

Weekly One Liners 13th to 19th of January 2025

Smartphones to Laptops: India's IT Revolution

In a landmark development for India's electronics manufacturing sector, **Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated Syrma SGS Technology's advanced laptop assembly line in Chennai.** This new facility symbolizes **India's growing dominance in IT hardware production, expanding its success in mobile manufacturing to high-value electronics like laptops.** With initiatives under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) 2.0 scheme, India is taking significant steps towards becoming a global IT hardware hub.

Key Highlights of Assembly Line

- **Location:** Madras Export Processing Zone (MEPZ), Chennai.
- **Production Capacity:** Initially 100,000 laptops annually, scalable to 1 million within 1-2 years.
- **Global Collaboration:** Partnership with Micro-Star International (MSI), a Taiwanese tech giant.
- **Employment Impact:** Estimated creation of 150-200 specialized jobs by FY26.
- **Quality Standards:** Laptops produced will meet global benchmarks for quality and innovation.

India's Electronic Manufacturing Growth

- **Exponential Growth:** Total electronics production surged from ₹2.4 lakh crore in 2014 to ₹9.8 lakh crore in 2024.
- **Mobile Manufacturing Success:** Reached ₹4.4 lakh crore, with ₹1.5 lakh crore in exports in 2024.
- **Local Production:** 98% of mobile phones used in India are domestically manufactured.

Tamil Nadu: A Leading Contributor

- **Major Hub:** 47 manufacturing units supported by MeitY under various schemes.
- **PLI 2.0 Impact:** Seven out of 27 approved units under PLI 2.0 are in Tamil Nadu.



Schemes Supporting Growth

- **SPECS (Scheme for Promotion of Manufacturing of Electronic Components and Semiconductors):** ₹1,200 crore allocated for promoting electronic components.
- **M-SIPS (Modified Special Incentive Package Scheme):** ₹15,000 crore investment potential, backed by ₹1,500 crore from MeitY.
- **EMC Cluster (Electronic Manufacturing Clusters):** Located in Sriperumbudur, attracting ₹8,700 crore in investments and creating 36,300 jobs.
- **iPhone 16 Pro:** Manufactured in Tamil Nadu, showcasing India's capabilities in high-end electronics.

PLI 2.0 for IT Hardware

- **Launch Date:** May 29, 2023.
- **Incentives:** Offers a 5% incentive to eligible companies.
- **Covered Products:** Laptops, tablets, servers, all-in-one PCs, and ultra-small form factor devices.

Projected Outcomes

- **Investment:** ₹3,000 crore.
- **Production:** ₹3.5 lakh crore.
- **Jobs:** 47,000 across India.

Achievements as of December 2024

- **Investments:** ₹520 crore.
- **Production:** ₹10,000 crore.
- **Jobs Created:** 3,900.

California's Wildfire Defense: The Use of Pink Fire Retardant

As wildfires continue to rage across Southern California, authorities are **using planes to drop bright pink fire retardant to control the spread of the flames.** This long-standing method of firefighting is becoming increasingly scrutinized for its environmental impact. While pink fire retardant has been in use for decades, growing concerns over its effectiveness and harmful effects on the environment have sparked a debate. Below is an overview of what pink fire retardant is, how it works, and the environmental concerns associated with its widespread use.

Key Points about Pink Fire Retardant

What is it?

- **Fire retardant is a chemical mix used to slow or stop the spread of fires.**
- The most commonly used fire retardant in the U.S. is Phos-Chek, a slurry primarily composed of ammonium polyphosphate, which does not evaporate like water.
- The pink color is added to make it more visible against the landscape, helping firefighters to create fire lines and track the application area.

How Does it Work?

- The fire retardant is **sprayed ahead of the fire to coat vegetation and prevent oxygen from fueling the flames.**
- The pink color enhances visibility, helping firefighters to track the application of the retardant.

Environmental Concerns

- **Toxic Metals:** The fire retardant contains metals such as chromium and cadmium, which are toxic to both humans and the environment. These can accumulate in waterways, posing a threat to aquatic life.
- **Health Risks:** These metals are linked to cancer, kidney, and liver diseases in humans.
- **Water Pollution:** The chemicals from fire retardant can enter rivers and streams, polluting the water and harming wildlife.
- **Effectiveness:** Research has raised questions about the actual effectiveness of aerial retardants, as they depend on several environmental factors (e.g., weather, terrain, fuel type). Some experts argue that the windows for their effectiveness are narrowing due to climate change.

Usage and Impact

- Between 2009 and 2021, more than 440 million gallons of fire retardant were released on federal, state, and private lands in the U.S.
- A study by the University of Southern California (USC) found that over 400 tons of heavy metals were released into the environment during this period.

Debate and Dispute

- Environmentalists **raise concerns about the growing pollution due to fire retardant use.**
- The federal government and Perimeter Solutions (the company that manufactures Phos-Chek) dispute these claims, defending its safety and necessity in wildfire control.

Kappad and Chal Beaches Receive Prestigious Blue Flag Certification

Kerala's renowned **Kappad beach in Kozhikode and Chal beach in Kannur** have been awarded the prestigious Blue Flag certification by the **Denmark-based Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)**. This certification recognizes beaches that meet high standards in environmental protection, safety, and sustainability. The Blue Flag status enhances Kerala's appeal as a sustainable tourism destination and serves as a global benchmark for eco-friendly tourism practices. This achievement marks a significant milestone in the state's efforts to preserve its natural beauty while promoting responsible tourism.

Key Points

- **Blue Flag Certification:** Both Kappad and Chal beaches received the Blue Flag certification from the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).

- **Environmental and Safety Standards:** The beaches were recognized for meeting 33 criteria, including environmental sustainability, safety, and hygiene practices.
- **Tourism Minister's Statement:** Tourism Minister P.A. Mohamed Riyas emphasized that this achievement boosts Kerala's global reputation as a sustainable tourism destination and attracts eco-conscious travelers.
- **Responsible Tourism Initiatives:** Both beaches have implemented eco-friendly initiatives and maintain hygienic, safe environments for tourists, setting a model for responsible tourism (RT).
- **Global Recognition:** The Blue Flag certification enhances the beaches' international appeal, drawing attention to Kerala's sustainable practices and commitment to preserving its natural beauty.

1. Blue Flag Certification

Definition

- The Blue Flag is an international eco-label awarded to beaches, marinas, and sustainable boating operators as a mark of their environmental excellence.

Certification Authority

- Awarded by the **Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), based in Denmark.**
- **Established in 1985** to promote sustainable coastal development globally.

Eligibility and Criteria

- 33 stringent criteria are evaluated, grouped into four categories,
- Environmental Education and Information
- Bathing Water Quality
- Environmental Management
- Conservation and Safety Services

International Jury

- The decision to grant Blue Flag status is made by an international jury that includes representatives from,
- United Nations Environment Programme (**UNEP**)
- United Nations World Tourism Organisation (**UNWTO**)
- International Union for Conservation of Nature (**IUCN**)

Global Reach

- Over 4,000 beaches worldwide hold Blue Flag certification.
- Spain leads with 729 certified beaches.

