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DISTANCE BETWEEN DREAM AND REALITY

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TODAY NEWS HIGHLIGHT

- Ayush Verma won the gold medal in shot put at the Asian Para Games 2026
- Fifth edition of India-Australia joint military exercise 'AUSTRAHIND 2026' begins
- India ranks third in the Ipsos Quality of Care Perception Index 2026
- DCGI approves toripalimab-based combination therapy for the treatment of esophageal cancer
- Three new sites from India added to UNESCO's tentative World Heritage List
- Nigeria reports Bundibugyo strain of Ebola virus, stressing public health surveillance
- Reema Nanavati honored with the 2026 Hillary Rodham Clinton Award for her contributions to women's economic empowerment
- International Snow Leopard Day on October 23rd – Emphasis on conservation of Himalayan ecosystem

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1. Ayush Verma Wins Gold Medal in Shot Put at the 2026 Asian Para Games



On October 21, 2026, Indian para-athlete Ayush Verma won the gold medal in the men's shot put F53 event at the 2026 Asian Para Games, held in Nagoya, Japan, with a throw of 8.16 meters. Previously, he had also won a bronze medal in the men's javelin throw F53/54 event, marking his second medal of the competition. Meanwhile, Indian para-badminton player Suhas L. Yathiraj advanced to the semi-finals of the men's singles SL4 category after defeating South Korea's N. Cho. This achievement boosted India's medal tally, while Sukant Kadam, Prem Kumar Ale, and Pallavi Kaluvehalli faced defeats in their respective events.

2. Fifth Edition of India-Australia Joint Military Exercise 'AUSTRAHIND 2026' Begins



The fifth edition of the bilateral military exercise 'AUSTRAHIND 2026' between the armies of India and Australia is being held from October 19 to November 1, 2026, at the Foreign Training Node in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. Approximately 240 military personnel from both nations are participating in this exercise, which aims to enhance joint military capabilities, interoperability, and operational coordination. The exercise includes training in military operations in coastal and island regions, surveillance, reconnaissance, the protection of strategic sites, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR).

3. India Ranks Third in the Ipsos Quality of Care Perception Index 2026

In the 'Quality of Care Perception Index 2026,' released by the global market research firm Ipsos in October 2026, India secured the third position, with Malaysia ranking first and Singapore second. According to the report, 68% of Indians expressed a positive perception regarding the quality of healthcare services, while 64% indicated trust in the healthcare system. Approximately 74% of respondents acknowledged that many people in India cannot afford healthcare services, with 42% identifying high costs as a major issue.

4. DCGI Approves Toripalimab-Based Combination Therapy for the Treatment of Esophageal Cancer



According to a report available on October 21, 2026, the DCGI has approved a combination of toripalimab (Zytorvi), cisplatin, and paclitaxel as a first-line treatment for advanced, recurrent, or metastatic esophageal squamous cell carcinoma (ESCC). Toripalimab is a PD-1 immune checkpoint inhibitor that helps enhance the immune system's response against cancer cells. Data from the Phase 3 JUPITER-06 trial showed a median overall survival of 17.7 months for the group receiving the combination therapy, compared to 12.9 months for the group receiving chemotherapy alone.

5. Three New Indian Sites Added to UNESCO's Tentative World Heritage List



The UNESCO World Heritage Centre has added three new sites to India's Tentative World Heritage List: the Karst-Mud-Volcano Complex of Baratang, the Andaman Subduction Volcanic Zone, and the Cultural and Archaeological Landscape of Sirpur in Chhattisgarh. Baratang is renowned for its limestone caves, karst landforms, and mud volcanoes, while Barren and Narcondam islands are significant for their volcanic geology and biodiversity. Sirpur, located in Chhattisgarh, is known for its ancient temples, Buddhist monasteries (viharas), archaeological remains, and the coexistence of diverse religious traditions.

6. Case of Bundibugyo Strain of Ebola Virus in Nigeria; Emphasis Placed on Public Health Surveillance



In October 2026, a case of Bundibugyo virus infection was confirmed in a woman who had arrived in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory from Uganda; she was subsequently placed in isolation and began receiving treatment. Nigerian health authorities identified 44 contacts and initiated monitoring, while the Nigeria Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (NCDC) activated an emergency management system for contact tracing, disease surveillance, and infection control. The Bundibugyo virus, a member of the *Orthoebolavirus* genus, can spread through direct contact with the blood or bodily fluids of an infected person, or through contaminated objects, and can cause severe Ebola virus disease.

7. Reema Nanavaty Honored with the 2026 Hillary Rodham Clinton Award for Contributions to Women's Economic Empowerment



On October 15, 2026, Indian social activist Reema Nanavaty was honored with the Hillary Rodham Clinton Award in Washington, D.C., USA, for her contributions to women's rights and economic empowerment. Reema Nanavaty serves as the Director and General Secretary of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), an organization dedicated to the employment, social security, and economic self-reliance of women in the informal sector.

8. International Day of the Snow Leopard on October 23 — Emphasis on Conserving the Himalayan Ecosystem



International Day of the Snow Leopard is observed annually on October 23, a date established by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2024. Its objective is to raise awareness about the conservation of the snow leopard and its natural habitat. The natural habitat of the snow leopard (*Panthera uncia*) spans the high mountain ranges of Central and South Asia, specifically the Himalayas, the Karakoram, and the Hindu Kush. According to India's first Snow Leopard Population Assessment (SPAI), the estimated population in the country between 2019 and 2023 was 718, with the highest number—477—recorded in Ladakh.

