



CURRENT AFFAIRS AT A GLANCE

Quick-Revision Compendium

December 2025 • January 2026 • February 2026

For SSC CGL, CHSL, Banking, Railways & all Competitive Exams

VEDANTA

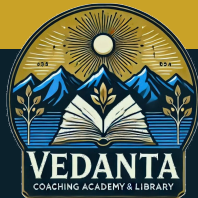
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How to use this booklet

This compendium condenses three monthly Current Affairs magazines (December 2025, January 2026 and February 2026) into one crisp fact per news item — ideal for last-mile revision before SSC, Banking, Railways and other competitive exams. Items are grouped by month and by the standard 15-section structure.

Contents

DECEMBER 2025	National News, International Affairs, State Affairs, Business and Economy, Science & Technology, Defence, Appointments, MoUs, Summits, Reports, Sports, Awards & Honours, Government Schemes, Obituary, Important Days
JANUARY 2026	National News, International Affairs, State Affairs, Business and Economy, Science & Technology, Defence, Appointments, MoUs, Summits, Reports, Sports, Awards & Honours, Government Schemes, Obituary, Important Days
FEBRUARY 2026	National News, International Affairs, State Affairs, Business and Economy, Science & Technology, Defence, Appointments, MoUs, Summits, Reports, Sports, Awards & Honours, Government Schemes, Obituary, Books & Authors, Important Days



DECEMBER 2025

1

National News

8th Pay Commission – ToR approved

The Union Cabinet approved the Terms of Reference for the 8th Central Pay Commission, to be headed by former SC Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai with Prof. Pulak Ghosh (IIM-B) as part-time member. It will impact ~50 lakh central employees and ~69 lakh pensioners; recommendations are due in 18 months.

APEDA – first-ever GI-lime air shipment

APEDA flagged off India's first air export of 500 kg of GI-tagged limes to the UK on 28 Oct 2025 — 350 kg of Indi Lime (Vijayapura, Karnataka) and 150 kg of Puliyanakudi Lime (Tenkasi, Tamil Nadu). It marks a milestone in expanding the global footprint of India's GI horticultural produce.

Bharat Parv 2025

Home Minister Amit Shah announced Bharat Parv 2025 (Nov 1–15) to mark the 150th birth anniversary of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the 'Iron Man of India'. A grand celebration is held at the Statue of Unity, Ekta Nagar, also honouring tribal icon Birsa Munda on 15 November.

India Maritime Week 2025, Mumbai

Amit Shah inaugurated India Maritime Week 2025 in Mumbai, attended by 100+ countries, 350+ speakers, 500 companies and ~1 lakh delegates. India highlighted its 11,000-km coastline and 23.7 lakh sq km EEZ; the event targets investment opportunities worth **■10 lakh crore.**

Defence Procurement Manual (DPM) 2025

Rajnath Singh released DPM 2025 (effective 1 Nov) enabling revenue procurement of ~**■1** lakh crore for the armed forces. It simplifies procedures, boosts MSMEs/start-ups, raises the Limited Tender threshold to **■50** lakh, and assures 5-year orders for indigenous items; he also inaugurated Shaurya Van, Jaisalmer.

Pratibha Setu Portal

PM Modi launched the Pratibha Setu Portal to connect UPSC candidates who narrowly missed selection with job opportunities. Only 6.9% (1,009 of 14,627) clear the civil services; the portal aims to channel this talent, alongside the PM Viksit Bharat Rozgar Yojana targeting 3.5 crore jobs.

Cyclone Montha

Cyclone Montha, the first cyclone to make landfall in India this year, formed over the Bay of Bengal and intensified into a severe cyclone. The IMD tracked its landfall on the Andhra coast near Kakinada (between Machilipatnam and Kalingapatnam), with heavy rain across coastal AP, Odisha and Tamil Nadu.

KOYLA SHAKTI & CLAMP portal

Coal & Mines Minister G. Kishan Reddy launched the KOYLA SHAKTI Dashboard and the CLAMP (Coal Land Acquisition, Management and Payment) portal. Koyla Shakti integrates the entire coal value chain on one platform and acts as the digital backbone of India's coal ecosystem.

National Marine Fisheries Census 2025

George Kurian launched the household-enumeration phase of India's first fully digitised Marine Fisheries Census at ICAR-CMFRI. Registration on the National Fisheries Digital Platform (NFDP) is mandatory to avail benefits under PM-MKSSY, marking a shift to data-driven fisheries governance.

3 Guinness World Records – SNSPA

The Health Ministry set three Guinness World Records under the 'Swasth Nari, Sashakt Parivar Abhiyaan' — most sign-ups to a healthcare platform in a month (3.21 cr), most breast-cancer screening sign-ups in a week (9.94 lakh) and most vital-signs sign-ups at state level (1.25 lakh).

Aadhaar Vision 2032

UIDAI launched the 'Aadhaar Vision 2032' framework to future-proof India's digital identity using AI, blockchain, quantum computing and advanced encryption. A high-level expert committee chaired by Neelkanth Mishra will draft the document aligned with the DPDP Act.

SC: No mining within 1 km of parks/sanctuaries

A CJI B.R. Gavai bench extended the 2023 Goa-specific ruling into a pan-India directive banning mining within 1 km of any national park or wildlife sanctuary. The Court also directed Jharkhand to notify the Saranda sanctuary, ensuring uniform wildlife protection.

NCRTC 'Solar on Track'

NCRTC launched India's first 'Solar on Track' project at the Namohar (Duhai) Depot, fixing 28 solar panels (15.4 kWp) on a 70-m stretch of rapid-rail track. It will generate ~17,500 kWh/year and cut CO₂ by ~16 tonnes annually, supporting NCRTC's net-zero goal.

Royalty rationalised – 4 critical minerals

The Cabinet approved new royalty rates for four critical minerals — 2% of ASP for caesium and rubidium, 1% for zirconium, and 2–4% for graphite by carbon content. The move boosts domestic production and enables auction of mineral blocks vital for green energy and high-tech.

India's first MWh-scale Vanadium Flow Battery

Manohar Lal inaugurated India's largest MWh-scale Vanadium Redox Flow Battery (3 MWh) at NTPC's NETRA R&D; centre, Greater Noida. It offers an alternative to lithium-ion for long-duration storage and supports renewable integration and grid resilience.

GI Tags

Ambaji Marble of Banaskantha (north Gujarat) received a GI tag, strengthening Gujarat's global identity. Two Lepcha musical instruments from Sikkim — Tungbuk (a three-stringed instrument) and Puntong Pulit (a bamboo flute) — were also GI-tagged on 5 November to protect Lepcha heritage.

2 International Affairs

India re-elected COP10 Bureau Vice-Chair

India was re-elected Vice-Chairperson of the Asia-Pacific Bureau at COP10 of the International Convention against Doping in Sport, held at UNESCO HQ, Paris (20th-anniversary session). Azerbaijan was elected Chair; India proposed integrating Values Education through Sport (VETS).

Saudi Arabia abolishes Kafala system

Saudi Arabia ended the sponsorship-based Kafala system, long criticised as modern-day slavery, granting migrant workers freedom to change jobs and exit the country without employer approval. The reform is part of Vision 2030 and the National Transformation Program.

Sarah Mullally – first woman to head Church of England

Dame Sarah Mullally was named Archbishop of Canterbury designate, becoming the first woman chosen for the Church of England's most senior role. A former NHS chief nurse ordained in 2006, she was the first female Bishop of London (2018).

World's first yen-pegged stablecoin

Japan launched JPYC, the world's first yen-pegged stablecoin, fully convertible to yen and backed by Japanese government bonds. Issuer JPYC plans ¥10 trillion (\$66 bn) over three years, charging no transaction fees initially to drive adoption.

East Timor – ASEAN's 11th member

East Timor (Timor-Leste) became ASEAN's 11th member on 26 Oct 2025 at the Kuala Lumpur summit — the bloc's first expansion since Cambodia (1999). The 1.4-million-population nation gained independence in 2002; President José Ramos-Horta is a 1996 Nobel Peace laureate.

Dictionary.com Word of the Year 2025

Dictionary.com chose '67' (six-seven) as its 2025 Word of the Year — a Gen-Alpha slang popularised via a Skrilka song and viral TikToks. Searches rose over sixfold since June 2025; critics question choosing a number, while supporters note language now includes memes.

