

18/05/2026 Daily Current News

1. *C-295 programme:*

Context: The first domestically assembled Airbus C-295 military transport aircraft in India was completed at the Tata-Airbus facility in Vadodara on 17 May 2026 and was ready for flight testing.

About C-295:

- ❖ The C-295 programme in India includes 16 fly-away aircraft from Spain and 40 aircraft to be manufactured in India under the Make in India framework.
- ❖ The first India-made aircraft was expected to begin flight tests in June 2026 and to be delivered to the Indian Air Force in September 2026.
- ❖ The aircraft is part of a 56-aircraft contract signed in September 2021 between India and Airbus Defence and Space for the Indian Air Force.
- ❖ The Airbus C-295 is designed for tactical airlift operations from semi-prepared strips.
- ❖ The aircraft supports transport roles, logistics missions, and medical evacuation tasks for military use.

2. *Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe):*

Context: The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe) led a delegation of nine Indian space-tech companies to Space Meetings Veneto 2026 in Venice, Italy, on 16–17 May 2026. The delegation was headed by Dr. P.K. Jain, Director of the Programme Management and Authorisation Directorate at IN-SPACe.

About Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACe):

- ❖ Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACe) is an autonomous single-window agency under the Department of Space created after India's space sector reforms to promote and regulate private participation in space activities.
- ❖ It authorizes, promotes, and supervises non-governmental entities in activities such as satellite building, launch vehicles, and space-based services.
- ❖ IN-SPACe facilitates sharing of ISRO/Department of Space infrastructure and acts as an interface between ISRO and private players, educational institutions, and research organisations.
- ❖ It functions through three directorates: Promotion Directorate (PD), Technical Directorate (TD), and Program Management & Authorization Directorate (PMAD).
- ❖ The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) headquarters is located in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

3. *Ebola disease outbreak:*

Context: The World Health Organization on Sunday declared the Ebola disease outbreak caused by a rare virus in Congo and neighbouring Uganda a public health emergency of international concern, after more than 300 suspected cases and 88 deaths.

About Ebola disease:

- ❖ Ebola Virus Disease is a severe and often deadly viral disease caused by orthoebolaviruses.
- ❖ First discovered in 1976 in Democratic Republic of the Congo near the Ebola River.
- ❖ Mainly found in sub-Saharan Africa.
- ❖ Called a hemorrhagic fever because it damages blood clotting and can cause internal bleeding.
- ❖ Six species of the virus are identified; four can infect humans.
- ❖ Affects humans and other primates like gorillas, monkeys, and chimpanzees.
- ❖ Transmitted from wild animals such as fruit bats, porcupines, and non-human primates to humans.
- ❖ Human-to-human spread occurs through direct contact with blood, body fluids, organs, or contaminated materials.
- ❖ Ebola is not airborne.
- ❖ Symptoms include fever, diarrhea, vomiting, bleeding, weakness, and sometimes death.
- ❖ Average fatality rate is about 50%, varying from 25% to 90% in outbreaks.
- ❖ No fully approved cure is available; experimental treatments are being used.
- ❖ Treatment mainly includes fluid and electrolyte balance, supportive care, and blood/plasma administration to control bleeding.
- ❖ Early treatment, lower viral exposure, strong immunity, and patient age influence recovery chances.

4. *Promulgation of Ordinance:*

Context: President Droupadi Murmu has promulgated an ordinance increasing the number of judges in the Supreme Court to 37 — excluding the Chief Justice of India. The ordinance has amended Section 2 of the Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956 to replace the word “thirty-three” with “thirty-seven”.

About promulgation of Ordinance:

- ❖ Ordinance-making power of the President is provided under Article 123 of the Constitution of India.
- ❖ The President can promulgate an ordinance when Parliament is not in session and immediate action is necessary.
- ❖ An ordinance is a temporary law issued by the executive under urgent circumstances.
- ❖ Ordinances have the same force and effect as an Act of Parliament.
- ❖ The power is an emergency legislative power of the executive, as explained by the Supreme Court.
- ❖ India's ordinance system originated from the Indian Councils Act 1861 after the Revolt of 1857.
- ❖ The Government of India Act 1935 gave ordinance powers to the Governor-General, later adopted in the Constitution.
- ❖ Ordinances can have a retrospective effect.
- ❖ They can amend, repeal, or modify existing laws and tax laws.