India's Blue Flag Beaches

- India has 13 Blue Flag beaches, including Kappad and Chal, demonstrating its commitment to sustainable tourism.

Annual Updates

- Certification is updated annually; sites must consistently meet the criteria to retain status.

2. Beams (Beach Environment & Aesthetic Management Services)

Objective

- To develop world-class facilities at Indian beaches with a focus on environmental sustainability.
- To promote beach cleanliness, conservation, and sustainable tourism.

Launch and Implementation

- Launched under the Integrated Coastal Zone Management Project (ICZMP) by the Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change.

Key Features

- Focuses on reducing pollution, conserving coastal ecosystems, and enhancing the aesthetic appeal of beaches.
- Supports local communities by creating jobs in beach management and eco-tourism.
- Promotes the use of green technologies and renewable energy for beach infrastructure.

India's Blue Flag Beaches

Certified In	Beach Name	State Name
2020	Shivrajpur Beach	Dwarka, Gujarat
2020	Golden Beach	Puri, Odisha
2020	Ghoghla Beach	Diu, Gujarat
2020	Kasarkod Beach	Uttara Kannada, Karnataka
2020	Padubidri Beach	Udupi, Karnataka
2020	Rushikonda Beach	Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
2020	Radhanagar Beach	Havelock Island, Andaman & Nicobar Islands
2020	Kovalam Beach	Chennai, Tamil Nadu
2020	Eden Beach	Puducherry
2022	Minicoy Thundi Beach	Lakshadweep
2022	Kadmat Beach	Lakshadweep
2025	Kappad Beach	Kozhikode, Kerala
2025	Chal Beach	Kannur, Kerala

IMD Vision-2047: Zero Deaths, 100% Weather Detection

On January 14, 2025, during the **150th Foundation Day** celebrations of the India Meteorological Department (IMD), Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the **'IMD Vision-2047'** document. This strategic roadmap outlines ambitious goals to enhance India's meteorological capabilities by 2047, coinciding with the nation's centenary of independence.

Key Objectives of IMD Vision-2047

Zero Disaster Deaths: The vision document sets a target of eliminating fatalities due to severe weather events by 2047. This objective emphasizes the importance of accurate and timely weather forecasts to enable effective disaster management and early public warnings.

Enhanced Forecast Accuracy: IMD aims to achieve zero-error weather forecasting for up to three days and 90% accuracy for five-day forecasts by 2047. For severe weather predictions extending up to seven days, the target is 80% accuracy, and 70% accuracy for forecasts up to ten days.

Comprehensive Weather Detection: The department plans to attain 100% detection of all types of severe weather events down to the village and household levels. This will involve augmenting meteorological observational systems nationwide, supported by advanced remote-sensing technologies, including improved radars and satellites.

Launch of 'Mission Mausam'

In conjunction with the Vision-2047 document, Prime Minister Modi introduced **'Mission Mausam,'** an initiative aimed at transforming India into a **'Weather-ready and Climate-smart'** nation. The mission focuses on developing cutting-edge weather surveillance technologies, implementing high-resolution atmospheric observations, deploying next-generation radars and satellites, and enhancing high-performance computing systems.

Historical Context and Achievements

Established in 1875, IMD has played a pivotal role in advancing meteorological science in India. Over the years, the department has significantly improved its forecasting capabilities, contributing to a substantial reduction in casualties from natural disasters. For instance, accurate cyclone warnings have led to a decrease in deaths from approximately 10,000 in 1999 to zero in recent years.

The department has also expanded its technological infrastructure, increasing the number of Doppler **Weather Radars from 15 in 2014 to 39 in 2023**, thereby enhancing land area coverage by **about 35%**. Additionally, the overall forecast accuracy has improved by **40% between 2014 and 2023**.

BANK MAHAPACK PLUS
For IBPS, SBI, SIDBI, RBI
Grade B, +5 More
Selection Ka Saathi

Global Contributions and Future Directions

IMD’s advancements have not only benefited India but have also provided critical information to neighboring countries, including Nepal, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka, through systems like the Flash Flood Guidance System. Looking ahead, the department is committed to further enhancing its services to support disaster management, agriculture, aviation, and public safety, aligning with global efforts to address climate change and environmental challenges.

New Appointment Process for India’s Election Commissioners

The appointment procedure for India’s Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) and Election Commissioners (ECs) has undergone significant changes with the enactment of the **Chief Election Commissioner and Other Election Commissioners (Appointment, Conditions of Service and Term of Office) Act, 2023**. This legislation introduces a structured selection process aimed at enhancing transparency and accountability in the Election Commission of India.

Establishment of the Selection Committee

Under the new Act, a three-member Selection Committee is responsible for appointing the CEC and ECs. This committee comprises:

- The Prime Minister
- A Cabinet Minister nominated by the Prime Minister
- The Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha

This composition is designed to balance executive influence with opposition input, promoting a more bipartisan approach to appointments.

Role of the Search Committee

Supporting the Selection Committee is a Search Committee tasked with identifying suitable candidates. **Chaired by the Union Minister for Law and Justice**, it includes two government officials of Secretary rank. The Search Committee shortlists a panel of candidates, from which the Selection Committee makes its appointments.

Inclusion of External Candidates

A notable feature of the Act is its provision to consider candidates from outside the existing pool of Election Commissioners. This allows for a broader selection, potentially bringing in individuals with diverse experiences and perspectives, thereby enriching the leadership of the Election Commission.

Supreme Court’s Influence

The legislative changes were influenced by a Supreme Court ruling that emphasized the need for a more transparent and balanced appointment process. The Court highlighted concerns over the executive’s exclusive power in appointments and recommended the inclusion of the Leader of the Opposition to ensure checks and balances.

Critiques and Concerns

Despite its intentions, the new appointment process has faced criticism. **Former Chief Election Commissioner O.P. Rawat** expressed concerns that allowing the government to nominate candidates could lead to partisan appointments, potentially eroding the Commission’s credibility. The exclusion of the Chief Justice of India from the Selection Committee has also been a point of contention, with critics arguing that it diminishes judicial oversight.

Implications for Electoral Governance

As the new appointment process is implemented, its impact on the **Election Commission’s independence** and effectiveness will be closely observed. The upcoming selection of the next **CEC, following Rajiv Kumar’s** tenure ending on February 18, 2025, will serve as a critical test for the new system. Stakeholders and observers will assess whether the changes enhance the Commission’s role in ensuring free and fair elections or if they introduce new challenges to its autonomy.

ISRO Successfully Docks Satellites, Enters Elite Club

The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has successfully docked two satellites in space, marking **India as the fourth country to achieve this feat after the United States, Russia, and China**. The docking process, part of the SpaDeX (Space Docking Exercise) mission, demonstrates ISRO’s capability to conduct autonomous satellite docking. This milestone is critical for future missions like Chandrayaan-4 and the planned Bharatiya Antariksh Station.