China – Thorium-to-Uranium conversion

China completed the first-ever thorium-to-uranium fuel conversion in a Thorium Molten Salt Reactor (TMSR) on 3 Nov 2025. Thorium-232 is converted to Uranium-233 via neutron absorption; the reactor runs at atmospheric pressure with passive safety, a fourth-generation nuclear milestone.

Sweden – world's first cashless society

Sweden became the world's first officially cashless country in 2025, a shift driven by the Swish mobile-payment app (2012). Most transport, restaurants and museums are cash-free; the Riksbank is exploring a state-backed e-krona for financial stability.

CoP30, Belém (Brazil)

At UNFCCC CoP30 in Belém, India delivered statements on behalf of BASIC and the Like-Minded Developing Countries (LMDC), stressing equity, CBDR-RC and full implementation of the Paris Agreement. India backed multilateralism amid geopolitical challenges and praised Brazil's preparations.

World Bank – TEREK, Tunisia

The World Bank signed a five-year, US\$430 million Tunisia Energy Reliability, Efficiency and Governance (TEREG) programme, including \$30 mn concessional finance from Climate Investment Funds. It boosts renewables, improves the STEG utility's finances and modernises the power sector.

Samia Suluhu Hassan

Samia Suluhu Hassan was sworn in for a second term as Tanzania's President after winning 98% of the vote in an election the opposition called a sham. The inauguration was held in Dodoma amid tight security; observers flagged transparency concerns.

3 State Affairs

Kerala – \$280 mn World Bank health loan

The World Bank approved a \$280-million, 25-year loan for Kerala's health system to improve life expectancy for 11 million elderly and vulnerable people. It targets 90%+ tracking of hypertension/diabetes patients, home-based elderly care, eHealth expansion and climate-resilient facilities.

Odisha 'B-MAAN' scheme

Odisha launched the ₹14,182-crore 'B-MAAN' scheme to make the state an aviation hub in eastern India. It covers airport infrastructure, air connectivity, an MRO ecosystem, cargo and logistics, and emerging tech like drones, seaplanes and e-VTOL aircraft.

Bengal SIR training

The Election Commission began training Booth-Level Officers (BLOs) in West Bengal for the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) of electoral rolls. From 4 Nov to 4 Dec, BLOs equipped with kits and a new mobile app visited households to verify voters and assist with form-filling.

Gateway of Guwahati floating terminal

Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated India's first riverine terminal on the Brahmaputra at Guwahati, built at ₹304.95 crore. With an integrated command centre, observatory lounge and sewage plant, it will boost river transport, tourism and urban mobility; she also opened the Brahmaputra Riverfront.

Coal India–DVC ₹21,000 cr JV

Coal India and Damodar Valley Corporation formed a 50:50 JV to build a ₹21,000-crore, 1,600 MW ultra-supercritical thermal plant in Jharkhand (two 800-MW units). Coal will be supplied by CIL's subsidiary Central Coalfields; operations are expected by FY2031-32.

4 Business and Economy

RBI gold reserves cross 880 tonnes

The RBI's gold reserves crossed 880 metric tonnes (880.18 MT) by Sept 2025, worth ~USD 95 billion. Rising global uncertainty has driven safe-haven demand; central banks worldwide added 166 tonnes, and gold prices hit an all-time high in September 2025.

India GDP FY26 – Deloitte

Deloitte India forecast India's FY26 growth at 6.7–6.9% (avg 6.8%), with Q1 (Apr-Jun) growth at 7.8%. Drivers include buoyant domestic demand, accommodative policy, GST 2.0 reforms and low inflation, with possible upside from trade deals with the US and EU.

Banking Laws (Amendment) Act 2025

Key provisions of the Banking Laws (Amendment) Act took effect from 1 Nov 2025. The Act, with 19 amendments across five laws, lets customers nominate up to four persons per account (simultaneously or successively), simplifying claim settlement for depositors.

IMF – India 6.6% in 2025-26

The IMF projected India to grow 6.6% in 2025-26, among the fastest-growing emerging economies and outpacing China. The 2026 projection was trimmed to 6.2%; global growth was pegged at 3.2% (2025), with the IMF urging credible, transparent fiscal policies.

Paytm UPI for NRIs

Paytm launched UPI payments for NRIs from 12 countries (Singapore, UAE, UK, US, etc.) using international mobile numbers, removing the need for an Indian SIM. Powered by NPCI, it links NRE/NRO accounts for instant transfers and QR payments without forex charges.

GST registration in 3 days

A simplified GST registration scheme effective 1 Nov gives small/low-risk businesses approval within 3 working days. Eligibility covers firms self-assessing output tax below ₹2.5 lakh/month; Nirmala Sitharaman said it will benefit 96% of new applicants among 1.54 crore registrants.

SBI joins \$100 bn market-cap club

SBI became the 6th Indian company to cross a USD 100 billion market cap, as its total business exceeded ₹100 trillion (₹100.12 trillion). It reported a 10% rise in Q2 FY26 net profit to ₹20,160 crore, joining Reliance, TCS, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank and Infosys.

RBI permits silver as loan collateral

Under new directions effective 1 Apr 2026, the RBI will allow silver jewellery, ornaments and coins as loan collateral — up to 10 kg of ornaments or 500 g of coins. Lenders must give valuation certificates and follow borrower-protection rules, mirroring gold-loan norms.

PM launches ₹1 trillion RDI Fund

PM Modi unveiled a ₹1 trillion Research, Development and Innovation (RDI) Fund at ESTIC 2025 to back private-sector R&D.; The DST is the nodal ministry; a Special Purpose Fund under the Anusandhan National Research Foundation will route capital through professional fund managers.

NaBFID → Infrastructure Development Bank (IDB)

NaBFID (National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development) is being renamed the Infrastructure Development Bank (IDB) with a new logo. The repositioning aims to make it a global financial institution like the ADB and IFC; it was set up after the 2021 Union Budget.

₹2,000 notes – ₹5,817 cr still in circulation

As of 31 Oct 2025, ₹2,000 notes in circulation fell to ₹5,817 crore from ₹3.56 lakh crore at withdrawal — meaning 98.37% have returned since the May 2023 withdrawal. The notes remain legal tender, exchangeable at 19 RBI issue offices.

NPCI-BENEFIT India-Bahrain remittances

NPCI International (NIPL) partnered with Bahrain's BENEFIT for real-time cross-border remittances linking India's UPI with Bahrain's EFTS (Fawri+). Backed by the RBI and Central Bank of Bahrain, it offers faster, cheaper transfers for the large Indian community in Bahrain.

5

Science & Technology

IN-SPACE-SIDBI ₹1,000 cr VC Fund

IN-SPACE and SIDBI Venture Capital signed a contribution agreement for a ₹1,000-crore VC fund for India's space sector (pending SEBI nod). It will give early-stage and growth capital to start-ups in launch tech, satellites, payloads, in-space services and earth observation.

6

Defence

INS Ikshak commissioned

INS Ikshak, the third Survey Vessel (Large), was commissioned at Kochi by CNS Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi. Built by GRSE Kolkata with 80%+ indigenous content, it carries advanced hydrographic systems, doubles as a HADR/hospital platform, and is the first SVL ship with women's accommodation.

Infantry Day – 79th Shaurya Diwas

The Army observed Infantry Day (Shaurya Diwas) on 27 October with a wreath-laying by Army Chief Gen. Upendra Dwivedi at the National War Memorial. The day marks the Army's first deployment to Srinagar in 1947, which repelled a Pakistan-backed invasion.

Exercise Ocean Sky 2025

The IAF participated in the multinational air-combat Exercise Ocean Sky 2025 hosted by Spain at Gando Air Base (20–31 Oct). It trained air-superiority missions in defensive and offensive counter-air roles, following the induction of 16 Airbus C-295 transport aircraft.

'Mahe' ASW SWC delivered

'Mahe', the first of eight Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Crafts, was delivered to the Navy by Cochin Shipyard on 23 Oct with 80%+ indigenous content. The ~78-m, 1,100-ton craft is armed with torpedoes and ASW rockets for littoral underwater warfare.

ICGS Ajit & Aparajit launched

The Coast Guard launched its 7th and 8th indigenous Fast Patrol Vessels — ICGS Ajit and ICGS Aparajit — at Goa Shipyard. The 52-m, 320-ton vessels feature India's first Controllable Pitch Propellers in this class for fisheries protection, anti-smuggling and SAR roles.

