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HEADLINES

- ❖ Supreme Court Sets Uniform Legal Definition for Aravalli Hills and Range
- ❖ The two-day PESA Mahotsav organized in Visakhapatnam on 23 and 24 December, 2025
- ❖ National Farmers' Day 2025: 23 December
- ❖ India announced \$450 million reconstruction package for cyclone-hit Sri Lanka
- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu gave the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar 2025 in New Delhi
- ❖ Vinod Kumar Shukla passed away in Raipur on 23 December 2025
- ❖ National Consumer Day: 24 December
- ❖ BlueBird Block-2 communication satellite successfully launched by ISRO from Sriharikota using the LVM3-M6 rocket
- ❖ RBI plans to inject around ₹3 trillion into banking system through open market operations and a foreign exchange swap
- ❖ National Good Governance Day: 25 December

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- ❖ **ADB Approves \$650 Million Loan to Boost Rooftop Solar Adoption Under PM Surya Ghar Yojana in India**
- ❖ **RBI to infuse ₹3 trillion liquidity via OMOs, buy-sell swap after rupee defence**
- ❖ **PayNearby Gets NPCI TPAP License, Launches 'PayNearby Saathi' App with BHASHINI Support**
- ❖ **SBI Life Insurance Launches 'New Smart Samriddhi' Savings Plan with Guaranteed Returns and Life Cover**

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Supreme Court Sets Uniform Legal Definition for Aravalli Hills and Range

- The Supreme Court has laid down a **uniform legal definition** for the Aravalli Hills and the Aravalli Range.
- These definitions were included in a **Supreme Court judgment dated November 20, 2025**.
- The Court adopted the recommendations of a committee constituted following its **May 2024 order**.
- An **Aravalli Hill** is defined as any landform rising **100 metres or more** above the surrounding local level, including slopes and connected features.
- The **Aravalli Range** is defined as a group of **two or more such hills within 500 metres** of each other, including interconnecting areas identified through scientific mapping.
- The committee was chaired by the **Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change**, with representatives from Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, Gujarat and national expert bodies.
- A uniform definition was required to address **regulatory inconsistencies** that enabled unauthorised mining and environmental degradation.
- The Court directed the MoEFCC to prepare a **Sustainable Mining Management Plan** through the Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE).
- Until the plan is finalised, **no new mining leases** will be granted, and a large share (about **75–99%**) of the Aravalli region will remain protected.



The two-day PESA Mahotsav organized in Visakhapatnam on 23 and 24 December, 2025

- On 23 December, the two-day PESA Mahotsav has been commenced by the Ministry of Panchayati Raj in Visakhapatnam to mark the anniversary of the Panchayats (Extension to Scheduled Areas) Act, 1996.
- The event organised to spread awareness about the PESA Act and to strengthen Gram Sabha-led governance in Scheduled Areas.
- The PESA Act is aimed at empowering tribal communities by extending Panchayati Raj institutions to Scheduled Areas.
- The Mahotsav is focused on enhancing the capacity of Gram Panchayats and reinforcing the constitutional role of Gram Sabhas.
- The event is used as a platform to showcase tribal culture and traditional governance practices.
- The PESA Mahotsav mascot “Krishna Jinka” was unveiled during the inaugural programme.
- Around 1,500 participants from 10 states took part in sports events, traditional games and cultural programmes.



National Farmers' Day 2025: 23 December

- National Farmers' Day is observed on 23 December across the country to honour the contributions of farmers to national development.
- The day is observed to mark the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Chaudhary Charan Singh.
- Chaudhary Charan Singh is remembered for his lifelong advocacy for farmers' welfare and rural development.
- Tributes were paid to Chaudhary Charan Singh by Union Agriculture and Farmer Welfare Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan.
- The relevance of Chaudhary Charan Singh's ideas in building a self-reliant India was highlighted by the agriculture minister.
- Farmers were acknowledged as the backbone of the nation for their resilience and tireless efforts.
- Several government initiatives have been launched to ensure farmers' socio-economic upliftment and sustainable agriculture.
- Key schemes include Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi, Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Pradhan Mantri Kisan Maandhan Yojana.
- India's agricultural sector, employing nearly half of the population, continues to remain a cornerstone of the national economy.