Key Details of the SpaDeX Mission

- **Launch Date:** December 30, 2024.
- **Satellites:** SDX01 (Chaser) and SDX02 (Target).
- **Objective:** Demonstrate autonomous docking technology.
- **Initial Distance:** 20 km between satellites, gradually reduced for docking.
- **Docking Milestone:** Achieved after overcoming technical issues and two postponements.

Timeline and Events

- **December 30, 2024:** Launch of SpaDeX satellites by PSLV.
- **January 7 and 9, 2025:** Scheduled docking postponed due to technical issues.
- **January 12, 2025:** Successful trial to reduce satellite distance to 3 meters.
- **January 16, 2025:** Final successful docking announced.

Future Applications

- **Chandrayaan-4:** Will involve docking and undocking of lunar modules.
- **Bharatiya Antariksh Station:** Docking capabilities essential for assembling modules in space by 2028.
- **Human Moon Mission:** Docking technology to support lunar exploration by 2040.

Docking Procedure

- **Gradual approach:** 20 km → 5 km → 1.5 km → 500 m → 225 m → 15 m → 3 m.
- Final docking achieved under controlled conditions.
- Post-docking tests: Power transfer between satellites and separation for independent payload operation.

PM Modi Commissions INS Surat, Nilgiri, and Vagsheer

On January 15, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi commissioned three significant naval assets—INS Surat, INS Nilgiri, and INS Vagsheer—at the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai. This event underscores India’s commitment to enhancing its maritime capabilities and achieving self-reliance in defense production.

INS Surat: Advanced Guided Missile Destroyer

INS Surat is the fourth and final ship of the **Project 15B**, also known as the **Visakhapatnam-class destroyers**. Designed by the Indian Navy’s Warship Design Bureau and constructed by MDL, this guided missile destroyer **measures 163 meters in length and 17 meters in width**, with a top speed of 30 knots. It boasts approximately 75% indigenous content and is equipped with state-of-the-art weaponry, including the indigenously developed Medium Range Surface-to-Air Missile (MRSAM), BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, torpedo tube launchers, and anti-submarine indigenous rocket launchers. The ship also features modern stealth capabilities and can accommodate two helicopters.

INS Nilgiri: Stealth Frigate of Project 17A

INS Nilgiri is the lead ship of **Project 17A**, an initiative aimed at developing advanced stealth frigates for the Indian Navy. Designed by the Indian Navy’s Warship Design Bureau and built by MDL, the ship **measures 149 meters in length and 17.8 meters in breadth**, with a maximum speed of 28 knots. It features enhanced stealth capabilities, survivability, and seakeeping, and can accommodate two helicopters. The frigate is armed with eight BrahMos supersonic cruise missiles, 32 MRSAMs, torpedoes, Kavach chaff launchers, and a 76mm gun. Future upgrades are planned to include indigenously developed VL-SRSAM missiles.

INS Vagsheer: Final Submarine of Project 75

INS Vagsheer is the sixth and final submarine of the **Kalvari-class**, developed under Project 75 through an Indo-French collaboration between MDL and the French Naval Group. This 2,000-tonne submarine is versatile, capable of performing a range of missions including anti-surface warfare, anti-submarine warfare, long-range strikes, special operations, and intelligence gathering. The modular design of INS Vagsheer facilitates future upgrades, such as the integration of air-independent propulsion technology.

Strategic Significance and Future Outlook

The commissioning of these vessels represents a significant advancement in India’s indigenous shipbuilding capabilities and defense self-sufficiency. All three platforms were designed and built entirely in India, reflecting the nation’s growing competence in defense production. After rigorous trials, the assets are now fully operational, poised to strengthen the Navy’s maritime power. This development comes amid increasing Chinese presence in the Indian Ocean region, underscoring the importance of protecting maritime interests. Defense Minister Rajnath Singh highlighted the shifting global focus to the Indian Ocean, emphasizing India’s commitment to bolstering its naval power.

In addition to these developments, India’s defense ministry is expected to conclude a deal for three additional Scorpene submarines to be built in India during Prime Minister Modi’s anticipated visit to Paris next month. However, according to the Indian Navy, the first of these submarines is only likely to be commissioned by 2031.

Cabinet Nod for 8th Pay Commission Implementation

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the **constitution of the 8th Central Pay Commission**, which will evaluate and recommend revised salary structures and allowances for central government employees and pensioners. This early initiative ensures readiness for implementing the recommendations by January 1, 2026. The commission’s scope encompasses over one crore employees and pensioners, aiming to address compensation, pensions, and welfare enhancements.

Key Highlights of the 8th Pay Commission

Approval and Formation

- The Union Cabinet has sanctioned the establishment of the 8th Pay Commission.
- Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced that the commission’s Chairman and two members will be appointed soon.

Timeline and Implementation

- The 7th Pay Commission’s recommendations remain effective until 2026.
- The 8th Pay Commission’s recommendations will be prepared for implementation by January 1, 2026.

Scope and Expectation

- Revises basic pay, allowances, pensions, and benefits for central government employees and pensioners.
- Includes potential adjustments to Dearness Allowance (DA) and Dearness Relief (DR).

Historical Context

- Pay Commissions are established every 10 years to review compensation structures based on economic indicators like inflation.

- The 7th Pay Commission was constituted in 2014, submitted its report in 2015, and its recommendations were implemented in 2016.

Government Proactive Approach

- Early constitution ensures a seamless transition to revised pay structures.

Next Steps

- Further details, including membership and terms of reference, will be announced soon.

Key Expectations from the 8th Pay Commission

1. Salary Enhancements

- The minimum basic salary, increased from ₹7,000 to ₹18,000 by the 7th Pay Commission, may rise to ₹51,480 (approx. 186% increase).

2. Fitment Factor Adjustment

- The fitment factor, set at 2.57 by the 7th Pay Commission, is expected to increase to 2.86, ensuring higher pay hikes.

3. Allowance Revisions

- Comprehensive reviews of allowances like DA, HRA, and TA are anticipated to align with current inflation and economic conditions.

4. Pension Reforms

- Possible enhancements in pension amounts and measures to ensure timely disbursement.

5. Performance-Based Incentives

- Introduction of performance-linked pay structures to boost productivity and efficiency.

6. Health and Welfare Benefits

- Expansion of health insurance schemes and welfare measures for employees' well-being.

7th Central Pay Commission (7th CPC)

- The 7th CPC was established in 2014 to review and recommend revisions in pay, allowances, and pensions for central government employees and pensioners.
- Its recommendations, implemented from January 1, 2016, brought significant changes to the compensation structure.

Key Recommendations and Implementations

Revised Pay Structure

- **Minimum Pay:** Increased from ₹7,000 to ₹18,000 per month.
- **Maximum Pay:** Set at ₹2,50,000 per month for top positions like the Cabinet Secretary.

Pay Matrix Introduction

- Introduced a simplified pay matrix with 19 levels, ensuring uniformity in salary progression.

Allowances Rationalization

- Rationalized key allowances, including DA, HRA, and TA, to reflect economic conditions.

Pension Reforms

- Ensured a minimum pension of ₹9,000 per month, with higher pensions aligned with the pay matrix.

Performance-Linked Pay

- Proposed incentives for efficiency through performance-related pay.