MoD-BDL ₹2,095 cr deal

The MoD signed a ₹2,095-crore contract with Bharat Dynamics Ltd for INVAR Anti-Tank Guided Missiles for T-90 tanks under the 'Buy (Indian)' category of the Defence Acquisition Procedure, enhancing the Army's firepower and domestic capability.

7

Appointments

Paul Kapur

Indian-American security expert Paul Kapur was sworn in as US Assistant Secretary of State for South & Central Asian Affairs, succeeding Donald Lu. He earlier served on the State Department's Policy Planning Staff (2020–21) covering India-US ties and Indo-Pacific strategy.

Sanae Takaichi

Sanae Takaichi was elected Japan's first female Prime Minister and leader of the ruling LDP, winning 237 votes in the Lower House. A staunch conservative influenced by Margaret Thatcher, she is Japan's fourth PM in five years amid economic challenges.

Deepak Gupta

Deepak Gupta, currently Director (Projects) at GAIL, was selected as the next Chairman & Managing Director of GAIL (India). With 35 years in oil and gas, his record includes the \$19-bn Dangote Refinery (Nigeria) and the HMEL Bhatinda Polymer Project.

Sanjay Garg, IAS

Sanjay Garg, a 1994-batch IAS officer (Kerala cadre), took charge as Director General of the Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) from 1 Nov 2025. He earlier served as Secretary, ICAR, where he led digital transformation and expanded the Kisan Sarathi portal.

Justice Ashok Bhushan

Former SC judge Justice Ashok Bhushan was reappointed Chairperson of the National Company Law Appellate Tribunal (NCLAT), holding office until 4 July 2026. Born in Jaunpur (1956), he had been Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court.

Satyakam Arya

Satyakam Arya, MD & CEO of Daimler India Commercial Vehicles, will become President & CEO of Toyota-owned Hino Motors from 1 Apr 2026 — the first Indian to lead a major Japanese automobile company globally.

S. Krishnan

The RBI approved S. Krishnan as part-time Chairman of J&K Bank (13 Nov 2025 to 26 Mar 2028). Currently an independent director on the bank's board, he earlier served as MD & CEO of Punjab & Sind Bank and Tamilnad Mercantile Bank.

8

MoUs

HAL–Russia UAC: SJ-100 jet

HAL and Russia's United Aircraft Corporation signed an MoU in Moscow to manufacture the SJ-100 regional passenger jet in India. HAL will hold domestic production rights, making it the first complete passenger aircraft built in India since the AVRO HS-748 (1961-88).

HAL–GE Tejas engines

HAL and General Electric inked a \$1-bn+ deal for 113 F404-GE-IN20 engines to power 97 LCA Tejas Mk-1A fighters; HAL will ultimately supply 180 Mk-1A to the IAF. Talks are on for joint F414 engine production for the LCA Mk2.

ICAI–Indian Army UDIN verification

ICAI signed an MoU with the Army Purchase Organisation for real-time API verification of Unique Document Identification Numbers (UDINs). The integration boosts procurement transparency; ~9.72 crore UDINs have been generated and 3.2 crore verified by regulators.

EIL–NMDC Energy

Engineers India (EIL) signed an MoU with NMDC Energy at ADIPEC 2025 to jointly pursue onshore oil & gas, refinery, petrochemical and energy-transition projects in Saudi Arabia, using NMDC's Ras Al Khair fabrication and EIL's Al Khobar design centre.

TEC–IIT Bombay / IIT-Hyderabad

The Telecommunication Engineering Centre (TEC) signed MoUs with IIT Bombay and IIT Hyderabad for joint R&D; on 6G, AI and Non-Terrestrial Networks, developing India-specific telecom standards and boosting participation in ITU-T study groups.

9

Summits

22nd ASEAN-India Summit

PM Modi joined the 22nd ASEAN-India Summit (Kuala Lumpur) virtually — his 12th. He welcomed Timor-Leste as ASEAN's 11th member, called for a review of the AITIGA trade pact, and announced that 2026 will be the 'ASEAN-India Year of Maritime Cooperation'.

BIRC 2025 – Bharat Intl Rice Conference

The Bharat International Rice Conference 2025 at Bharat Mandapam aimed to position India as a leader in the global rice supply chain. India exports rice to 172+ countries and produced ~150 MT (28% of world output); the meet targeted ■25,000 cr export MoUs.

17th India-Israel Defence JWG

The 17th India-Israel Joint Working Group on Defence Cooperation met in Tel Aviv on 4 Nov, co-chaired by Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh. A defence-cooperation MoU was signed covering training, R&D;, AI, cybersecurity and co-production.

ICGH 2025 – Green Hydrogen

The MNRE hosted the International Conference on Green Hydrogen (ICGH) 2025 at Bharat Mandapam on 11–12 Nov. Sessions covered financing, certification, port readiness and technology localisation to advance the National Green Hydrogen Mission.

Kaju Centennial Summit 2025

The Karnataka Cashew Manufacturers' Association held the 'Kaju Centennial Summit 2025' in Mangaluru (14–16 Nov), marking 100 years of India's organised cashew industry (first factory in 1925). It targeted 2.5 MT of domestic raw-cashew production by 2030.

10 Reports

QS Asia University Rankings 2026

India lost its top Asian spot to China in the QS Asia University Rankings 2026 after two years. With 294 Indian universities listed (vs 395 Chinese), IIT Delhi was the best Indian entry at 59th, dropping 15 places; IIT Bombay fell from 48th to 71st.

G20 wealth study

A G20-commissioned report led by Joseph Stiglitz found India's richest 1% grew their wealth 62% between 2000 and 2023. Globally the top 1% captured 41% of new wealth versus 1% for the bottom half; inequality was called 'emergency level'.

Henley Passport Index 2025

India slipped five spots to 85th in the Henley & Partners Passport Index 2025. The US passport dropped out of the global top 10 for the first time (visa-free access to 180 countries), reflecting shifts in global mobility and soft power.

WEF deep-tech in agriculture

The WEF report 'Shaping the Deep-Tech Revolution in Agriculture' identified seven domains for transformation: Generative AI, Computer Vision, Robotics, Edge IoT, Satellite Remote Sensing, CRISPR and Nanotechnology.

Hurun India Philanthropy 2025

The EdelGive Hurun India Philanthropy List 2025 found 191 top donors gave ₹10,380 crore in FY25 (up 85% over three years). Shiv Nadar (HCL) was Most Generous with ₹2,708 crore; Mukesh Ambani ranked second; Rohini Nilekani was the most generous woman.

WHO Global TB Report 2025

India accounted for 25% of global tuberculosis cases in 2024, topping the WHO's Global TB Report 2025. India's incidence improved to 187 per 100,000 (from 195), but remains far above the 2025 elimination target of 44 per 100,000; it also had 32% of global MDR-TB cases.

11 Sports

India win Women's Cricket World Cup

India won their maiden Women's Cricket World Cup, beating South Africa by 52 runs at DY Patil Stadium before 45,000 fans. Batting first, India made 298/7 (Shafali 87, Deepti 58); Deepti Sharma then took 5/39 and was named Player of the Tournament.

World Para Powerlifting C'ships 2025

The 11th World Para Powerlifting Championships were held in Cairo, Egypt — the first in Africa — with 537 athletes from 70 nations. China topped with 13 medals (8 gold); hosts Egypt won 5 to finish fourth.

Dabang Delhi KC – PKL Season 12

Dabang Delhi K.C. won the Pro Kabaddi League Season 12 final, beating Puneri Paltan 31–28 at the Thyagaraj Stadium, Delhi. It was Delhi's second PKL title (first in Season 8) and a rare home-venue triumph.

Raahul VS – India's 91st GM

Raahul VS became India's 91st chess Grandmaster by winning the 6th ASEAN Individual Championship with a round to spare. The 21-year-old former Asian junior champion followed Illamparthy AR (90th) and S Rohith Krishna (89th).

Bajaj Pune Grand Tour 2026

The logo and jersey of the Bajaj Pune Grand Tour 2026 — India's first international UCI 2.2 stage cycling race — were unveiled in Pune. Organised by Maharashtra, Pune district and the Cycling Federation of India, it ties into PM Modi's 2036 Olympics vision.