India announced \$450 million reconstruction package for cyclone-hit Sri Lanka

- A reconstruction package worth 450 million dollars has been announced by India for cyclone-affected regions of Sri Lanka.
- The announcement was made by External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar during his visit to Colombo on 23 December.
- The package includes a 350 million dollar concessionary line of credit and 100 million dollars in grants.
- The assistance is intended to support rehabilitation of road, railway and bridge connectivity damaged by Cyclone Ditwah.
- Support will also be provided for the construction of fully destroyed and partially damaged houses.
- India's support was stated to be in line with the India's neighbourhood first and Mahasagar policies.
- Under Operation Sagar Bandhu, India delivered relief material and medical supplies to Sri Lanka after the cyclone.
- India assured continued support through tourism promotion and encouragement of foreign investment in Sri Lanka.



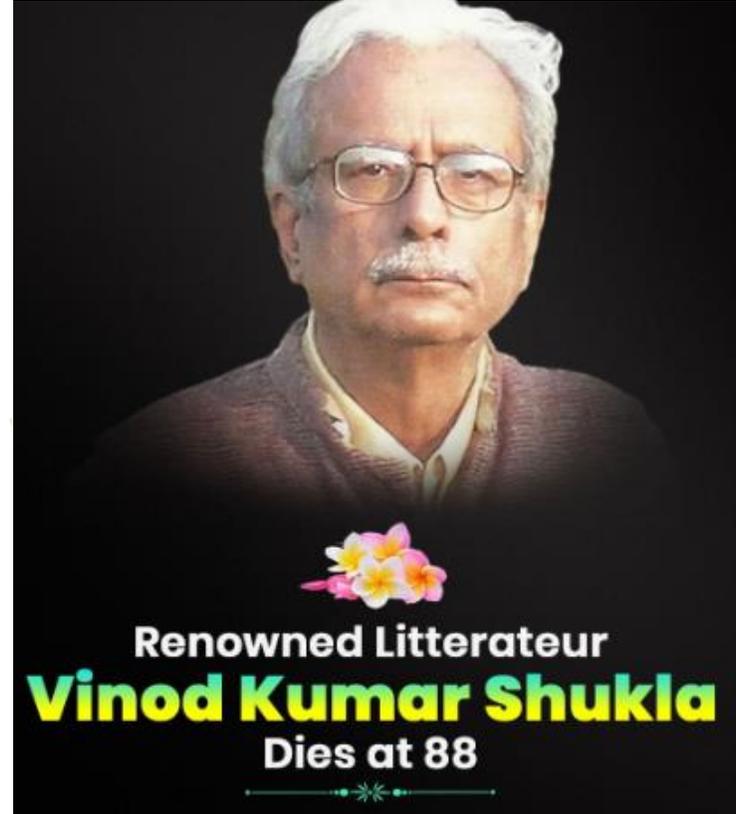
President Droupadi Murmu gave the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar 2025 in New Delhi

- Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar is the nation's highest recognition for exceptional contributions in the fields of science, technology, and innovation.
- 2025 edition was the second edition of Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar.
- There were four categories-Vigyan Ratna, Vigyan Shree, Vigyan Yuva–Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar and Vigyan Team.
- Vigyan Ratna award has been posthumously given to Padma Vibhushan awardee Prof. Jayant Vishnu Narlikar.
- Prof. Jayant Vishnu Narlikar is an Indian astrophysicist and cosmologist, who developed the Hoyle–Narlikar theory to unify gravitation and matter creation.
- It provided a framework for a steady-state universe in the 1960s.
- Eight scientists have been honoured with the Vigyan Shree award.
- These included Dr Yusuf Mohammad Seikh, Jayan N and Prof. Mahan Maharaj.
- Fourteen young scientists were awarded the Vigyan Yuva–Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar award.
- These included Ankur Garg of ISRO, Prof Amit Kumar Agarwal of IIT Kanpur, Prof. Arkaprava Basu of IISc Bengaluru.
- The Vigyan Team award has been given to Team Aroma Mission of CSIR.
- Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar honours contributions of scientists, technologists and innovators.
- It recognises individuals as well as teams working across science and technology and technology-led innovations.