Defense Forces Considerations

- Special recommendations for defense personnel addressing unique service conditions.

National Affairs

- Dr. S. Jaishankar, India's External Affairs Minister, will represent India at **Donald Trump's swearing-in** on January 20, 2025, marking his second term as the **47th President of the U.S.** This visit highlights the **strengthening of India-U.S. relations.** ([Click here to read article](#))
- India added a record **30 GW of renewable energy** capacity in 2024, a **113% increase** from 2023. This milestone supports India's goal of reaching **500 GW** by 2030, emphasizing its commitment to **clean energy** and reducing **carbon footprint.** ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Piyush Goyal** launched the **Bharat Cleantech Manufacturing Platform** at the **Bharat Climate Forum 2025** in **New Delhi**, aiming to strengthen India's **cleantech** sectors like **solar, wind, hydrogen, and battery storage.** The platform fosters **collaboration, innovation, and financing** to make India a global sustainability leader. Goyal emphasized **self-sustaining growth** and the need for innovation and scaling in the sector. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **INROAD** project, backed by ₹100 crore, aims to improve **natural rubber** quality in India's **North-East.** It focuses on **skill development** for rubber growers and building **model infrastructure**, with support from the **tyre industry**, highlighting collaboration between **agriculture** and **manufacturing.** ([Click here to read article](#))
- **South Eastern Coalfields Limited (SECL)** has launched a **Post-Retirement Benefit (PRB) Cell** to enhance the welfare of its retired employees. This **single-window solution** consolidates post-retirement services, improving the experience for retirees. The initiative aligns with **Mission Sambandh**, SECL's program to foster better **communication** and **stakeholder engagement.** ([Click here to read article](#))



- On **January 14, 2025**, **Piyush Goyal**, Union Minister of Commerce, inaugurated the **National Turmeric Board** in **New Delhi** and appointed **Shri Palle Ganga Reddy** as its first **Chairperson**. Headquartered in **Nizamabad, Telangana**, the Board will support **turmeric farmers** across **20 states**, focusing on **farmer welfare, production enhancement, and research** on new varieties. It will also promote **value addition** for global markets and highlight turmeric's **health benefits**, with a focus on **Andhra Pradesh and Telangana**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Union Minister **Shri Piyush Goyal** launched the **Bharat Cleantech Manufacturing Platform** on January 11, 2025, at the **Bharat Climate Forum**. The initiative aims to strengthen India's **cleantech value chains** in **solar, wind, hydrogen, and battery storage** sectors. Goyal emphasized the importance of **innovation, self-reliance, and reducing dependence on government support**, encouraging long-term **growth** in the **clean energy** industry. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **Sri Sri Radha Madanmohanji Temple** in **Kharghar, Navi Mumbai** on January 15, 2025. Built over 12 years at a cost of ₹170 crore, it is **Asia's second-largest ISKCON temple**. The temple embodies **spirituality and knowledge**, featuring various facilities aligned with **ISKCON's mission**. The event was attended by **Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis, Deputy CM Eknath Shinde, Governor CP Radhakrishnan, and MP Hema Malini**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's **Railway Minister, Ashwini Vaishnaw**, announced the development of the **world's most powerful hydrogen fuel-run train engine** by **Indian Railways** during the **18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas**. Built with **indigenous technology**, this achievement sets a new benchmark in **green energy and sustainable development** in the railway sector. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Justice **Krishnan Vinod Chandran** was sworn in as the newest judge of the Supreme Court of India on January 16, 2025. Chief Justice of India **Sanjiv Khanna** administered the oath of office. With this appointment, the Supreme Court's judicial strength has risen to 33, just one short of its full sanctioned capacity. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The 9th Foundation Day of Startup India celebrated India's progress as a global innovation hub. Union Minister **Piyush Goyal** launched the **PRABHAAV Factbook** and **Bharat Startup Challenge**, highlighting the country's startup growth, with **1.59 lakh startups, 76 IPOs** in 2024, and **₹13 trillion** in government funding. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The world's first **Mahamrityunjaya Yantra**, measuring 52 feet, has been installed at **Tapovan Ashram** in **Prayagraj**, a sacred site of the **Maha Kumbh**. This **spiritual marvel**, known as the **Victory over Death Yantra**, helps devotees overcome **fear of death, disease, and danger**, while enhancing **courage, positivity, and connecting them to Lord Shiva's higher energy**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 17, 2025**, Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2025** at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi**. India's largest **mobility expo**, running from **January 17-22, 2025**, spans three venues: **Bharat Mandapam, Yashobhoomi, and India Expo Centre & Mart**. The event features **9+ shows, 20+ conferences, and state sessions** on regional mobility policies, promoting industry-government collaboration. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **India's textile industry** has long been a cornerstone of its economy, renowned for its **rich heritage** and diverse products. In recent years, the sector has experienced significant growth, positioning India as a **formidable player in the global textile market**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 16, 2025**, **Startup India** celebrated its **9th anniversary** as **National Startup Day**, marking India's emergence as the **3rd largest startup ecosystem** globally with over **1.59 lakh startups**. Launched in **2016**, the initiative has fostered growth in **fintech, edtech, health-tech, and e-commerce**, driving India's transformation into a global **hub for innovation and entrepreneurship**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Kalagram**, located in **Prayagraj** during **Mahakumbh 2025**, is a cultural hub created by the **Ministry of Culture** to showcase India's rich heritage. It offers an immersive experience with **crafts, cuisine, and cultural performances**, reflecting India's **diverse cultural legacy** and spiritual significance. Kalagram serves as a **cultural jewel** that celebrates the essence of **Bharat**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 15, 2025**, coinciding with **Army Day**, the government launched the **"Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan"** app and website in **Pune, Maharashtra**. Developed by the **Ministries of Defence, Tourism, and the Indian Army**, the app allows civilians to visit key **battlefield locations** from the **1962, 1971, and 1999 wars**, as well as significant conflict zones like **Siachen base camp and Galwan valley**. This initiative aims to transform border regions into **tourist hubs**, fostering a deeper connection to India's **military history** and the sacrifices of its soldiers. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On January 16, 2025, the Lokpal of India celebrated its inaugural **Foundation Day** at the **Manekshaw Centre in New Delhi**, marking 11 years since its establishment on January 16, 2014, under the **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 17, 2025**, the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** launched **National Broadband Mission 2.0 (NBM 2.0)** and the **Sanchar Saathi mobile app**. Building on **NBM 1.0**, NBM 2.0 aims to connect **1.7 lakh villages**, ensuring **60%** of rural households have access to **100 Mbps** broadband. This initiative is designed to bridge the **digital divide** and promote **inclusive growth** across India. ([Click here to read article](#))