12 Awards & Honours

David Szalay – Booker Prize 2025

Canadian-Hungarian-British writer David Szalay won the 2025 Booker Prize (£50,000) for 'Flesh', a spare tale of a Hungarian immigrant's life in Britain. A panel including Roddy Doyle and Sarah Jessica Parker chose it unanimously over five finalists.

Children's Booker Prize launched

The Booker Prize Foundation announced a new £50,000 Children's Booker Prize for fiction for ages 8–12 written in or translated into English. Nominations open in 2026 with the first award in 2027; author Frank Cottrell-Boyce chairs the judges.

Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar 2025

Three IIT Madras professors won the Rashtriya Vigyan Puraskar 2025 — Thalappil Pradeep (Chemistry), Mohana Sankar Sivaprakasam (Electrical Engineering) and Shweta Prem Agrawal (Computer Science) — for outstanding contributions to science and technology.

13 Government Schemes

ECMS – first 7 projects approved

The first seven projects worth ₹5,532 crore were approved under the Electronics Components Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS), projected to generate ₹36,559 crore in production. The MeitY scheme (₹22,919-cr outlay) cuts import dependence and integrates firms with global value chains.

PM E-DRIVE – 1,000 e-buses for Pune

The Centre approved 1,000 electric buses for Pune under the PM E-DRIVE scheme to expand the PMPML fleet (~2,000 buses) toward 3,000. The move reduces congestion and vehicular pollution while strengthening Pune's public transport alongside metro expansion.

14 Obituary

Gopichand Hinduja

London-based billionaire Gopichand 'GP' Hinduja, chairman of the Hinduja Group, died at 85 after a long illness. The second of four brothers, he helped build the family business into a global conglomerate spanning autos, finance, media and chemicals.

James Watson

James Watson, Nobel laureate and co-discoverer of DNA's double-helix structure with Francis Crick (1953), died at 97 on Long Island. His 1962 Nobel-winning work transformed biology, though his later years were clouded by racist remarks.

Manuel Frederick

Manuel Frederick, former India hockey goalkeeper and Kerala's first Olympic medallist, died at 78. He was part of India's bronze-medal squad at the 1972 Munich Olympics and was admired for his bold goalkeeping.

15 Important Days

World Vegan Day – 1 November

World Vegan Day promotes a vegan lifestyle and begins World Vegan Month. First marked in 1994 by the Vegan Society UK (founded 1944), the 2025 focus is on veganism's positive impact on the planet, animals and human health.

National Cancer Awareness Day – 7 November

Observed on Marie Curie's birth anniversary, the day promotes cancer prevention, early detection and screening. Announced in 2014 by the Health Ministry, it responds to India's 14 lakh+ new cancer cases a year, many detected late.

World Immunisation Day – 10 November

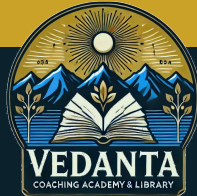
Launched by the WHO in 2012, World Immunisation Day raises awareness of vaccines as one of the most effective public-health tools. It urges governments and health workers to prioritise vaccination to prevent deadly diseases.

National Education Day – 11 November

National Education Day marks the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, India's first Education Minister. It honours his contribution to modern Indian education and promotes accessible, quality education for all.

National Press Day – 16 November

National Press Day marks the day the Press Council of India began functioning in 1966. The Council acts as an independent moral watchdog of journalistic standards; the 2025 theme stresses safeguarding press credibility amid misinformation.



JANUARY 2026

1

National News

Cyber Security Innovation Challenge (CSIC) 1.0

MeitY launched CSIC 1.0 under the ISEA project to strengthen India's cybersecurity ecosystem and expose students to real-world challenges. It involves CERT-In, NSCS, AICTE, C-DAC and DSCI, with a five-stage process across domains like network, mobile and hardware security.

Sanchar Saathi pre-install made optional

The government withdrew the mandate to pre-install the Sanchar Saathi app on phones after privacy concerns from tech analysts. The cyber-fraud app — which has 1.4 crore downloads and helped trace 26 lakh stolen handsets — remains available but optional.

CAG sets up CoEFA, Hyderabad

CAG K. Sanjay Murthy launched the Centre of Excellence for Financial Audit (CoEFA) in Hyderabad to tackle complexities in public finance. It uses AI/ML for technology-driven auditing and serves as a hub for research, policy support and capacity building.

■37,000 cr under RDSS

The Centre released ~■37,000 crore (38% of sanctioned support) as grants under the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme to boost power distribution. Funds are tied to DISCOMs meeting milestones under a result-evaluation framework with customised action plans.

IGI Airport – first 'Water-Positive' airport

Delhi's Indira Gandhi International Airport — handling 40 million+ passengers a year — became India's first airport to achieve water-positive status. It is part of IGIA's long-term vision to become a net-zero airport and reduce dependence on natural water sources.

WorldSkills Asia 2025

India finished 8th among 29 nations on its debut at WorldSkills Asia 2025, led by the MSDE with NSDC support. The 23-member contingent competed in 21 skill categories, winning one silver, two bronze and three Medallions for Excellence.

Cyclone Ditwah

Cyclone Ditwah, the third post-monsoon cyclone in the Bay, brought heavy rain to Tamil Nadu and Puducherry. The name (meaning 'lagoon', after Yemen's Detwah Lagoon) was suggested by Yemen under the WMO/ESCAP cyclone-naming convention.

Census of India 2027 approved

The Cabinet approved Census 2027 at ₹11,718.24 crore in two phases — house-listing (Apr–Sep 2026) and population enumeration (Feb 2027). It will be India's first fully digital Census via a mobile app, with caste data collected and a self-enumeration option.

Operation Sagar Bandhu

Under Operation Sagar Bandhu, the Navy deployed four more warships (INS Gharial, LCU 54/51/57) to deliver 1,000 tonnes of HADR material to cyclone-hit Sri Lanka. INS Vikrant, Udaygiri and Sukanya had earlier provided relief and heli-borne SAR.

DHRUVA addressing system

The Department of Posts proposed DHRUVA (Digital Hub for Reference and Unique Virtual Address), a UPI-like addressing system. It would replace textual addresses with labels like 'name@entity'; the DIGIPIN component was rolled out in March.

Deepavali on UNESCO ICH list

Deepavali was inscribed on UNESCO's Representative List of Intangible Cultural Heritage for 2025, becoming India's 15th element (joining Kumbh Mela, Durga Puja, Garba, yoga and Ramlila). The inscription boosts the festival's global recognition.

SHANTI Bill assent

President Murmu gave assent to the SHANTI Bill, which opens the civil nuclear sector to private players and lets them build, own and operate nuclear plants under licence. It repeals the Atomic Energy Act 1962 and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act 2010.

Siliserh Lake & Kopra Jalashay – Ramsar

Siliserh Lake (Rajasthan) and Kopra Jalashay (Chhattisgarh) were designated India's 95th and 96th Ramsar sites, taking the total to 96. Kopra Jalashay is Chhattisgarh's first; the Ramsar Convention (1971, Iran) protects wetlands of international importance.

India's first wildlife-safe road

NHAI launched India's first wildlife-safe road on NH-45 in Madhya Pradesh through the Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve. The 2-km stretch has 25 underpasses, an 8-ft fence and Dubai-inspired table-top markings to slow drivers and protect wildlife.

Ponduru Khadi (Andhra) – GI tag

Ponduru Khadi, the handspun-and-handwoven cotton fabric from the Srikakulam region of Andhra Pradesh, received a GI tag. Made entirely by hand using indigenous hill cotton, it was registered on the back of a KVIC declaration.

2

International Affairs

India to restart air cargo with Afghanistan

India is restarting air cargo links with Afghanistan via Kabul–Delhi/Amritsar corridors amid the Pakistan rift. The move, discussed during Taliban Commerce Minister Nooruddin Azizi's visit, aims to revive bilateral trade beyond \$1 billion.

Singapore – world's top container port

Singapore was named the world's top container port in the first 'Leading Container Ports of the World' report by DNV and Menon Economics, leading all five pillars. The top five are Singapore, Shanghai, Ningbo-Zhoushan, Rotterdam and Busan.

India re-elected to IMO Council 2026-27

India was re-elected to the Council of the International Maritime Organisation for 2026-27 with the highest vote tally — 154 of 169 valid votes — in the category of nations with the largest stake in seaborne trade, at the 34th IMO Assembly in London.