Vinod Kumar Shukla passed away in Raipur on 23 December 2025

- Vinod Kumar Shukla was a renowned litterateur and Jnanpith Award awardee.
- He was around 88 years old. He was recently awarded Jnanpith Award.
- For his novel, Deewar Mein Ek Khidki, he was awarded Sahitya Akademi Award.
- He earned wide acclaim for his poetry collection, Lagbhag Jai Hind, and the novel, Naukar Ki Kameez.
- He had been involved in literary writing for the past fifty years.
- He became 1st Indian author, who got the PEN/Nabokov Award for Achievement in International Literature in 2023.



National Consumer Day: 24 December

- National Consumer Day is celebrated every year on 24th December to highlight the importance of the consumer movement and spread awareness about the rights and responsibilities of every consumer.
- This year's theme for National Consumer Day is “Efficient and Speedy Disposal through Digital Justice.”
- It was on this day in 1986 the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, received the President's assent.
- Consumer Protection Act, 1986 was replaced by Consumer Protection Act 2019 from 20th July 2020.
- The Central Consumer Protection Authority was set up on 24 July 2020 under the Consumer Protection Act, 2019.
- It serves as a regulatory body to safeguard the interests of consumers as a collective.
- e-Jagriti was launched on 1 January 2025. It is now a significant digital platform for consumer grievance redressal in India.



BlueBird Block-2 communication satellite successfully launched by ISRO from Sriharikota using the LVM3-M6 rocket

- ISRO was successful in accurately inserting the satellite into its planned Low Earth Orbit.
- The mission to launch BlueBird Block-2 communication satellite was 6th operational flight of Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3) launch vehicle of India.
- LVM3 (previously referred as the GSLV Mk III) is the most powerful rocket developed by ISRO to date.
- BlueBird Block-2 weighed around 6,100 kg and became the heaviest payload ever carried to Low Earth Orbit by the LVM3.
- BlueBird Block-2 was developed by US-based company AST SpaceMobile. It is part of a next-generation satellite constellation.
- The next-generation satellite constellation will provide space-based cellular broadband services.
- BlueBird Block-2, heaviest commercial satellite ever launched, arrived in India from the United States on October 19.



RBI plans to inject around ₹3 trillion into banking system through open market operations and a foreign exchange swap

- RBI will purchase government securities worth ₹2 trillion through open market operations.
- This will be carried out in four equal tranches of ₹50,000 crore each on December 29, January 5, January 12 and January 22.
- On 13 January, RBI will carry out a three-year USD/INR buy-sell swap of \$10 billion.
- RBI recently carried out intervention in the foreign exchange market.
- It sold dollars to curb volatility in the rupee. As per experts, this currency market intervention had tightened rupee liquidity.
- So far in December, RBI has already injected about ₹1.45 trillion of liquidity through bond purchases and foreign exchange swaps.
- In the 1st half of this calendar year, RBI injected around ₹9.5 trillion into the banking system.
- This was done through open market purchases, long-term repo operations, and USD/INR buy-sell swaps.
- Open market operations are a monetary policy tool. RBI uses them to manage money supply and liquidity in economy.
- Open market operations involve buying and selling of government securities with commercial banks and financial institutions.
- Foreign exchange swap is a simultaneous purchase and sell of same amounts of one currency for another.