States in the News

- The **Adani Group** will invest ₹75,000 crore in **Chhattisgarh**, with ₹60,000 crore dedicated to expanding **energy** operations, including a 6,120 MW increase in power generation across **Raipur**, **Korba**, and **Raigarh**. This move strengthens the state's energy role. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On January 13, 2025, **PM Modi** inaugurated the **Z-Morh Tunnel** in **Jammu and Kashmir**, enhancing **connectivity** between **Srinagar** and **Ladakh**. The 6.5 km, bi-directional tunnel, at 8,652 feet, bypasses avalanche-prone areas, reducing travel time from 2+ hours to 15 minutes. The ₹2,400 crore project, started in 2015, was led by **NHAI**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Dr. Jitendra Singh** announced the establishment of a **Regional Meteorological Centre** in **Jammu** during the **150th anniversary** of the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**. This initiative aims to enhance **weather forecasting**, **disaster preparedness**, and **climate resilience** in **Jammu & Kashmir**. The event highlighted **IMD's** journey and **India's** leadership in **climate action** under **PM Modi**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 10, 2025**, **UP CM Yogi Adityanath** launched 'Kumbhvani' (103.5 MHz), an FM channel by **All India Radio**, to enhance the **Maha Kumbh 2025** experience. The channel broadcasts from **5:55 AM to 10:05 PM** daily, from **January 10 to February 26, 2025**. **Dr. L. Murugan** attended online. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 8, 2025**, **PM Modi** laid the foundation for the **NTPC Green Energy Limited (NGEL) Green Hydrogen Hub** in **Pudimadaka**, near **Visakhapatnam**. A collaboration between **NGEL** and **NREDCAP**, it is the first hub under **India's National Green Hydrogen Mission**, boosting the country's commitment to **sustainable energy** and the **green hydrogen economy**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Avaniyapuram Jallikattu** began on **January 14, 2025**, in **Madurai**, celebrating **Tamil Nadu's** cultural heritage during the **Pongal** festival. The event featured **1,100 bulls** and **900 bull-tamers**, with the best bull winning a **₹11 lakh tractor** and the top bull-tamer receiving a **₹8 lakh car**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 13, 2025**, **Odisha** became the **34th state** to implement **Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY**, formalized through an **MoU** with the **National Health Authority**. The scheme will converge with **Odisha's** **Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana (GJAY)**, offering **₹5 lakh** health coverage per family, plus an additional **₹5 lakh** for women. Around **1.03 crore families** will benefit, with **67.8 lakh** families supported by the **Union Government**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **Uttar Pradesh** is considering the **privatization** of two power distribution companies, **Dakshinanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam** and **Purvanchal Vidyut Vitran Nigam**, to tackle challenges like **power losses** and poor infrastructure. The **UP Power Corporation Ltd (UPPCL)** has issued a **tender** for consultants and advisers to explore privatization or **PPP** to improve **efficiency** and **service quality**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Gaan-Ngai festival**, the largest post-harvest celebration of the **Zeliangrong community**, began on **January 12, 2025** in **Manipur**. Celebrated for five days, it features **vibrant cultural performances** and traditional rituals, symbolizing the transition from the old year to the new. The festival emphasizes **peace**, **prosperity**, and **community healing**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Boda Tyohar**, or **Magho ko Tyohar**, is the largest annual festival of the **Hatti tribes** in **Himachal Pradesh's Trans-Giri region**. Celebrated by over **three lakh** community members, this **month-long festival** marks the end of the **Magha** month, featuring unique **cultural practices**, **rituals**, and promoting **community unity**. It holds significant cultural importance, showcasing **Hatti traditions** and beliefs. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Odisha government** has announced a **monthly pension of ₹20,000** for surviving detainees of the **1975-1977 Emergency** under the **Maintenance of Internal Security Act (MISA)**. This welfare measure, effective from **January 1, 2025**, also includes **medical coverage** and other benefits, honoring those imprisoned during the Emergency period. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Union Ministry of Culture** and **Gujarat State Government** inaugurated a state-of-the-art **Archaeological Experiential Museum** in **Vadnagar**, a town with over 2,500 years of history. The event, presided over by **Union Home Minister Amit Shah** and attended by **Gujarat CM Bhupendrabhai Patel** and **Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan**, highlights **Vadnagar's** rich **cultural and historical heritage**. ([Click here to read article](#))

BANK MAHAPACK
for all Bank & Insurance Exams
Selection Ka Saathi

International Affairs

- **Mount Ibu**, situated in **North Maluku, Indonesia**, erupted on January 11, 2025, sending ash clouds up to **4,000 meters high** and ejecting glowing lava up to **two kilometers from its crater**. This event has prompted authorities to issue warnings and implement safety measures for the public. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 13, 2025**, a **magnitude 6.9 earthquake** struck **southwestern Japan**, with its epicenter in the **Hyuga-Nada Sea** near **Miyazaki Prefecture**. The **Japan Meteorological Agency (JMA)** issued a **tsunami advisory** for **Miyazaki and Kochi Prefectures**, warning of waves up to **1 meter**. The advisory was later lifted, and no significant **damage or injuries** were reported. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Nicolas Maduro**, the **46th President of Venezuela**, was sworn in for a third term after a disputed election. His opponent, **Edmundo Gonzalez**, alleged **voter fraud** and declared himself the winner. Despite **international pressure**, including **U.S. sanctions**, Maduro's inauguration occurred amid **controversy and public protests**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Hindenburg Research**, founded by **Nate Anderson** in 2017, has announced its **closure**. Known for exposing **corporate fraud and mismanagement**, it impacted companies like **Nikola Corp., Icahn Enterprises, and the Adani Group**. Anderson cited **personal reasons** for shutting down the firm. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Tarun Das**, former **Director General of CII**, was awarded Singapore's **Honorary Citizen Award** for his pivotal role in strengthening **Singapore-India relations**. Notably, in 1993, he led an Indian industrialist delegation to Singapore, advancing India's **"Look East" policy** and fostering continuous engagement between the two nations' **political leaders and businesses**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India and Spain will celebrate **2026 as a 'dual year'**, focusing on **culture, tourism, and advancements in artificial intelligence (AI)**. Announced by **External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar**, this initiative aims to strengthen **bilateral ties** and promote **mutual understanding** between the two nations. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **U.S. Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)** updated its **Entity List**, removing three **Indian organizations—Indian Rare Earths, IGCAR, and BARC—**due to national security concerns. The removal aims to enhance **energy cooperation and joint research** for shared **energy security** goals. Eleven **Chinese firms** were added to the list. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 17, 2025**, **China** successfully launched **Pakistan's first indigenous Electro-Optical (EO-1) satellite, PRSC-EO1**, from the **Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center**. The satellite, designed for **Earth observation** using **electro-optical sensors**, was deployed into orbit by a **Long March-2D carrier rocket** at **12:07 pm Beijing Time**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Agreements/MoUs Signed

- **C-DOT**, in collaboration with **IIT Mandi and IIT Jammu**, has signed an agreement to develop a **Wideband Spectrum-Sensor ASIC-Chip** to improve **spectrum utilization** and enhance **broadband services** in **rural India**. The project, under the **Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF)**, aligns with India's **Atmanirbhar Bharat** and **Make-in-India** goals. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India is set to sign a **preliminary agreement** with **Mongolia** to boost cooperation in **geology and exploration**, focusing on sourcing critical minerals like **copper and coking coal**. This partnership aims to reduce India's reliance on imports, supporting sectors like **power generation, construction, and steel production**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India is advancing in **6G technology** with a collaboration between **C-DOT and IIT Bombay** to develop an **Optical Transceiver Chipset** for **high-bandwidth 6G wireless links**. Supported by the **Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF)**, this initiative aims to position India as a leader in **6G innovation** by 2030, focusing on **affordability, sustainability, and ubiquity**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Books and Authors