Oxford Word of the Year 2025

The Oxford Dictionary named 'rage bait' its 2025 Word of the Year, after 'brain rot' in 2024. The term refers to online content designed to provoke anger or outrage to drive engagement, a more targeted form of clickbait amplified by social-media algorithms.

US 'New G20' for 2026

The US announced a 'New G20' for the 2026 Leaders' Summit in Miami — adding Poland and excluding South Africa, marking its first G20 presidency since 2009. The bloc will focus on cutting regulation, securing energy supply chains and AI.

UNESCO Global Learning Cities

UNESCO added 72 new cities from 46 countries to its Global Network of Learning Cities, taking the total to 425. The intake includes 11 capital cities (Cairo, Riyadh, Lisbon, Hanoi, etc.) and 12 first-time countries, including the USA and Iraq.

India's wildfire resolution at UNEA-7

India's resolution on 'Strengthening the Global Management of Wildfires' was adopted at the 7th UN Environment Assembly (UNEA-7) in Nairobi. India warned of a 14% rise in wildfires by 2030 and called for early-warning systems and global cooperation.

Italy – first nation with cuisine on UNESCO ICH

Italy became the first country to have its entire national cuisine recognised on UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage list. The inscription spans pasta, cheese, wine and regional specialities, framing food as a shared social experience.

José Antonio Kast

Far-right candidate José Antonio Kast was elected the 38th President of Chile with over 58% of the vote, marking a major rightward shift. An admirer of Donald Trump, he campaigned on security, immigration and crime.

BRICS presidency to India

Brazil formally handed the BRICS presidency to India at the 4th Sherpas meeting in Brasília; India assumes the chairmanship from 1 Jan 2026. Brazil's 2025 presidency launched health/AI partnerships and the first Climate Finance Framework.

3

State Affairs

Arunachal 'Dao' – GI tag

Arunachal Pradesh's traditional handcrafted blade 'Dao' received a GI tag, recognising the state's ancestral blacksmithing traditions. Hand-forged by master artisans, the blade symbolises identity and cultural endurance; the state aims for 50 GI tags by 2030.

Andhra–Rapido driver-cum-guide

Andhra Pradesh partnered with Rapido to launch a driver-cum-guide service in Vijayawada, Tirupati and Visakhapatnam. Drivers undergo training in state history, culture and hospitality; the public-private model aims to boost tourism and driver incomes.

Darjeeling Mandarin Orange – GI tag

The Darjeeling Mandarin Orange received a GI tag (registered to the Darjeeling Organic Farmers Producer Organisation) on 24 Nov 2025. The move aims to revive cultivation hit by virus and pest issues over the past 15 years.

Rajasthan – 100% voter-roll digitisation

Rajasthan became the first state to fully digitise its 5.46-crore voter rolls under the Special Intensive Revision (SIR) 2026, led by CEO Navin Mahajan. Using ECINET and the BLO app, it achieved 97% mapping, leaving only 3% needing extra documents.

Chhattisgarh – Jan Vishwas (2nd ed.) Bill

Chhattisgarh became the first state to bring a second edition of the Jan Vishwas Bill, decriminalising minor offences by replacing prison terms with fines. The 2025 bill amends 116 provisions across 14 Acts, building on the first edition (2024).

Google for Startups Hub

Google and Telangana launched the Google for Startups Hub at T-Hub, Hyderabad — the state's first AI-first startup hub. It offers mentorship, infrastructure and investor access, especially for founders from Tier-2/3 cities and women entrepreneurs.

UP's first forest university

Uttar Pradesh's first forest university will come up in Gorakhpur on 125 acres near the Jatayu Conservation Centre, announced by CM Yogi Adityanath. It will offer forestry, agroforestry and horticulture degrees and diplomas.

J&K's first Gen Z Post Office

Jammu & Kashmir opened its first Gen Z Post Office at the AIIMS Vijaypur campus — the first AIIMS in India to host one. It offers digital payments and youth-oriented, technology-enabled services as part of postal modernisation.

4

Business and Economy

Net FDI doubles to \$7.64 bn

Net FDI into India more than doubled to \$7.64 billion in H1 FY26 (Apr–Sep) from \$3.4 billion a year earlier, per RBI data. Gross inflows rose 16% to \$50.36 bn; Singapore, Mauritius, the UAE, Luxembourg and Qatar accounted for ~78% of inflows.

Crisil raises FY26 GDP to 7%

Crisil raised India's FY26 GDP forecast to 7% from 6.5% after strong Q2 growth of 8.2% (H1 at 8%). Private consumption is the main driver, aided by GST rate rationalisation, income-tax cuts and RBI repo-rate reductions.

NSFI 2025-30

RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra released the National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI) 2025-30. Built on five 'Panch-Jyoti' objectives and 47 action points, it focuses on last-mile access, gender-sensitive inclusion and financial resilience.

D-SIBs unchanged

The RBI retained SBI, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs), requiring additional CET-1 buffers of 0.80%, 0.40% and 0.20% respectively. D-SIBs are seen as 'too big to fail' and need higher capital.

MUFG buys 20% of Shriram Finance

Japan's MUFG Bank acquired a 20% stake in Shriram Finance for \$4.4 billion (■39,600 crore) via preferential allotment — the largest FDI in India's financial sector. MUFG can appoint two nominee directors; the floor price was ■840.83 per share.

Fitch raises FY26 GDP to 7.4%

Fitch Ratings revised India's FY26 growth forecast up to 7.4% from 6.9%, citing strong domestic demand and tax reforms. It projected FY27 growth at 6.4%, inflation averaging 1.5%, and the rupee strengthening to ~87 per dollar.

Insurance Bill – 100% FDI

The Lok Sabha passed the 'Sabka Bima Sabki Raksha' Bill raising insurance FDI from 74% to 100% and empowering IRDAI to claw back wrongful gains. It amends the Insurance Act 1938, LIC Act 1956 and IRDAI Act 1999, and requires Indian citizenship for top leadership.

Bank of Baroda – 'Best Bank in India'

Bank of Baroda was named 'Best Bank in India' at The Banker's Bank of the Year Awards 2025 (Asia-Pacific), recognised for phygital branches blending in-person and digital services. It opened 184 new branches and launched a Smart OD product for small businesses.

SBI & BoB fraud-detection platform

SBI and Bank of Baroda received RBI approval to set up the Indian Digital Payment Intelligence Corporation (IDPIC), a Section 8 non-profit. It will detect and prevent fraudulent digital transactions across public-sector banks.

Amazon Pay UPI biometric

Amazon Pay launched UPI biometric authentication in India for PIN-free transactions up to ₹5,000 using fingerprint or facial recognition on Android. Biometric data stays on the device, reducing breach risk while speeding up peer-to-peer transfers.

5

Science & Technology

Liquid Helium Cryogenic Facility

Union Minister Dr Jitendra Singh inaugurated India's first Liquid Helium Facility at IIT Bombay and reviewed indigenous quantum sensing platforms, including India's first portable magnetometer QMagPI. The facility strengthens cryogenics for quantum computing.

Skyroot 'Infinity Campus'

PM Modi inaugurated 'Infinity Campus', a rocket-manufacturing facility built by Hyderabad startup Skyroot Aerospace that can build one orbital rocket a month. The 2-lakh-sq-ft facility supports the Vikram-I orbital rocket; Skyroot earlier launched Vikram-S (2022).

IIT Madras VTMS

IIT Madras developed India's first indigenous Vessel Traffic Management System (VTMS) for ports, providing vessel tracking, hazard warnings and traffic management. Built by the NTCPC with ₹10 crore from the Shipping Ministry, it reduces import dependence.

National Coral Reef Research Institute

India's first National Coral Reef Research Institute (₹120 crore) will be set up at Chidiyatapu, South Andaman, by the Environment Ministry. It will be the nodal agency for coral-reef research, providing scientific data and conservation strategies.

'Alaknanda' Milky Way twin

Indian astronomers Rashi Jain and Yogesh Wadadekar discovered 'Alaknanda', a 12-billion-year-old spiral galaxy seen when the universe was just 1.5 billion years old. The 'grand-design' galaxy, found via JWST and gravitational lensing, defies models predicting only chaotic early galaxies.

