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India, Sri Lanka, and Maldives Conducts 17th Trilateral Coast Guard Exercise 'DOSTI 17' in Maldives

- On 17 January 2026, the 17th edition of the biennial trilateral Coast Guard exercise 'DOSTI 17' involving the Indian Coast Guard (ICG), Sri Lanka Coast Guard (SLCG), and the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF) Coast Guard, commenced in Male, Maldives. The biennial maritime exercise was held from 17 to 19 January 2026.
- India is represented by a four-member ICG delegation led by Director General (DG) Paramesh Sivamani, while Sri Lanka is represented by Admiral Rohan Joseph, DG of the SLCG.
- Phases: The harbour phase was held from 17–19 January 2026 and was followed by an operational sea phase.
- The exercise supports India's SAGAR (Security And Growth for All in the Region) vision and Neighbourhood First policy by fostering regional maritime cooperation in the Indian Ocean Region.



Punjab Agricultural University becomes the only Indian state agricultural university to join the BRICS Network University

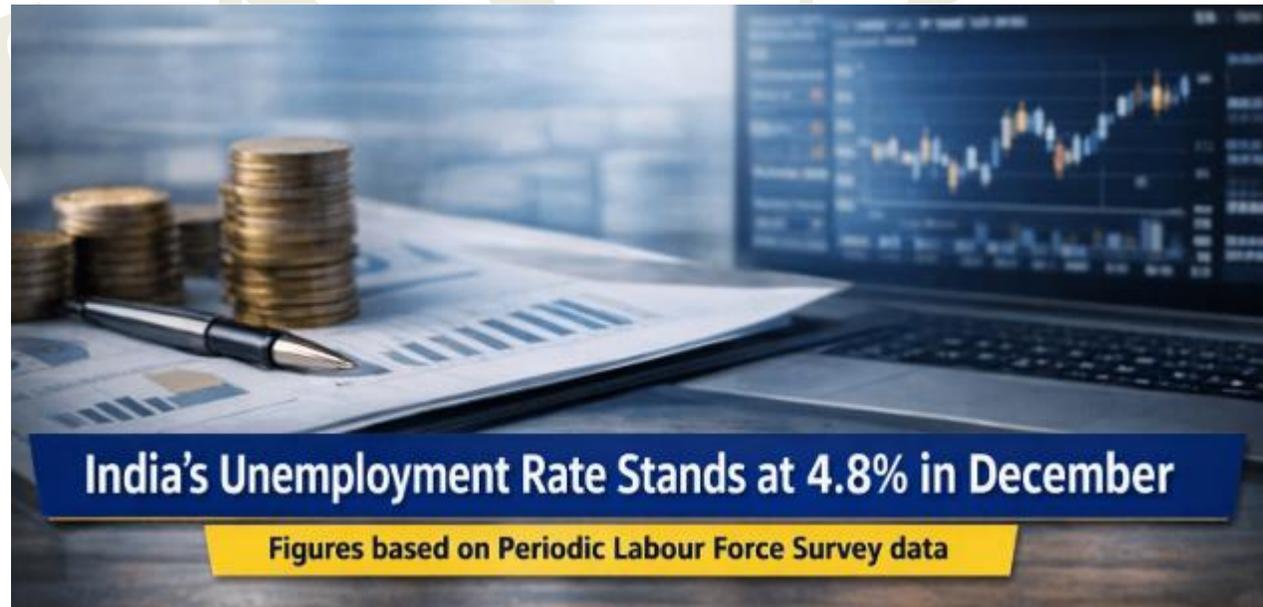
- Punjab Agricultural University in Ludhiana has become the only agricultural institution from India to be inducted into the prestigious BRICS network, marking a major global recognition of the country's agricultural research and academic capacity.
- At the same time, the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) in Delhi was also selected for the BRICS Network University in its category. However, PAU stands out because it is the only state agricultural university included from India.
- The collaboration will focus on climate resilient agriculture, food security, soil health, and water conservation. PAU researchers will work with international partners to develop scalable farming solutions for developing economies.
- The BRICS International Governing Board approved the expansion of the BRICS Network University in May 2025. Many new areas with many topics were created, including one that was focused on sustainable farming and food security.