- Vice President **Jagdeep Dhankhar** launched **Dr. K.S. Chauhan's** book, *"Parliament: Powers, Functions & Privileges; A Comparative Constitutional Perspective"*. The book explores **Parliament's role, functions, privileges, and its influence on democratic accountability**. Dhankhar praised the author for his in-depth analysis of Parliament's critical role in maintaining the country's democratic fabric. ([Click here to read article](#))

Banking/Economy/Business News

- India's **net direct tax collection** reached **₹16.90 lakh crore** by **January 12, 2025**, a **15.88% increase** year-on-year. Key highlights include **₹8.74 lakh crore** from **personal income tax**, **₹7.68 lakh crore** from **corporate tax**, and **₹44,538 crore** from **Securities Transaction Tax (STT)**, reflecting robust economic activity and market trading. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's **retail inflation** dropped to **5.22%** in **December 2024**, from **5.48%** in November, mainly due to slower food price increases, especially in **vegetables, cereals, and pulses**. **Food inflation** fell to **8.39%**, while **core inflation** decreased to **3.5%**. **Rural areas** saw inflation at **5.76%**, compared to **4.58%** in urban areas. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** appointed **M. Rajeshwar Rao**, Deputy Governor, to oversee the **Monetary Policy and Economic Research Departments** after **Michael Patra** completed his term on **January 15, 2025**. Patra, who served since 2020, managed key areas including **Monetary Policy and Financial Market Operations**, with responsibilities now reassigned among current deputy governors. ([Click here to read article](#))

- India's **wholesale price inflation** rose to **2.37%** in **December 2024**, up from **1.89%** in November. Key drivers included **manufactured products** (+2.14%), **non-food articles** (+2.46%), and **fuel and power** (improved deflation of -3.79%). The rise in non-food articles reflects increased costs in sectors like **oilseeds**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's **GDP growth** is projected to rise to **6.7%** in FY25, after moderating to **6.4%** in the current fiscal year, down from **8.2%** previously. **Food inflation** declined, with **CPI inflation** cooling to **5.2%** in December. This trend, alongside stable **non-food inflation** at **3.1%**, may pave the way for a potential **rate cut** by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL)** has partnered with UAE-based **fintech firm Magnati** to enable **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** transactions for Indian travelers in the UAE. This collaboration aims to integrate **UPI** into the UAE's **payment ecosystem**, allowing Indian visitors to make seamless payments using their preferred method. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India is projected to become the world's **fourth-largest economy** by 2026, surpassing **Japan**, driven by **6.8% GDP growth** in FY2024-25 and **7.7% growth** in FY2025-26, according to **PHDCCI**. Strategic policies aim to boost economic **resilience** and **sustainable development**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On January 16, 2025, the Indian government appointed new Managing Directors and Chief Executive Officers for two major public sector banks: **Ashok Chandra at Punjab National Bank (PNB)** and **Binod Kumar at Indian Bank**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India is projected to remain the fastest-growing major economy, with a **6.7% growth rate** for fiscal years 2025-26 and 2026-27, according to the World Bank. Key drivers include the expanding **services sector**, strengthening **manufacturing**, and government initiatives to improve **logistics infrastructure** and **tax reforms**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- FICCI revised India's economic forecast, projecting a **6.4% GDP growth** and **4.8% CPI-based inflation** for fiscal year **2024-25**, reflecting a cautious outlook due to **global uncertainties** and **domestic challenges**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 15, 2025**, **PNB MetLife** partnered with **Saraswat Co-Operative Bank**, India's largest urban co-operative bank, to offer a wide range of **life insurance solutions**, including **savings**, **protection**, **retirement**, and **group plans**. This strategic **bancassurance** collaboration targets **30 lakh customers** across **302 branches** nationwide. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Shriram Housing Finance** has rebranded as **Truhome Finance** following its acquisition by **Warburg Pincus** and **QIA**, Qatar's sovereign wealth fund. The rebranding reflects the company's focus on enhancing **accessibility to affordable home loans** across diverse **socio-economic segments**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Union Cabinet** has approved a **₹11,440 crore** package to revitalize **Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL)**, or **Vizag Steel**, addressing its financial challenges. The plan includes infusing **₹10,300 crore** as **equity capital** and converting **₹1,140 crore** of working capital loans into **7% non-cumulative preference share capital**, redeemable in 10 years. This strategic intervention aims to resolve RINL's **operational issues**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **IMF** has revised India's **FY25 economic growth forecast** to **6.5%**, down from earlier projections, citing **global economic uncertainties**, **domestic inflation**, and **investment slowdown**. Despite this, the IMF maintained a stable outlook for **FY26**. The revision reflects challenges impacting India's post-pandemic recovery, including **geopolitical risks** and inflation. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **RBI** has authorized overseas branches of authorized banks to open **Indian Rupee (INR) accounts** for **non-residents**, aiming to enhance the global use of the **Indian Rupee** in cross-border transactions and investments. This move facilitates **settling transactions** with non-residents, supports **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)**, and allows **Indian exporters** to receive export proceeds and manage payments, reducing currency conversion costs. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In **November 2024**, the **RBI** sold a record **\$20.2 billion** in the foreign exchange market to stabilize the **rupee** amid **foreign portfolio investor (FPI) outflows**. Despite purchasing **\$30.8 billion** and selling **\$51.1 billion** in the spot market, the **rupee depreciated by 0.48%** against the US dollar, increasing the RBI's **net short position** in the forward market to **\$58.9 billion**. ([Click here to read article](#))

BANK MAHAPACK PLUS
For IBPS, SBI, SIDBI, RBI
Grade B, +5 More
Selection Ka Saathi

Appointments/Resignations

- **Shri Vineet Joshi** has been appointed **Secretary of the Department of Higher Education** in the **Ministry of Education** on **January 17, 2025**, at **Shastri Bhawan**, New Delhi. With a distinguished career in key positions within the Indian educational sector, his vast experience is expected to drive significant improvements in **India's higher education landscape**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Justice Arun Mishra**, a former **Supreme Court judge**, has been appointed as the **Ombudsman and Ethics Officer** of the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**. This appointment marks a significant milestone in his career, leveraging his **legal expertise** and **leadership experience** to ensure **ethical practices** and address **disputes** within the BCCI. ([Click here to read article](#))