DHRUV64 microprocessor

C-DAC launched DHRUV64, India's first fully indigenous 1.0 GHz 64-bit dual-core microprocessor, under the Microprocessor Development Programme. Suitable for 5G, automotive, IoT and industrial automation, it advances self-reliance under the India Semiconductor Mission.

AFMS AI diabetic-retinopathy screening

The Armed Forces Medical Services launched India's first AI-driven community screening programme for diabetic retinopathy, jointly with AIIMS and the Health Ministry's e-Health AI Unit. The platform auto-grades retinal images and generates real-time disease data across seven pilot cities.

Photonics Odyssey

Chennai-based team 'Photonics Odyssey' won the 'Most Inspirational Award' at NASA's 2025 International Space Apps Challenge. Their concept is a sovereign phased-array satellite-internet system to bring broadband to 700 million Indians lacking connectivity.

6

Defence

INS Mahe commissioned

The Navy commissioned INS Mahe, the first Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft of the Mahe class, built by Cochin Shipyard under Aatmanirbhar Bharat. The compact, agile craft is designed to hunt submarines, conduct coastal patrols and secure maritime routes.

Exercise Suryakiran XIX

The 19th India-Nepal joint military exercise Suryakiran XIX was held at Pithoragarh, Uttarakhand (25 Nov–8 Dec), with 334 personnel from each side. It rehearsed jungle warfare, counter-terrorism and HADR under a UN mandate, incorporating drones and AI decision tools.

Exercise Ekuverin

The 14th India-Maldives joint exercise Ekuverin ('Friends' in Dhivehi) commenced at Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala (2–15 Dec). Held alternately since 2009, it enhances interoperability in counter-insurgency and counter-terror operations across jungle, semi-urban and coastal terrain.

Exercise Garuda 25

The 8th India-France bilateral air exercise Garuda 25 concluded at Mont-de-Marsan, France, with the IAF fielding Su-30MKI fighters, IL-78 tankers and C-17 transports. It was one of the IAF's largest international air engagements of the year.

BrahMos long-range launch

The Army's Southern Command, with the Andaman & Nicobar Command, conducted a long-range precision launch of the BrahMos supersonic cruise missile over the Bay of Bengal. Developed by DRDO and Russia's NPOM, it is named after the Brahmaputra and Moskva rivers.

DRDO fighter escape system test

DRDO successfully tested a fighter-aircraft escape (ejection) system at the Rail Track Rocket Sled facility in Chandigarh, with HAL and ADA. Using a dual-sled LCA forebody and an instrumented dummy, it puts India in an elite club of nations with this capability.

BRO – 125 border projects

Rajnath Singh inaugurated 125 Border Roads Organisation projects (28 roads, 93 bridges) worth ₹5,000 crore from Ladakh — BRO's most simultaneous inaugurations. Highlights include the 920-m Shyok Tunnel and the virtually inaugurated Galwan War Memorial.

Sai Jadhav – first woman IMA officer

Sai Jadhav became the first woman officer to graduate from the Indian Military Academy, Dehradun, ending a 93-year tradition. The fourth-generation military officer was commissioned as a Lieutenant in the Territorial Army after rigorous training alongside male cadets.

Quad 1st FTX

The Quad (Australia, India, Japan, US) conducted its first Indo-Pacific Logistics Network Field Training Exercise (8–12 Dec) at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam, alongside Operation Christmas Drop. It built shared logistics capacity for rapid disaster response.

7 Appointments

Justice Surya Kant

Justice Surya Kant took oath as the 53rd Chief Justice of India, succeeding Justice B.R. Gavai, for a ~15-month tenure ending 9 Feb 2027. Born in Hisar (1962), he aims to address case pendency during his term.

Vivek Chaturvedi

Vivek Chaturvedi was appointed Chairman of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC), succeeding Sanjay Kumar Agarwal. With 30+ years in customs and vigilance, he will play a key role in the 2026-27 Budget on indirect taxes.

Arun Kumar Singh

Arun Kumar Singh received a one-year extension as ONGC chairman, extending his tenure to 6 Dec 2026. The extension reflects continuity after he helped stabilise management and reverse declines in crude oil production.

Harmanpreet Kaur

World Cup-winning India captain Harmanpreet Kaur became the first female brand ambassador of Punjab National Bank. She was also made the first customer of PNB's premium RuPay Metal Credit Card Luxura.

Andrej Babis

Populist billionaire Andrej Babis was sworn in as the Czech Republic's Prime Minister after his ANO movement won the October election and formed a coalition. His government plans to align with Hungary and Slovakia and reduce support for Ukraine.

Shashwat Sharma

Shashwat Sharma was appointed MD & CEO of Bharti Airtel from 1 January, having been CEO-designate for 12 months. Current MD Gopal Vittal becomes Executive Vice-Chairman overseeing Airtel and its subsidiaries.

Meg O'Neill

BP appointed Meg O'Neill its new CEO, making her the first female CEO in Big Oil. She succeeds amid pressure from activist investor Elliott to refocus on oil and gas; she earlier led Woodside Energy and worked at ExxonMobil.

Henrique Braun

Coca-Cola named Henrique Braun its new CEO from 31 Mar 2026, with James Quincey moving to executive chairman. Braun, a 30-year Coca-Cola veteran, previously served as COO leading operations across regions.

B. Sairam / Ravi Ranjan

B. Sairam, earlier CMD of Northern Coalfields, was appointed Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Coal India. Ravi Ranjan was appointed Managing Director of SBI (from 15 Dec), handling risk, compliance and the Stressed Assets Resolution Group.

8

MoUs

India–Oman CEPA

India and Oman signed a free trade pact (CEPA) granting duty-free access to over 98% of India's exports to Oman, including textiles, agriculture and leather. Oman offered immediate tariff elimination on 97.96% of product categories; implementation is expected in Q1 of the next year.

India & ADB – \$2.2 bn loans

India and the ADB signed five loans worth over \$2.2 billion for skilling (modernising 650 ITIs), rooftop solar, healthcare, metro development and ecotourism. The package aligns with national flagship programmes across multiple states.

India–Brazil Scorpene MoU

India and Brazil signed a tripartite MoU (Indian Navy, Brazilian Navy and Mazagon Dock) for cooperation in maintaining Scorpene-class submarines, during CNS Admiral Dinesh Tripathi's visit to Brazil. It deepens India-Brazil maritime and defence ties.

India–Ethiopia strategic partnership

India and Ethiopia upgraded ties to a strategic partnership during PM Modi's visit to Addis Ababa, signing eight MoUs covering customs, a data centre at Ethiopia's Foreign Ministry and UN peacekeeping training cooperation.

India–Saudi visa waiver

India and Saudi Arabia signed a visa-waiver agreement for diplomatic, special and official passport holders to ease official travel. India will also set up an India-Saudi Arabia Parliamentary Friendship Group, announced by Speaker Om Birla.

Labour Ministry–Microsoft; MSME–Amazon

The Labour Ministry signed an MoU with Microsoft for AI-led skilling (via DigiSaksham) and jobs through the National Career Service. Separately, the MSME Ministry tied up with Amazon to bring PM Vishwakarma artisans onto its marketplace.

BEL–Safran HAMMER JV

Bharat Electronics and Safran signed a JV agreement to produce the HAMMER precision air-to-ground weapon in India (50:50), targeting 60% indigenisation. Compatible with Rafale and Tejas, it supports Make-in-India in defence manufacturing.

9 Summits

COP30, Belém

COP30 in Belém concluded with a compromise expanding climate finance for developing nations but avoiding any fossil-fuel phase-out, with the US sending no delegation. The deal urged developed countries to triple adaptation finance by 2035; India praised Brazil's inclusive approach.

23rd India–Russia Annual Summit

The 23rd India-Russia Annual Summit reaffirmed the Special & Privileged Strategic Partnership and marked 25 years of the partnership (2000–2025). Both sides adopted 'Programme 2030', a roadmap for trade, defence, energy, space and nuclear cooperation.

2nd WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine

The Second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine was held in New Delhi (17–19 Dec), co-hosted by the WHO and India's Ministry of Ayush. Themed 'Restoring balance', it drew participants from over 100 countries to promote evidence-based traditional medicine.

India hosts 20th UNESCO ICH Committee

India hosted the 20th session of UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee on Intangible Cultural Heritage at the Red Fort, New Delhi. The 24-member committee reviews nominations; Deepavali was inscribed during the session.