- ❖ Ordinances cannot amend the Constitution.
- ❖ Ordinances must comply with Fundamental Rights under Part III of the Constitution.
- ❖ The President acts only on the advice of the Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister.
- ❖ Ordinances can be issued only when both Houses or at least one House of Parliament is not in session.
- ❖ The President's satisfaction regarding immediate necessity is subject to judicial review.
- ❖ In the R.C. Cooper Case 1970, the Supreme Court held that mala fide ordinances can be challenged in court.
- ❖ The 38th Constitutional Amendment Act 1975 made the President's satisfaction non-justiciable.
- ❖ The 44th Constitutional Amendment Act 1978 restored judicial review of ordinance-making power.
- ❖ Ordinances can be issued only on subjects on which Parliament can legislate.
- ❖ Every ordinance must be approved by Parliament after reassembly.
- ❖ An ordinance lapses six weeks after Parliament reconvenes if not approved.
- ❖ It can be withdrawn earlier if both Houses disapprove it.
- ❖ The maximum possible life of an ordinance is about six months and six weeks.

More details on increase of judges:

- ❖ Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Bill, 2026 provides for increasing the number of Judges of the Supreme Court by 04 i.e. from 33 to 37 (excluding the Chief Justice of India)
- ❖ The expenditure on salary of Judges and supporting staff and other facilities will be met from the Consolidated Fund of India.
- ❖ Article 124 (1): Supreme Court to have CJI + up to 7 judges (initial provision).
- ❖ The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Act, 1956: Strength fixed at 10 judges (excluding CJI).
- ❖ 1960 Amendment: Increased to 13 judges (excluding CJI).
- ❖ 1977 Amendment: Increased to 17 judges (excluding CJI).
- ❖ 1977–1979 (Cabinet decision): Working strength restricted to 15 judges (excluding CJI), later withdrawn.
- ❖ 1986 Amendment: Increased to 25 judges (excluding CJI).
- ❖ 2008 Amendment: Increased to 30 judges (excluding CJI).
- ❖ The Supreme Court (Number of Judges) Amendment Act, 2019: Increased to 33 judges (excluding CJI) (present strength basis).

5. ***Nalanda University:***

Context: Bihar's Nalanda University has formally integrated the ancient Indian tradition of Śāstrārtha, a historical form of philosophical, religious, and intellectual debate, by including it in the programme for the University's third convocation being held this week.

About Nalanda University:

- ❖ Nalanda is recognized as the most ancient university on the Indian subcontinent.
- ❖ It was established by Kumar Gupta of the Gupta dynasty in Bihar during the early 5th century.
- ❖ The university thrived for 600 years until the 12th century.
- ❖ It reached its zenith during the reign of Harshavardhan and the Pala monarchs.

- ❖ It served as a hub for learning, culture, and intellectual exchange, significantly influencing Indian civilization and beyond.
- ❖ It was primarily a place where monks and nuns lived and studied.
- ❖ It focused on teaching major philosophies of Buddhism.
- ❖ It attracted students from regions including China, Korea, Japan, Tibet, Mongolia, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia.
- ❖ It offered courses in medicine, Ayurveda, religion, Buddhism, mathematics, grammar, astronomy, and Indian philosophy.
- ❖ The university was destroyed in 1193 by Bakhtiyar Khilji, a general of the Turkish ruler Qutbuddin Aibak.
- ❖ It was rediscovered in 1812 by Scottish surveyor Francis Buchanan-Hamilton and later identified as the ancient university by Sir Alexander Cunningham in 1861.

Quick Bites:

- ☐ In a special ceremony hosted in Gothenburg, Her Royal Highness Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden conferred upon Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi the 'Royal Order of the Polar Star, Degree Commander Grand Cross,' one of Sweden's oldest and most distinguished honours, instituted in the 18th century. The award is Sweden's highest honour conferred on foreign Heads of Government in recognition of exceptional public service and contribution towards strengthening relations with Sweden.
- ☐ Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi accompanied by the Prime Minister of the Netherlands, H.E. Rob Jetten visited the iconic Dutch water management structure, the Afsluitdijk. The visit underscored the shared commitment of both nations to innovative water management solutions, climate resilience, and sustainable infrastructure. The Afsluitdijk, a 32-kilometer-long dam and causeway, is a global benchmark in flood control and land reclamation, protecting large parts of the Netherlands from the North Sea while enabling freshwater storage.
- ☐ The Indian Navy inaugurated its premier Naval Sailing Node at Upper Lake, widely known as Bhojtal, in Bhopal on 17 May 2026. Developed as a state-of-the-art facility, the Sailing Node will be extensively utilised by the Indian Navy Sailing Team, the Navy Rowing, Canoeing, and Kayaking Teams, as well as NCC for their training.
- ☐ Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah today inaugurated the Innovation & Incubation Centre (IIC) at the National Institute of Design (NID) in Ahmedabad, Gujarat.

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