National Good Governance Day: 25 December

- National Good Governance Day is observed every year on 25 December.
- This day is observed to honor former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee on his birth anniversary.
- This day was established in 2014 to raise public awareness of government responsibility among Indian citizens.
- This day reminds us that governance is not only about administration, but also about making life better for every citizen.
- Good Governance Week (Sushasan Saptah) is observed every year from December 19 to 25.
- Atal Bihari Vajpayee served as India's Prime Minister for three terms.
- During his leadership, India conducted the Pokhran-II nuclear tests in 1998.
- In 2015, he was awarded the Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian honour.



ADB Approves \$650 Million Loan to Boost Rooftop Solar Adoption Under PM Surya Ghar Yojana in India

- **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** approved a **\$650 million policy-based loan** to support India's rooftop solar expansion, aiming to provide clean and affordable energy to 10 million households by 2027.
- The funding will back the government's flagship scheme Pradhan Mantri Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSGMBY), which promotes nationwide adoption of residential rooftop solar systems.
- Under PMSGMBY, households installing rooftop solar systems up to 3 kW will receive subsidies of 60% (up to 2 kW) and 40% (2–3 kW), along with access to collateral-free, low-interest loans.
- The program supports India's climate goals by targeting 30 GW rooftop solar capacity, reducing 28.8 million tonnes of CO₂ annually, creating green jobs, enhancing skills of 5,000 personnel (including 1,500 women), and strengthening the power sector.

About Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- **Founded** – 19 December 1966
- **Headquarters** – Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines
- **President** – Masato Kanda (replace Masatsugu Asakawa)
- **Member Countries** – 69 (Israel)



RBI to infuse ₹3 trillion liquidity via OMOs, buy-sell swap after rupee defence

- The RBI plans to inject around ₹3 trillion into the banking system through open market operations (OMO) and a foreign exchange (FX) swap.
- RBI will purchase government securities worth ₹2 trillion through OMOs.
- This purchase will happen in four equal tranches of ₹50,000 crore each on Dec 29, Jan 5, Jan 12, and Jan 22.
- On 13 January, RBI will carry out a three-year USD/INR buy-sell swap of \$10 billion.
- RBI recently intervened in the forex market by selling dollars to curb rupee volatility.
- Experts said this intervention tightened rupee liquidity.
- So far in December, RBI has already injected about ₹1.45 trillion through bond purchases and FX swaps.
- In the first half of this calendar year, RBI injected around ₹9.5 trillion into the banking system.
- The earlier injections were done through OMOs, long-term repo operations, and USD/INR buy-sell swaps.

About Open market operations (OMO):

- Buying and selling of government securities by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to regulate money supply and liquidity in the economy.

Types:

- Repo Operation (OMO Buying): RBI buys securities → Adds money to banks → Liquidity increases.
- Reverse Repo (OMO Selling): RBI sells securities → Banks give money to RBI → Liquidity decreases.



PayNearby Gets NPCI TPAP License, Launches 'PayNearby Saathi' App with BHASHINI Support

- PayNearby, an Indian fintech company, secured a Third-Party Application Provider (TPAP) license from NPCI.
- The license allows PayNearby to offer UPI services directly through its platform.
- After approval, PayNearby launched the 'PayNearby Saathi' app.
- The app integrates BHASHINI, a Government of India AI-based speech technology platform.
- BHASHINI enables users to speak in their preferred language, raise queries, and receive instant responses.



SBI Life Insurance Launches 'New Smart Samriddhi' Savings Plan with Guaranteed Returns and Life Cover

- SBI Life Insurance has launched 'New Smart Samriddhi', a life insurance savings plan.
- It is an individual, non-linked, non-participating plan.
- The plan offers a combination of guaranteed savings and life cover.
- It ensures financial security for the policyholder's family.
- The plan provides guaranteed annual additions of 5.5% or 6% on cumulative premiums, based on the premium amount.
- SBI Life Insurance is a joint venture (JV) between State Bank of India (SBI) and BNP Paribas (France).
- The MD & CEO of SBI Life Insurance is Amit Jhingran.