Election Commission to host India International Conference on Democracy and Election Management 2026

- The Election Commission of India (ECI) will host the first India International Conference on Democracy and Election Management (IICDEM) 2026 from January 21-23, 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.
- It was organized by the India International Institute of Democracy and Election Management (IIIDEM) under the aegis of ECI. Theme of this conference is “Democracy for an inclusive, peaceful, resilient and sustainable world”.
- IICDEM 2026 is positioned as the largest international electoral conference hosted by India, promoting India as a global hub for democratic governance and election management.
- The Council of Member States of International IDEA has elected India as the Institute’s Chair for 2026. India assumed the annual Chairship from the 2025 Chair, Switzerland, at a meeting of the Council in Stockholm, Sweden on 3 December 2025.

India's Unemployment Rate Stable at 4.8% in December

- India's unemployment rate for individuals aged 15 years and above remained broadly stable at 4.8% in December 2025, showing only a marginal rise from 4.7% in November, according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).
- Rural unemployment remained unchanged at about 3.9%, indicating stable job conditions in non-urban areas.
- Urban unemployment rose modestly to around 6.7% from 6.5% the previous month, reflecting continued labour market pressures in cities.
- The jobless rate among urban females moderated slightly, while rural male unemployment remained low and stable.



Union Minister Jitendra Singh Launches India's First Open-Sea Marine Fish Farming Project in A & N Islands

- On 13 January 2026, Union Minister of State(MoS) (Independent Charge, IC) Jitendra Singh, Ministry of Science and Technology (MoS&T), launched India's first open-sea Marine Fish Farming project (MFFP) in the Andaman Sea, at North Bay, Sri Vijaya Puram, Andaman and Nicobar(A&N) Islands.
- It is a pilot project designed to promote India's Blue Economy by utilizing ocean resources for sustainable development and creating livelihood opportunities.



Vidarbha won its first Vijay Hazare Trophy title with a magnificent 38-run victory over Saurashtra

- Vidarbha scripted a landmark moment in Indian domestic cricket by winning their first “Vijay Hazare Trophy” title with a commanding 38-run victory over two-time champions “Saurashtra”.
- The final, played at the BCCI Centre of Excellence in Bengaluru, marked the culmination of a consistent campaign built on depth in batting and disciplined bowling.
- In 2025-26 tournament Aman Mokhande from Vidarbha emerged as the player of the series and he also scored most runs in this tournament. Ankur Panwar from Saurashtra team became the highest wicket taker of this tournament.
- The 2025–26 Vijay Hazare Trophy was the 33rd edition of the Vijay Hazare Trophy, an annual List A tournament in India. The tournament took place from 24 December 2025 to 18 January 2026 and featured all 38 teams from the Ranji Trophy.
- Karnataka were the defending champions.