India–AI Impact Summit 2026

India will host the India-AI Impact Summit 2026 in New Delhi (16–20 Feb), becoming the first Global South country to hold a global AI summit series. It will focus on seven 'Chakras' including safe and trusted AI, inclusion and innovation.

10 Reports

Groundwater uranium contamination

The CGWB's Annual Ground Water Quality Report 2025 found 13–15% of samples (based on ~15,000 collected in 2024) exceed uranium limits. While most groundwater is safe, certain regions face rising uranium, requiring regular monitoring and local mitigation.

India 3rd in Stanford AI Vibrancy Index

India climbed to 3rd in Stanford's 2025 Global AI Vibrancy Index, up four spots from 7th in 2023, behind only the US and China. The rise reflects strong AI R&D, expanding talent and digital infrastructure, though it slipped in policy and governance.

Arton Capital Passport Index 2025

The Arton Capital Passport Index 2025 ranked the UAE strongest for the seventh year (visa-free access to 126 destinations). India ranked 67th with a mobility score of 74, while Singapore and Spain shared second place.

Elon Musk richest

Elon Musk's net worth reached \$684 billion, making him the world's richest person per Forbes, driven by SpaceX's rising valuation and an ~\$800-bn IPO move. His wealth surpassed the combined fortunes of Bezos, Zuckerberg and Jensen Huang.

Bloomberg Richest Families 2025

Bloomberg's 2025 list found the top 25 families worth \$2.9 trillion. The Walton family (Walmart) led at \$513.4 billion, followed by Abu Dhabi's Al Nahyan family (\$335.9 bn); an Indian family ranked 8th.

Deepinder Goyal tops Hurun self-made list

Deepinder Goyal, CEO of Eternal (formerly Zomato), topped Hurun India's 'Top 200 Self-Made Entrepreneurs of the Millennia 2025'. Eternal's valuation rose 27% to ₹3.2 lakh crore, surpassing DMart's Radhakishan Damani.

11 Sports

India win Women's Kabaddi World Cup

India's women's kabaddi team won their second consecutive Women's Kabaddi World Cup, beating Chinese Taipei 35–28 in the Dhaka final (24 Nov). India were unbeaten throughout, defeating Iran 33–21 in the semi-finals.

Sunil Narine – 600 T20 wickets

Veteran spinner Sunil Narine became the first bowler to reach 600 wickets in competitive T20 cricket, during a World T20 match. Known for his variations and control, the 37-year-old has shaped modern T20 bowling across leagues.

Lando Norris – maiden F1 title

McLaren's Lando Norris clinched his first Formula 1 world championship at the Abu Dhabi Grand Prix, finishing on 423 points ahead of Verstappen (421) and Piastri (410). McLaren took both drivers' and constructors' titles for the first time since 1998.

R Praggnanandhaa – Candidates 2026

R Praggnanandhaa became the first Indian to qualify for the Candidates 2026 tournament by winning the FIDE Circuit 2025, with wins at Wijk aan Zee, Superbet Romania and London Chess Classic. The event runs in Cyprus from 28 Mar–16 Apr 2026.

Khelo India University Games 2025

The 5th Khelo India University Games concluded in Jaipur, with Chandigarh University topping the medal tally (67 medals, 42 gold). Held across seven Rajasthan cities, the multi-sport event spanned 23 disciplines from archery to yoga.

Shafali Verma & Simon Harmer

Shafali Verma won the ICC Women's Player of the Month (Nov) after scoring 87 in the World Cup final, while South Africa's Simon Harmer won the men's award for 17 wickets in a 2-0 Test series win in India.

12 Awards & Honours

Fatima Bosch – Miss Universe 2025

Fatima Bosch of Mexico won the 74th Miss Universe in Thailand — Mexico's fourth title. India's Manika Vishwakarma finished in the Top 12, while badminton icon Saina Nehwal was on the judging panel.

Duplantis & McLaughlin-Levrone

Armand Duplantis and Sydney McLaughlin-Levrone were named World Athletes of the Year at the World Athletics Awards in Monaco. Duplantis set four pole-vault world records (clearing 6.30 m); McLaughlin-Levrone went undefeated in the 400 m and 400 m hurdles.

Donald Trump – first FIFA Peace Prize

Donald Trump received the first-ever FIFA Peace Prize at the 2026 World Cup draw in Washington, presented by Gianni Infantino. Trump claimed credit for resolving conflicts including an India-Pakistan ceasefire, which India denies.

Supriya Sahu

Supriya Sahu, Additional Chief Secretary (Environment) of Tamil Nadu, won the UN Environment Programme's 2025 Champions of the Earth Award. She was recognised for integrated governance and nature-based solutions to protect vulnerable communities.

PM Modi – Ethiopia & Oman honours

PM Modi was conferred 'The Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia' — the first foreign head of state/government to receive it — and the 'Order of Oman', Oman's highest civilian honour. These add to 28+ foreign honours he has received.

Time Person of the Year

Time named the 'Architects of AI' its 2025 Person of the Year, reflecting AI's sweeping impact across education and industry. The choice highlighted the concentration of power among a few AI builders, drawing parallels to the Gilded Age.

Changi Airport – world's best 2025

Singapore Changi Airport was named the world's best international airport for 2025 by Travel+Leisure readers at India's Best Awards. It was praised for features like the world's tallest indoor waterfall, indoor gardens and efficient transit experience.

13 Government Schemes

Tex-RAMPS

The government approved the ₹305-crore Tex-RAMPS scheme (2025–31) to promote research and innovation in textiles. Funded entirely by the Textiles Ministry, it addresses gaps in research, data systems, innovation support and capacity building.

VB–G RAM G Act 2025

The Viksit Bharat–G RAM G Act, 2025 replaced MGNREGA, raising the guaranteed employment entitlement to 125 days and linking work to rural infrastructure and livelihood assets. Funding shifts to 60:40 between Centre and States, with a 60-day pause during peak farming.

PM MITRA Parks

DPRs worth ₹5,567 crore were finalised for three greenfield PM MITRA textile parks at Lucknow (UP), Kalaburagi (Karnataka) and Navsari (Gujarat). Developed via PPP on a DBFOT model, they have drawn reported investment interest exceeding ₹20,054 crore.

National Makhana Board

The first board meeting of the National Makhana Board was held in New Delhi, kicking off its ₹476-crore Central Sector Scheme. It reviewed state action plans and focused on seed supply, processing technology and value-chain training centred on Bihar.

14 Obituary

Dharmendra

Veteran actor and Padma Bhushan awardee Dharmendra, fondly called Bollywood's 'He-Man', died at 89. Across six decades and 300+ films including 'Sholay' and 'Seeta Aur Geeta', he also served as an MP from 2004 to 2009.

Simone Tata

Simone Tata, who shaped India's beauty industry through Lakmé and later founded Trent Ltd, died at 95. Born in Geneva, she settled in Mumbai after marrying Naval Tata in 1955 and influenced Indian retail for over four decades.

Ram Sutar

Renowned sculptor Ram Sutar, who designed the Statue of Unity — the world's tallest statue — died at 100. A Padma Bhushan awardee and JJ School of Art gold medallist, his works include statues of Gandhi and Shivaji at Parliament.

Frank Gehry

World-renowned architect Frank Gehry, known for the Guggenheim Museum Bilbao and the Walt Disney Concert Hall, died at 96. A Pritzker Prize (1989) winner, he used jet-design software and drew inspiration from nature for his bold, sculptural style.

Shivraj Patil

Former Union Home Minister and senior Congress leader Shivraj Patil died at 90. The 10th Speaker of the Lok Sabha (1991–96), he won the Latur seat seven times and resigned as Home Minister after the 26/11 Mumbai attack.

15 Important Days**Elimination of Violence Against Women – 25 Nov**

Established by the UN in 2000, the day starts the global 16 Days of Activism against Gender-Based Violence. The 2025 theme is 'UNiTE to End Digital Violence against All Women and Girls'; India works through the umbrella Mission Shakti scheme.

National Milk Day – 26 November

National Milk Day marks the birth anniversary of Dr Verghese Kurien, the 'Father of the White Revolution'. First celebrated in 2014, it recognises the cooperatives developed under Operation Flood; India now produces 25% of the world's milk.