1. What distance did Ayush Verma achieve in the shot put F53 event at the 2026 Asian Para Games?

A - 7.86 meters
B - 8.16 meters
C - 8.36 meters
D - 8.56 meters



Indian para-athlete Ayush Verma won a gold medal in the men's shot put F53 event at the 2026 Asian Para Games with a throw of 8.16 meters, and also secured a bronze medal in the javelin throw. Meanwhile, para-badminton player Suhas L. Yathiraj advanced to the semi-finals of the men's singles SL4 category after defeating South Korea's N. Cho.

2. Which edition of the military exercise 'AUSTRAHIND 2026' between India and Australia is being conducted?

A - Third
B - Fourth
C - Fifth
D - Sixth



The fifth edition of the joint military exercise 'AUSTRAHIND 2026' between the armies of India and Australia is being held from October 19 to November 1, 2026, at the Foreign Training Node in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala, with approximately 240 military personnel participating. The objective of this exercise is to enhance joint military capabilities and operational coordination; it includes training in coastal operations, surveillance, reconnaissance, and Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR).

3. What rank did India secure in the Quality of Care Perception Index 2026?

A - First
B - Second
C - Third
D - Fourth



In the 'Quality of Care Perception Index 2026' released by Ipsos in October 2026, India ranked third, while Malaysia and Singapore secured the first and second positions, respectively. 68% of Indians expressed a positive perception regarding the quality of healthcare services. According to the report, 64% of Indians expressed trust in the healthcare system; however, 74% found healthcare services difficult to afford, and 42% identified high costs as a major issue.

4. Which drug was reported to have been approved for the first-line treatment of ESCC?

A - Toripalimab
B - Paracetamol
C - Metformin
D - Ibuprofen



The DCGI approved the use of Toripalimab (Zytorvi) in combination with cisplatin and paclitaxel for the first-line treatment of advanced, recurrent, or metastatic esophageal squamous cell carcinoma (ESCC). In the Phase-3 JUPITER-06 trial, this combination resulted in a median overall survival of 17.7 months, compared to 12.9 months in the chemotherapy-only group. Toripalimab is a PD-1 immune checkpoint inhibitor.

5. How many new sites from India have been added to UNESCO's tentative World Heritage list?

A - One **B - Two**

C - Three **D - Four**

UNESCO's World Heritage Centre has added three new sites from India to its tentative World Heritage list: the Karst-Mud-Volcano Complex of Baratang, the Andaman Subduction Volcanic Zone, and the Cultural and Archaeological Landscape of Sirpur in Chhattisgarh. These sites are significant for their geological features, biodiversity, ancient temples, and Buddhist monasteries. Inclusion in the tentative list does not equate to receiving the final status of a UNESCO World Heritage Site.



6. In which country was a case of Bundibugyo virus infection reported in October 2026?

A - Kenya **B - Nigeria**

C - Ghana **D - South Africa**

In October 2026, a case of Bundibugyo virus infection was confirmed in Nigeria's Federal Capital Territory in a woman who had arrived from Uganda. She was placed in isolation for treatment, and 44 of her contacts were monitored. The virus can spread through direct contact with the blood, bodily fluids, or contaminated objects of an infected person.



7. Which award was Reema Nanavaty honored with in October 2026?

A - Nobel Peace Prize **B - Hillary Rodham Clinton Award**

C - Ramon Magsaysay Award **D - Indira Gandhi Peace Prize**

On October 15, 2026, Indian social activist Reema Nanavaty was honored with the Hillary Rodham Clinton Award in Washington, D.C., USA, for her contributions to women's rights and economic empowerment. She serves as the Director and General Secretary of the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA), an organization that works toward the employment and social security of women in the informal sector.



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8. What is the scientific name of the snow leopard?

A - Panthera leo **B - Panthera uncia**

C - Panthera tigris **D - Acinonyx jubatus**

International Snow Leopard Day is observed annually on October 23, with the objective of raising awareness about the conservation of the snow leopard (Panthera uncia) and its natural habitat; this was declared by the United Nations General Assembly in December 2024. According to India's first Snow Leopard Population Assessment (SPAI), the estimated population of snow leopards in the country between 2019 and 2023 was 718, with 477 found in Ladakh.



One Liner

1. What rank did India achieve in the Ipsos Quality of Care Perception Index? - Third place

2. When is International Snow Leopard Day celebrated? - October 23

3. Which type of Ebola virus infection was reported in Nigeria in October 2026? - Bundibugyo Ebola virus

4. In which year was SEWA (Self-Employed Women's Association) founded? - 1972

5. Which award was Reema Nanavaty reported to have received in October 2026? - Hillary Rodham Clinton Award

6. AUSTRAHIND 2026 is a joint military exercise held between India and which other country? - Australia

7. What is the name of the archaeological site in Chhattisgarh that has been proposed for inclusion in UNESCO's tentative list of World Heritage Sites? - Sirpur Cultural and Archaeological Landscape

8. At the 2026 Asian Para Games, what distance did Ayush Verma throw to win the gold medal in the men's shot put F53 event? - 8.16 meters

9. Which immunotherapy drug was reported to have been approved in India for the treatment of Esophageal Squamous Cell Carcinoma (ESCC)? - Toripalimab

10. According to India's first Snow Leopard Population Assessment (SPAI), what is the estimated number of snow leopards in India? - 718