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## Asia's First Woman Train Driver | Maharashtra | 26 Sep 2025

### Why in News?

**Surekha Yadav**, Asia's first woman train driver, will retire from her remarkable 36-year career with **Central Railway (CR)** on 30th September 2025.

- Throughout her career, she broke **barriers in a male-dominated field**, inspiring generations of women to pursue careers in railways.



### Key Points

- Surekha Yadav began her career as an **assistant driver in 1989** and rose through the ranks, becoming the first female train driver in Asia.
- She piloted various trains, including the prestigious **Vande Bharat Express**.
- She was also the **first woman to navigate the Deccan Queen** on the steep Bhor Ghat stretch, one of **India's most treacherous rail routes**.
- Her journey from a small town in Satara to becoming a trailblazer in Indian Railways **reflects determination, resilience**, and the changing perception of women's roles in transportation.

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## World Para Athletics Championships (WPAC) 2025 | National

### Why in News?

The **World Para Athletics Championships (WPAC) 2025** was inaugurated at the **Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi**, where the Prime Minister hailed para athletes as breaking barriers and setting new benchmarks, underscoring **India's identity as a sporting and inclusive nation**.

### Key Points

- **About:** This year's championship, scheduled from 27th September to 5th October 2025, boasts a record-breaking **2,200 participants from 104 nations**, marking it as the **largest para sports** event ever **hosted on Indian soil**.
  - The event will also feature **India's largest-ever contingent** of 74 athletes.
- **India's First:** India will host the World Para Athletics Championships **for the first time**, becoming the **fourth Asian nation** to do so, following Qatar, the UAE, and Japan.
- **Infrastructure:** The event is being held on the **newly-laid Mondo track** at the Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, which was previously used at the **Paris Paralympics 2024** and inaugurated on **National Sports Day**.
  - Alongside the main competition track, a Mondo warm-up track and a multi-speciality gymnasium, capable of training 200 athletes simultaneously, were also inaugurated, emphasising India's commitment to world-class sports infrastructure.
- **Previous Achievement:** India's remarkable rise in para sports is evident, with the country achieving its best-ever performance at the **2024 World Para Athletics Championships in Kobe, Japan**, securing sixth place overall with 17 medals, including six golds, five silvers, and six bronzes.
- **Significance:** This event is part of **India's long-term strategy** to host major global sporting events, with plans already underway for the **Commonwealth Games in 2030** and aspirations to host the **Olympic Games in 2036**.