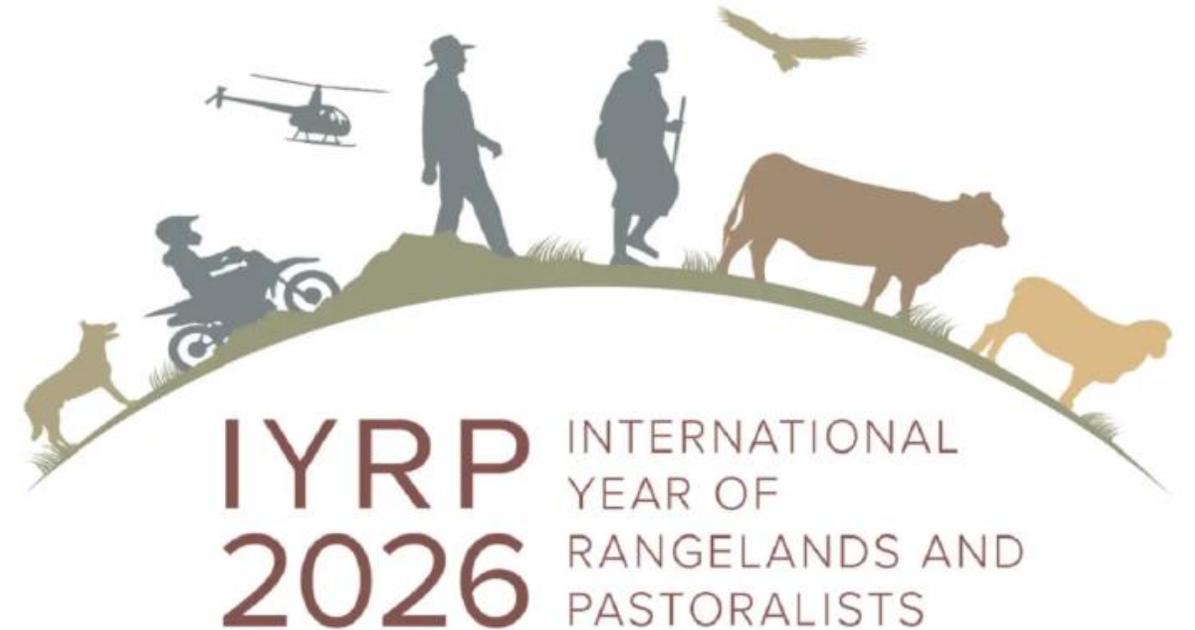
Union Minister Bhupender Yadav Launches Second Nationwide Dolphin Survey in Bijnor, UP

- In January 2026, Union Minister Bhupender Yadav, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), launched the second nationwide range-wide estimation of riverine and estuarine dolphins under Project Dolphin, flagged off from Bijnor in Uttar Pradesh (UP).
- The programme builds on the results of India's first nationwide dolphin population survey conducted during 2021–23.
- The programme is led by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) in collaboration with State Forest Departments and partner conservation organizations, including World Wildlife Fund(WWF) India, Aaranyak, and the Wildlife Trust of India (WTI).
- Previous Survey Data (2021–23): Total Dolphins: 6,327 riverine dolphins recorded nationwide. Distribution: Highest populations in (UP) and Bihar, followed by West Bengal(WB) and Assam.



UN General Assembly Proclaims 2026 as International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists

- The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) declared 2026 as the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP 2026) during its 76th session held in New York, USA.
- The UNGA resolution for IYRP was adopted on 28 February 2022, initiated by Mongolia and supported by 60 UN Member States.
- IYRP 2026 aims to raise global awareness about the importance of rangelands and pastoralist communities and promote sustainable management practices and secure livelihoods.
- Key objectives of IYRP 2026 include sharing traditional pastoralist knowledge, encouraging innovation, building partnerships, and supporting policy frameworks for sustainable rangelands.
- Rangelands cover nearly 50% of Earth's land surface and support over 2 billion people and more than 50% of the world's livestock.
- These ecosystems are crucial for biodiversity conservation, ecosystem regulation, and enhancing climate resilience, making them vital for global environmental sustainability.



World Bank Approves USD286 Million for West Bengal Healthcare

- In January 2026, The World Bank (WB) approved USD286 million financing for the West Bengal Health System Reform Program (WBHSRP), targeting improved quality of life and life expectancy for over 90 million people through equitable access to quality healthcare services.
- The WB approved WBHSRP will support delivery of personalized healthcare services across the state for people over 30 years.
- The International Bank of Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) approved a loan with a maturity of 16.5 years, including a grace period of 3 years.
- West Bengal has made sustainable health gains in the past 20 years, with Infant Mortality Rates (IMR) declining from 32 deaths per 1000 births in 2018 to 2012 to 19 deaths in 2018 to 2020.



