

# IACE

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## **Olympic Medallist Saina Nehwal Announces Retirement from Competitive Badminton**

- **Saina Nehwal** announced her **retirement from competitive badminton** after being out of action for nearly two years due to chronic knee problems and cartilage degeneration.
- She made history by winning a bronze medal at the London 2012 Olympics, becoming the first Indian woman to medal in Olympic badminton.
- Nehwal also achieved World No. 1 ranking in 2015, won the BWF Super Series title (Indonesia Open 2009), Commonwealth Games gold (2010 & 2018), and World Championship silver (2015).
- Throughout her career, she overcame injuries, contributed to Indian badminton's global recognition, and received prestigious awards, Arjuna Award – 2009, Padma Shri – 2010, Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna – 2010, Padma Bhushan – 2016.

### **Recently Retired Players:**

- Alyssa Healy (Australia)- All forms of international cricket
- Jinson Johnson (Kerala, India) – Middle-distance Runner
- Usman Khawaja (Australia) – International cricket
- Doug Bracewell (New Zealand) – all forms of international cricket
- Mohit Sharma (India) – All Forms of Cricket
- Kane Williamson (New Zealand) – T20 Internationals



## **Hindustan Zinc Develops India's First Zinc Tailings Recycling Facility**

- Hindustan Zinc Limited (HZL), a Vedanta Group company and one of the world's largest integrated zinc producers, has awarded contracts to CIMIC Group companies Sedgman and Leighton Asia.
- The contracts are for developing India's first zinc tailings recycling facility at Rampura Agucha Mines (RAM) in Rajasthan, which is HZL's flagship mining site.
- Tailings are finely ground remnants left after the mineral extraction process.
- Although traditionally treated as waste, tailings often contain residual quantities of valuable metals that could not be recovered using earlier processing technologies.
- The one-of-its-kind facility at Rampura Agucha Mines will use advanced processing techniques to recover metals such as zinc and silver from previously processed tailings.
- This initiative aims to convert legacy mining waste into valuable resources, strengthening a circular economy approach in mining.
- According to the company, the project reinforces sustainable mining practices, improves resource efficiency, and reduces environmental impact by reprocessing waste material.



## **MSDE Signs Landmark MoU with World Economic Forum to Strengthen India's TVET and Skills Ecosystem**

- The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) signed a landmark MoU with the World Economic Forum (WEF) to deepen cooperation in skill development, vocational education, and training.
- The MoU aims to strengthen India's Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) ecosystem by aligning skilling initiatives with industry needs and global economic demands.
- Under the agreement, MSDE and WEF will launch a Skills Accelerator in India, a multi-stakeholder platform to identify, scale, and accelerate innovative skilling solutions and public-private partnerships.
- The collaboration builds on momentum from India's participation in the 55th WEF Annual Meeting held in Davos-Klosters, Switzerland (January 2025), marking a new phase in India-WEF cooperation.



## **Suryoday Small Finance Bank Collaborates with HyperVerge to Deploy Video KYC**

- Suryoday Small Finance Bank partnered with HyperVerge to deploy an AI-powered Video KYC (VKYC) solution for digital customer onboarding.
- The VKYC solution will help the bank strengthen regulatory compliance, improve operational efficiency, and enhance digital onboarding.
- The system ensures high-level data security, with customer personal data stored securely, accessible only by Suryoday Small Finance Bank.
- The VKYC solution enables the bank to scale onboarding volumes without adding operational overhead, while maintaining a high-quality customer experience.
- Each agent can complete nearly twice the number of agent-approved verification calls per day compared to previous workflows, improving conversions and productivity.
- HyperVerge collaborated closely with the bank to deliver a solution that onboards customers faster, improves success rates, and ensures regulatory adherence.
- The data privacy controls are strict, ensuring personal data security and reinforcing the bank's regulatory commitments.
- MD & CEO of Suryoday Small Finance Bank : Baskar Babu
- CEO of HyperVerge : Kedar Kulkarni



