chairperson, Ex-Officio Members, Full-Time Members, Chief Ministers, and Lt Governors.
- ❖ Special invitees include administrators of certain Union Territories such as Chandigarh and Lakshadweep.
- ❖ The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of NITI Aayog is appointed by the Prime Minister.
- ❖ The CEO manages day-to-day operations and holds the rank of Secretary to the Government of India.
- ❖ Full-Time Members are experts from fields such as economics, science, and public policy.

- ❖ Special Invitees include specialists, practitioners, and domain experts from various sectors.
- ❖ Regional Councils are created to address specific regional development issues.
- ❖ Regional Councils consist of Chief Ministers and Lieutenant Governors.
- ❖ Regional Councils are chaired by the Prime Minister or a nominated representative.
- ❖ NITI Aayog has specialised support units such as the Circular Economy Cell and North East Forum.
- ❖ These supporting cells help promote inclusive growth and effective governance across India.

## 6. 2026 World Press Freedom Index:

Context: India ranked 157th out of 180 countries in the 2026 World Press Freedom Index released on 30 April 2026 by Reporters Without Borders (RSF). The ranking placed India in the “very serious” category for press freedom, and India fell six places from its 2025 rank of 151.

### More details of the report:

- ❖ The World Press Freedom Index is released annually by Reporters Without Borders.
- ❖ The index evaluates press freedom conditions in 180 countries and territories.
- ❖ It assesses factors such as pluralism, media independence, transparency, legal framework, and journalist safety.
- ❖ India ranked 159th out of 180 countries in the 2024 World Press Freedom Index.
- ❖ India's rank improved to 157 in the 2026 edition.
- ❖ India's 2026 rank was lower than its 2025 position of 151.
- ❖ RSF cited violence against journalists as a major concern in India.
- ❖ The report highlighted concentrated media ownership and political alignment of media outlets.
- ❖ Judicial harassment of independent media was also mentioned in the assessment.
- ❖ The use of defamation and national security laws against journalists was highlighted as a challenge to press freedom.
- ❖ Norway holds first place for the tenth consecutive year. Eritrea comes last for the third year in a row.

### Quick Bites:

- ☐ The Andaman and Nicobar Islands on Sunday created another Guinness World Record with the formation of the tallest human stack underwater at Swaraj Dweep, formerly known as Havelock Island, officials said. Fourteen people, including Lt. Gov. D.K. Joshi, took part in forming the 22.3-metre-long stack, and they stayed under water for three minutes. The feat comes a day after the Union Territory administration unfurled the world's largest underwater national flag, measuring approximately 60 by 40 metres, near the same island.
- ☐ On the occasion of International Sun Day, 3rd May 2026, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) organised the 'Run for Sun' Marathon — a tribute to the Saur Shakti that has brought light into millions of homes and lives, and will continue to do so for generations to come.
- ☐ Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh will inaugurate a North Tech Symposium, on the theme 'Raksha Triveni Sangam - Where Technology, Industry & Soldiering Converge', in Prayagraj, Uttar Pradesh on May 04, 2026. The three-day event is being jointly organised by the Northern

Command & Central Command of the Indian Army and the Society of Indian Defence Manufacturers (SIDM). This symposium will serve as a vibrant platform to showcase and integrate state-of-the-art indigenous technologies to overcome operational challenges.

- ☐ In a remarkable feat of endurance and determination, young swimmer Ishank Singh has become the youngest individual to successfully swim across the Palk Strait.
- ☐ Indian Railways rolled out the 100th Vande Bharat trainset on 2 May 2026 from the Modern Coach Factory at Raebareli. The trainset is a 16-coach chair-car rake fitted with a Siemens propulsion system and will undergo oscillation trials before induction into regular passenger service.
- ☐ Mayon Volcano is an active stratovolcano located in Albay province on Luzon Island, about 330 km southeast of Manila. It is part of the Pacific Ring of Fire, a region known for frequent earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. On 3 May 2026, renewed volcanic activity prompted authorities in Philippines to evacuate thousands of residents and maintain Alert Level 3 under the country's volcano warning system.



- ☐ South Korea launched its domestically developed Earth-observation satellite Compact Advanced Satellite 500-2 (CAS500-2) into orbit on 3 May 2026.
- ☐ The United States launched Project Freedom on 4 May 2026 to escort commercial ships through the Strait of Hormuz and restore freedom of navigation.

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