Defence News

- **DRDO** unveiled the **HIMKAVACH** multi-layer clothing system, designed to improve military personnel's efficiency in extreme cold, tested between **+20°C to -60°C**. It offers **insulation, breathability, and moisture protection**, with outer layers repelling **water** and **wind**, and inner layers trapping **heat**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India and the U.S. will collaborate on the **co-production of sonobuoys** to enhance the **Indian Navy's** submarine detection capabilities. The **final assembly** of U.S.-specification sonobuoys will take place in India, with production set to begin by **2027**. The partnership involves **Ultra Maritime** and **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)**, boosting India's **undersea warfare** capabilities. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India successfully conducted field trials of the **Nag Mk 2 Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM)** at **Pokhran Field Firing Range**, Rajasthan. Developed by **DRDO**, the missile is part of India's **Integrated Missile Development Program** and enhances the **Indian Army's anti-tank warfare** capabilities. The **Nag Mk 2** features **infrared** and **fire-and-forget** technology, making it a **precise** and **versatile** weapon system. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 13, 2025**, the Indian Navy's **second Multi-Purpose Vessel (MPV), 'Utkarsh'**, was launched at **L&T Shipyard**, Kattupalli, Chennai. The event, attended by **Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh**, marks a significant step in **India's indigenous shipbuilding** and **self-reliance in defense manufacturing**. The vessel is designed for a **multi-dimensional role**, reflecting its name, meaning "Superior in Conduct." ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Indian Armed Forces** are conducting **Exercise Devil Strike** from **January 16 to 19, 2025**, under the leadership of the **Indian Army**. The exercise aims to boost **combat**

readiness by simulating high-intensity combat operations, featuring **advanced strategies** and **innovative combat techniques**. It will test **synchronization** between various military branches, ensuring a coordinated response to external threats and strengthening **national security**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- On **January 17, 2025**, the **Indian Navy** celebrated the '**Year of Naval Civilians**' at the **Dr DS Kothari Auditorium**, New Delhi. The event, attended by **Raksha Mantri**, honored the crucial contributions of **Naval Civilians** in supporting the Navy's operations. It showcased their **dedication, innovation, and service** through **exhibitions, performances, and awards**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Awards and Recognitions

- The **West Bengal Film Journalists Association (WBFJA)** hosted its annual awards on **January 13, 2025**, at **Priya Cinema, Kolkata**. Renowned filmmaker **Aparna Sen** received the '**Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award**'. The event celebrated **Bengali cinema** with awards in categories like **Best Film, Best Actor, and Best Director**, and paid tribute to **Raj Kapoor** on his **birth centenary** with a thematic tribute to the **circus industry**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Renowned **mridangist T.V. Gopalakrishnan** will receive the **RK Srikantan Trust Award** at the **Sankranti Music Fest** for his exceptional contributions to **Indian classical music**. Born on **June 11, 1932**, in **Kerala**, he began playing mridangam at age four and has trained under **Chembai Vaidyanatha Bhagavathar**. A versatile artist, he excels in **Carnatic** and **Hindustani vocals, mridangam, and violin**, earning prestigious awards like the **Padma Bhushan (2012)** and **Sangeetha Kalanidhi (2014)**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Summits and Conferences News

- India has joined the **UN Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics (UN-CEBD)**, boosting its role in global statistical frameworks. This membership highlights India's focus on using **Big Data** and **technology** for **evidence-based policymaking**, especially to improve official statistics and track **SDGs**. It aligns with efforts to modernize statistical processes using **satellite imagery, IoT, and machine learning** for real-time insights. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India will host the **28th CSPOC** in **January 2026**, announced by **Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla** during the CSPOC Standing Committee Meeting in **Guernsey**. The conference will focus on the integration of **artificial intelligence (AI)** and **social media** into **parliamentary processes**, showcasing India's commitment to **technological advancement** and **modern governance**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Sports News

- **Devajit Saikia** was elected **Secretary** and **Prabhtej Singh Bhatia** as **Treasurer** of the **BCCI** during the **Special General Meeting (SGM)** on **January 12, 2025**, following the resignation of **Jay Shah** and **Ashish Shelar**. Their election was **unopposed**, with no ballot required, and formalized by **A.K. Joti**, the BCCI election officer. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Shreyas Iyer** has been appointed **captain** of **Punjab Kings** for the **IPL 2025** season. The announcement was made during a segment on **'Bigg Boss'**, where Iyer was joined by teammates **Yuzvendra Chahal** and **Shashank Singh**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Anju Bobby George**, a **2003 World Championships bronze medalist**, was appointed **Chairperson** of the **Athletics Federation of India (AFI) Athletes Commission**. The commission includes prominent retired athletes, with **Neeraj Chopra**, a **two-time Olympic medalist**, as a key male member. It reflects progress towards **gender parity**, with **six women** out of **nine members**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The inaugural **Kho Kho World Cup** began on **January 13, 2025**, at the **Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium** in **New Delhi**, with **23 nations** participating. The opening ceremony featured **cultural performances** and the unveiling of the **World Cup trophy**, marking a significant step in promoting **Kho Kho**, an indigenous Indian sport, on the international stage. ([Click here to read article](#))
- For **December 2024**, **Jasprit Bumrah** (India) and **Annabel Sutherland** (Australia) were awarded the **ICC Men's and Women's Players of the Month** titles, recognizing their exceptional performances in international cricket. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Smriti Mandhana** set a record for the **fastest century by an Indian** in women's ODIs during the 3rd ODI against **Ireland Women** at **Rajkot**. Leading in **Harmanpreet Kaur's** absence, Mandhana's performance, along with a strong partnership with **Pratika Rawal**, bolstered India's dominant display in the series. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Indian grandmaster **Arjun Erigaisi** triumphed in **Titled Tuesday** by defeating **World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen** and **World No. 2 Fabiano Caruana**. Erigaisi scored **10 points** out of **11 rounds**, showcasing his dominance in the competition. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **PV Sindhu**, the two-time **Olympic medallist**, has entered a multi-year partnership with **PUMA India**, marking the brand's official entry into the **badminton** domain. This collaboration aims to tap into the sport's growing popularity, with a fan base of **57 million** in India. PUMA seeks to strengthen its presence in India's expanding **sports market**, while Sindhu continues to inspire millions with her achievements. ([Click here to read article](#))

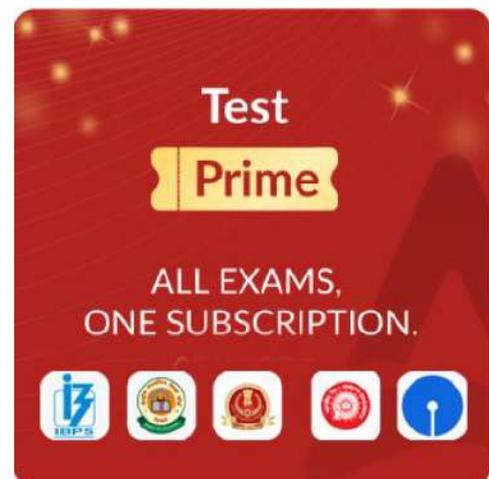
- On **January 17, 2025**, **Novak Djokovic** broke a tie with **Roger Federer** for the most **Grand Slam matches played** in tennis history, achieving his **430th match** during the second round of the **Australian Open**. Djokovic won a challenging match against **Jaime Faria**, further solidifying his legacy as one of tennis' greatest players. ([Click here to read article](#))