## Rajasthan to develop Alwar Biological Park in NCR region

# BIODIVERSITY PARK



- Rajasthan government has planned a new Biological Park in Alwar district, which will become the first biological park of its kind in the National Capital Region (NCR).
- The park will be developed in the Kati Ghati–Jaisamand area of Alwar and will cover around 100 hectares of land.
- 30% area will be developed as a zoo, while the remaining 70% will be maintained as green and natural forest space to ensure an eco-friendly environment.
- The biological park will house over 400 wild animals belonging to 81 species, including lions, cheetahs, Indian tiger species and African giraffes.
- A key attraction will be the availability of lion safari, tiger safari and herbivore safari at a single location, a first-of-its-kind feature in the NCR region.
- A high-tech animal rescue centre will be set up inside the park, developed on the lines of the Gir National Park rescue facility in Gujarat.

- The park will also include a modern veterinary hospital with advanced medical facilities and a dedicated team of wildlife doctors and forest officials.
- Animals will be sourced from around 25 zoos across India, with transfers to be carried out in a phased and regulated manner after approvals.
- A Detailed Project Report (DPR) has been prepared, and the project will commence after clearance from the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- The Alwar Biological Park is expected to boost wildlife conservation, eco-tourism and regional development while strengthening Rajasthan's position in sustainable tourism and biodiversity protection.

#### **About Rajasthan:**

- Capital: Jaipur
- Governor: Haribhau Bagade
- Chief Minister: Bajan Lal Sharma
- National Parks: Ranthambhore National Park, Sariska Tiger Reserve, Keoladeo National Park (Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary), Desert National Park
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Darrah Wildlife Sanctuary, Ranthambore Wildlife Sanctuary, Bassi Wildlife Sanctuary

## International Data Privacy Day 2026

- International Data Privacy Day observed on 28 January
- The day aims to raise awareness about the importance of protecting personal data and privacy in the digital age.
- International Data Privacy Day began in **2006**, initiated by the **Council of Europe** to mark the signing of Convention 108, the world's first binding data protection treaty.
- In this regard, India has also taken significant measures to protect the data of its citizens, as it is the world's 3rd-largest digitalised economy, with digital platforms embedded in daily economic and social life.
- The Government has highlighted recent legal reforms, including the DPDP Act, 2023, new DPDP Rules, 2025, and a ₹782 crore cybersecurity allocation in the Union Budget 2025-26.

INTERNATIONAL  
**DATA PRIVACY DAY**  
— 28 January —

# Microsoft Unveils Maia 200 AI Chip, Challenges Nvidia's Dominance

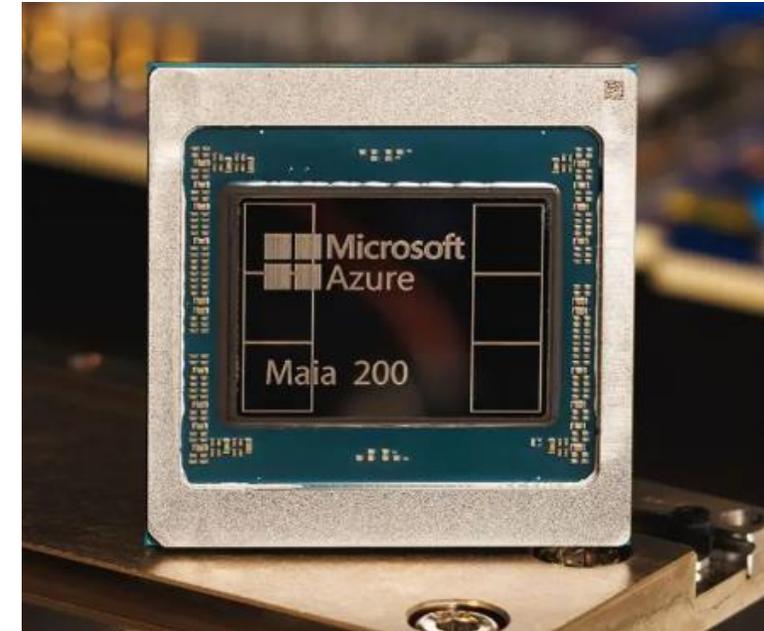
- Microsoft has rolled out its second-generation in-house AI chip, Maia 200, built on advanced 3-nanometer technology.
- Deployed in US data centres, the chip and its supporting software aim to reduce reliance on Nvidia by offering competitive performance, memory efficiency.