National Disaster Response Force Raising Day 2025 – January 19

- National Disaster Response Force (NDRF) Raising Day is observed annually across India on January 19 to mark the founding of the NDRF, a special force under the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA).
- The 20th Raising Day ceremony of the NDRF was held at the 10th Battalion of NDRF located in Kondapavuluru, Krishna District, Andhra Pradesh (AP) with Union Minister, Amit Shah, MHA as the Chief Guest.
- The NDRF, is a ‘Specialist Force’ to handle emergencies, trained to respond to both natural disasters like floods, cyclones, and earthquakes, and man-made disasters like chemical spills and terrorist attacks.

Formation of NDRF:

- India experienced a series of devastating natural disasters between 1990 and 2004, which led to the creation of the Disaster Management (DM) Act on December 26, 2005.
- The Act paved the way for the establishment of the NDRF under Section 44, with the force being officially raised on January 19, 2006, to become India’s premier disaster response unit.
- Since then, NDRF Raising Day has been observed annually on January 19. This year marks the observance of 20th NDRF Raising Day.



Bagurumba dance performed by 10,000 Bodo dancers in Assam

- India's rich cultural diversity has witnessed a historic moment as the Prime Minister of India participated in Bagurumba Dwhou 2026 on 17th January, 2026 at Sarusajai Stadium.
- On this occasion, more than 10,000 Bodo artists performed the iconic Bagurumba dance in a single, synchronized presentation. Moreover, participants have represented 81 Legislative Assembly Constituencies from 23 districts of Assam, making it one of the largest traditional dance performances in the state.
- This landmark event celebrated the vibrant heritage of the Bodo community, one of the largest indigenous communities of Assam.
- Bagurumba is one of the most graceful folk dances of the Bodo community. The dancers move gently, imitating butterflies, birds, leaves, and flowers.
- The term "Bagurumba" comes from two Bodo words: "Bagu" meaning bird "Rumba" meaning dance Together, it means "Dance of Birds". Due to its soft movements, people also call it the "Butterfly Dance".



Praveen Vashista Appointed Vigilance Commissioner in CVC

- President of India has appointed Shri Praveen Vashista, a 1991-batch IPS officer, as Vigilance Commissioner in the Central Vigilance Commission. He took oath on 16 January 2026.
- Shri Praveen Vashista was appointed through a Presidential warrant dated December 12, 2025, exercising powers under Section 4(1) of the CVC Act, 2003. He made and subscribed to his oath of office on January 16, 2026, before the Central Vigilance Commission.
- Shri Praveen Vashista took oath before the Central Vigilance Commissioner, who was authorised by the President of India under Section 5(3) of the CVC Act, 2003.
- Currently, Shri Praveen Kumar Srivastava is serving as Central Vigilance Commissioner, with A S Rajeev appointed as Vigilance Commissioner On February 9th, 2024 & Praveen Vashista appointed On December 12, 2025.

Central Vigilance Commission:

- The Central Vigilance Commission is a statutory body under the CVC Act, 2003.
- The Commission consists of one Central Vigilance Commissioner and two Vigilance Commissioners.
- Vigilance Commissioners are appointed by the President of India.
- The tenure is four years or up to the age of 65 years, whichever is earlier.

Andhra Pradesh's Kakinada will host the world's largest green ammonia project

- Andhra Pradesh will host the world's largest green ammonia project at Kakinada, with AM Green investing \$10 billion to build 1.5 MTPA capacity by 2030. The project supports India's first green ammonia exports and aligns with the National Green Hydrogen Mission.
- The project is being developed by AM Green through the conversion of an existing ammonia-urea complex at Kakinada. With a total planned investment of \$10 billion, the facility will have a final production capacity of 1.5 million tonnes per annum (MTPA).
- Phased commissioning is planned, with 0.5 MTPA by 2027, 1.0 MTPA by 2028, and full capacity by 2030, making it the largest such project globally.
- Green ammonia is emerging as a critical fuel in the global energy transition. It can be used as a clean shipping fuel, for power generation, and as a carrier for green hydrogen in international trade.
- Green ammonia is produced using renewable electricity and green hydrogen, eliminating carbon emissions associated with conventional ammonia production.