Schemes and Committees News

- The **Ministry of Rural Development** has approved **56 new Watershed Development Projects** under the **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY)**, totaling **₹700 crore**. The projects aim to boost **agricultural productivity**, combat **land degradation**, and enhance **climate resilience** in **10 states**, including **Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka**, and others. ([Click here to read article](#))

Science and Technology News

- The **Western Ghats** has been identified as a key hotspot for threatened **freshwater species** in the **IUCN Red List** assessment. The study reveals that **one-quarter** of global freshwater species face high extinction risk, with the Western Ghats being crucial for **biodiversity conservation**. The assessment covers **23,496 species**, including **crustaceans, fishes, and odonates**, highlighting key **extinction risks and threats**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **ISRO** achieved a major milestone in space docking with the **SpaDeX** mission, testing spacecraft **rendezvous, docking, and undocking** technologies. On **January 12, 2025**, ISRO successfully brought **SDX01 (Chaser)** and **SDX02 (Target)** within **3 meters** of each other. This positions India as the **4th country** to accomplish this complex maneuver, following the **USA, Russia, and China**. ([Click here to read article](#))



- India's private space sector achieved a milestone with **Pixxel** and **Digantara** launching satellites aboard a **SpaceX rocket**. **Pixxel** deployed **hyperspectral imaging satellites** to monitor agriculture, defense, and climate, with **high-resolution imagery** for vegetation, water, and atmospheric conditions. Their first "**Firefly**" satellites offer six times the resolution of standard systems, and the company plans further expansion. **Digantara** launched the **SCOT satellite**, a **commercial tracker** for space objects as small as 5 cm in **Low Earth Orbit (LEO)**, addressing space debris and congestion. Both missions focus on **sustainability** and **space safety**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, has approved the construction of a **third launchpad** at **ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Centre** in **Sriharikota**, Andhra Pradesh, with an investment of **₹3,985 crore**. This project aims to enhance **India's space transportation capabilities**, supporting **Next Generation Launch Vehicles (NGLVs)** and future **human spaceflight missions**, including an **Indian crewed lunar landing by 2040**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- ISRO** achieved a milestone in **space agriculture** by successfully germinating **black-eyed pea (lobia)** seeds aboard its **Compact Research Module for Orbital Plant Studies (CROPS)**. The **CROPS-1 Mission** demonstrated plant growth in a spacecraft's controlled environment, simulating Earth-like conditions. This breakthrough highlights the potential for sustainable **food sources** for **long-duration space missions**, addressing astronauts' **nutritional and psychological needs**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Blue Origin** successfully launched its **New Glenn rocket** on its maiden test flight, named after **John Glenn**, the first American to orbit Earth. The **320-foot rocket** carried a **prototype satellite** into orbit during a **six-hour mission**, with the second stage reaching a **high orbit** to minimize space debris. This milestone marks Blue Origin's entry into competitive **space exploration** alongside **SpaceX** and **NASA**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD)**, also called "**Zombie Deer Disease**", is spreading among wildlife like **deer**, **moose**, and **elk**. While concerns about its transmission to humans have arisen, especially in **hunters** consuming infected meat, the evidence linking CWD to **Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD)** in humans remains inconclusive. Further research is needed to assess the actual risk of human transmission. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Zoological Survey of India (ZSI)** has discovered a new species of **Indo-Burmese pangolin**, **Manis indoburmanica**,

which diverged from the **Chinese pangolin** around **3.4 million years ago**. Using advanced **genetic tools** to analyze mitochondrial genomes, this groundbreaking find sheds light on the species' unique evolutionary history and underscores its importance for **pangolin conservation** and **biodiversity** in the Indo-Burma region, a global biodiversity hotspot. ([Click here to read article](#))

Important Days News

- The **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**, established in **1875**, celebrates its **150th anniversary** on **January 15, 2025**. It remains crucial in **weather forecasting**, **disaster preparedness**, **cyclone warnings**, **earthquake monitoring**, and studying **atmospheric changes**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- National Youth Day** is celebrated on **January 12** to honor the birth anniversary of **Swami Vivekananda**, recognizing his contributions to **spiritual growth**, **national integration**, and **youth empowerment**. Declared in **1984** by the **Government of India**, the day encourages youth to follow his ideals for a **progressive, united, and self-reliant India**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Indian Army Day**, celebrated on **January 15** every year, honors the foundation of the **Indian Army** and the transfer of power to Indian leadership. It pays tribute to the **valor** and **sacrifices** of soldiers, promoting **patriotism** and **unity**. The day emphasizes India's **military independence** and commitment to **self-reliance** in defense matters. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Armed Forces Veterans' Day**, observed annually on **January 14**, honors the sacrifices and service of India's armed forces veterans. It fosters solidarity with the families of the bravehearts who served the nation and highlights the connection between veterans and current personnel. The day also focuses on addressing the welfare and concerns of veterans. ([Click here to read article](#))

Obituaries News

- David Lynch**, the renowned **Hollywood director** and **writer**, passed away at **78**. A visionary of modern cinema, Lynch revolutionized film with his surreal style, exploring the darker aspects of human nature and the subconscious. His works, notably in the **horror** and **psychological thriller** genres, left a lasting impact. Lynch, famous for creating **Twin Peaks**, earned four **Academy Award nominations** and a **Palme d'Or** over a career spanning six decades. ([Click here to read article](#))

Static Takeaways

Sr. No	Org./Bank/Country/States	Details Static
1	RBI	Governor - Sanjay Malhotra Head Office - Mumbai
2	BCCI	Secretary - Devjit Saikia
3	Bank of Baroda	MD - Debadatta Chand HQ - Vadodara, Gujarat
4	Internal Monetary Fund	President - Kristalina Georgieva HQ - Washington D.C.
5	FICCI	Chairman - Harshavardhan Agarwal
6	DRDO	DG - Sr. Subrata Rakshit
7	ISRO	Chairman - V. Narayanan
8	NASA	Administrator - Bill Nelson
9	Blue Origin	CEO - Dave Limp
10	IMD	DG - Mrutyunjay Mohapatra
11	Shriram Housing Finance	Chairperson - Renu Munjal
12	NPCI	Non Executive Chairman - Ajay Kumar Chuadhary
13	Venezuela	President - Nicolas Maduro Capital - Caracas
14	Spain	President - Pedro Sanchez Capital - Madrid
15	China	President - Xi Jinping Capital - Beijing
16	Gujarat	Governor - Acharya Devvrat CM - Bhupendra Patel Capital - Gandhinagar
17	Uttar Pradesh	Governor - Anandiben Patel CM - Yogi Adityanath Capital - Lucknow
18	Manipur	Governor - Ajay Kumar Bhalla CM - Biren Singh Capital - Imphal
19	Odisha	Governor - Hari Babu Khambhupati CM - Mohan Charan Majhi Capital - Bhubnehwar
20	Chattisgarh	Governor - Ramen Deka CM - Vishnu Deo Sai Capital - Raipur
21	Jammu and Kashmir	L. Governor - Manoj Jha CM - Umar Abdullah Capital - Sri Nagar