## What Is the Maia 200 AI Chip:

- The Maia 200 is Microsoft's second-generation custom-built artificial intelligence chip, following the original Maia introduced in 2023.
- The chip has gone live in a Microsoft data centre in Iowa, with plans for deployment in Arizona.
- Designed for large-scale AI workloads such as chatbots and generative AI systems, Maia 200 aims to improve performance, reduce costs, and enhance control over Microsoft's cloud-based AI infrastructure.

## Advanced Manufacturing and Technical Features

- Maia 200 is manufactured by **Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC)** using cutting-edge 3-nanometer chipmaking technology, similar to Nvidia's upcoming flagship Vera Rubin chips.
- It uses **high-bandwidth memory (HBM)**, though from an older generation than Nvidia's latest designs.
- A key differentiator is the chip's large **SRAM (Static Random Access Memory)** capacity, which boosts speed and efficiency when handling large volumes of AI queries simultaneously.



## **France Moves Bill to Ban social media for Under-15s to Protect Mental Health**

- France has taken a decisive step to regulate children's digital exposure.
- The country's National Assembly has approved legislation to ban children under the age of 15 from accessing social media platforms.
- The move reflects growing concerns over online bullying, mental health issues and the impact of excessive screen time on young people.
- The bill was adopted by the lower house, the National Assembly, by a margin of 130 votes to 21 after an overnight debate.
- The legislation now heads to the French Senate for approval before becoming law. Authorities aim to enforce the measures from the start of the 2026 school year, beginning with new user accounts.



## **Indian public health expert Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya has won the Wiley Research Heroes Prize 2025**

- Indian public health expert Dr. Chandrakant Lahariya has won the Wiley Research Heroes Prize 2025 in the 'Impact Beyond Academia' category.
- He is the first Indian to receive this global recognition for policy-oriented health research and inclusive research impact.
- Dr. Lahariya is a health policy researcher, academician, and medical practitioner.
- His primary research spans crucial public health domains such as vaccination programmes, conditional cash transfers for maternal and child health, and strengthening primary healthcare systems.
- These areas directly influence national health outcomes, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, making his research highly policy-relevant.

### **About the Wiley Research Heroes Prize**

- The Wiley Research Heroes Prize recognizes researchers worldwide who ensure that research is inclusive, innovative, and impactful.
- The 2025 edition received over 2,000 nominations globally, from which only five researchers were selected.
- The awards focus on research that bridges the gap between academic knowledge and real-world policy implementation, ensuring societal benefit rather than remaining limited to scholarly publications.



## **Former BCCI President Inderjit Singh Bindra Passes Away**

- Former BCCI president Inderjit Singh Bindra, regarded as one of the key architects of modern cricket marketing in India, passed away in New Delhi on January 26, 2026, at the age of 84.
- He served as President of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) from 1993 to 1996.
- He led the Punjab Cricket Association (PCA) for over three decades (1978–2014).
- His association with cricket administration began in 1975, steadily rising through state and national roles.
- In recognition of his contribution, the PCA stadium in Mohali was renamed IS Bindra Stadium in 2015.
- Bindra is best remembered for his role in bringing the 1987 Cricket World Cup to India.



## **Life Insurance Corporation of India Cuts ICICI Bank Stake Below 5% Following Market Sales**

- LIC (Life Insurance Corporation of India) has reduced its shareholding in ICICI Bank to below 5% after a series of market transactions.
- LIC sold 70 crore shares of ICICI Bank through open market sales, lowering its stake from 6.737% to 4.731%.
- By reducing its stake below 5%, LIC is no longer required to make certain regulatory disclosures applicable to large shareholders.
- LIC clarified that it is not part of the promoter or promoter group of ICICI Bank, reaffirming its role as a financial investor.

### **About ICICI Bank:**

- Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
- CEO: Sandeep Bakhshi
- Founded Year: 1994 (as a bank; ICICI established in 1955)
- Slogan: "Hum Hai Na, Khayal Apka"