Constitution Day – 26 November

Samvidhan Divas marks the adoption of the Indian Constitution on 26 Nov 1949. Declared Constitution Day in 2015 (earlier 'Law Day') to promote constitutional values and Ambedkar's 125th birth anniversary.

World AIDS Day – 1 December

First marked by the WHO in 1988, World AIDS Day raises awareness of HIV/AIDS and supports those living with it. The 2025 theme is 'Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response'; India runs campaigns through NACO.

Navy Day – 4 December

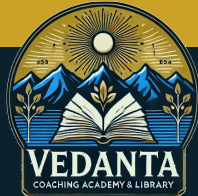
Navy Day honours Operation Trident (4 Dec 1971), when the Navy sank four Pakistani vessels including PNS Khaibar. The 2025 celebration featured an operational demonstration at Shangumugham beach, Kerala, aligned with the MAHASAGAR vision.

Intl Mountain Day – 11 December

Recognised by the UN in 2003, the day raises awareness of mountain ecosystems, which host ~half the world's biodiversity hotspots and support 15% of the population. The 2025 theme is 'Glaciers matter for water, food and livelihoods'.

National Mathematics Day – 22 December

National Mathematics Day marks the birth anniversary of Srinivasa Ramanujan, designated by the government in 2012. Born in 1887 in Erode, Ramanujan was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1918.



FEBRUARY 2026

1

National News

SHANTI Act 2025 assent

President Murmu gave assent to the SHANTI Act, opening the civil nuclear sector to private firms and granting statutory recognition to the AERB. Repealing the Atomic Energy Act 1962 and Civil Liability Act 2010, it supports India's goal of 100 GW nuclear capacity by 2047.

10th Swachh Survekshan launched

The 10th edition of Swachh Survekshan was launched with the theme 'Swachhata Ki Nayi Peהל'. Coverage expanded from 73 ULBs (2016) to ~4,900, now including all river and coastal towns, with higher weight to year-round citizen feedback and 3,000+ trained assessors.

CoE & VR Mine Simulator

G. Kishan Reddy inaugurated a Centre of Excellence under the National Critical Minerals Mission and India's first Virtual Reality Mine Simulator at IIT(ISM) Dhanbad. The CoE covers exploration to recycling; the VR simulator (with 20+ modules) cuts coal-mining training time by 50%.

Subansiri Lower Hydro – Unit-2

Manohar Lal inaugurated commercial operation of Unit-2 (250 MW) of the Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project (NHPC), advancing toward its full 2,000 MW capacity (8 x 250 MW). It features a 116-m dam, the largest in North-East India, for flood moderation.

Four labour codes – draft rules

The Centre notified draft rules for the four labour codes (Wages, Industrial Relations, Social Security and OSH), open for 45-day public consultation. They define gig workers, mandate free annual health check-ups above 40, double wages for overtime, and equal pay for women.

e-Bill System for fertiliser subsidy

Chemicals & Fertilizers Minister J.P. Nadda launched the e-Bill System to process ₹2 lakh crore of fertiliser subsidies digitally. Replacing manual paper-based bills with a system-to-system workflow, it adds automated controls and audit trails to curb fraud.

184 new crop varieties

Shivraj Singh Chouhan released 184 new varieties across 25 crops, developed by ICAR, agricultural universities and private firms. He announced India became the world's largest rice producer in 2024-25 (150.18 MT), surpassing China's 145.28 MT.

Indian Railways – biggest electrified system

Indian Railways electrified ~99.2% of its broad-gauge network (69,427 of 70,001 route km) under Mission 100% Electrification. The pace rose from 1.4 km/day (2004–14) to 15+ km/day (2019–25), giving India a higher electrified share than China, France, Russia and the UK.

India – first commercial bio-bitumen

India became the first country to commercially produce bio-bitumen for roads, announced by Nitin Gadkari at a CSIR ceremony. Made from crop residue, it cuts pollution from stubble burning and is seen as a step toward 'clean and green highways'.

UIDAI mascot 'Udai'

UIDAI introduced 'Udai', a resident-focused Aadhaar mascot, to simplify communication and boost awareness. Chosen via a MyGov competition (875 entries) and unveiled by Chairman Neelkanth Mishra, it guides citizens on updates, authentication and responsible use.

India's first tailings policy

The central government announced India's first tailings policy to recover critical minerals from mine dumps and tailings (secondary sources). It promotes coordinated action across ministries and sustainable mining to boost the supply of strategic minerals.

Akasa Air joins IATA

Akasa Air became the 5th Indian carrier to join the International Air Transport Association, after completing the IOSA safety audit. Founded in 2020 by Vinay Dube and the late Rakesh Jhunjhunwala, it operates 31 Boeing 737 MAX jets serving 32 cities.

National IED Data Management System

Amit Shah launched the National IED Data Management System (NIDMS), an NSG-maintained database of bomb explosions since 1999. Using AI to consolidate scattered datasets, it will aid agencies like the NIA and integrate into the ICJS-2 platform.

Dulhasti Stage-II cleared

The Environment Ministry approved the 260 MW Dulhasti Stage-II hydropower project on the Chenab river in Kishtwar, J&K; (~₹3,200 crore). An extension of the 390 MW Dulhasti Stage-I, it comes amid India's suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty after the Pahalgam attack.

Vande Mataram digital versions

Prasar Bharati digitally released two versions of Vande Mataram — one Carnatic and one Hindustani (composed by Ustad Johar Ali) — marking the song's 150th anniversary. They are the first two of a planned 25 musical renditions by Akashvani.

2

International Affairs

Russia – nuclear plant on Moon by 2036

Russia plans to build a nuclear power plant on the Moon by 2036, in partnership with China, to power the International Lunar Research Station. Executed by Roscosmos, Rosatom and the Kurchatov Institute, it marks a shift from one-time missions to a permanent lunar presence.

China – world's longest expressway tunnel

China inaugurated the 22.13-km Tianshan Shengli Tunnel in Xinjiang — the world's longest expressway tunnel — through the Tianshan range. Part of the Urumqi–Yuli Expressway, it cuts the Urumqi–Korla journey from ~7 hours to 3.

Bulgaria adopts euro

Bulgaria adopted the euro as its official currency, becoming the 21st eurozone member, after joining the EU in 2007. The lowest-GDP-per-capita EU state, it expects easier travel, lower exchange costs and greater investor confidence; Croatia was the last adopter (2023).

Turkmenistan legalises crypto mining

Turkmenistan legalised cryptocurrency mining and exchanges through legislation signed by President Berdimuhamedov, with the central bank overseeing licensing. Digital currencies, however, will not be recognised as legal tender; the economy relies heavily on gas exports.

UN – 2026 Year of Rangelands & Pastoralists

The UN General Assembly designated 2026 the International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists, an initiative led by Mongolia with 60 member states. The FAO will oversee the celebrations, aiming to raise awareness and promote sustainable rangeland management.

India–France 38th Strategic Dialogue

India and France co-chaired the 38th India-France Strategic Dialogue, covering security, defence, technology, space and civil nuclear cooperation under Make-in-India. NSA Ajit Doval led the Indian side; preparations for President Macron's India visit were reviewed.

EU–Mercosur trade deal

The EU and Mercosur (Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay) signed a long-delayed free trade agreement in Asunción, creating one of the world's largest trade zones. It will eliminate over 90% of tariffs, phased over 10–15 years, pending parliamentary ratification.

India–Pakistan nuclear list exchange

India and Pakistan exchanged lists of nuclear installations for the 35th consecutive year under the 1988 agreement (in force since 1991) prohibiting attacks on each other's nuclear facilities. The annual 1 January exchange is a confidence-building measure.

Afghanistan exports pomegranates to Qatar

Afghanistan exported pomegranates from Kandahar to Qatar for the first time (~20 tonnes), a step toward expanding its agricultural exports. Kandahar's pomegranate exports grew 32% year-on-year, with ~22,000 tonnes sent to countries including India and Pakistan.

3

State Affairs

Tamil Nadu CSR & TiNAI portals

Tamil Nadu launched the TNCSR portal for coordinating corporate social responsibility and the TiNAI land-use information system (■1.5 crore). TiNAI integrates 50 years of data with GIS and AI to map thermal stress, water levels, soil erosion and future land use.

Gujarat leads rooftop solar

Gujarat leads India in residential rooftop solar with 1,879 MW installed under PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana — over 50% of its target — across 1.1 million systems. Residential consumers received ■3,778 crore in subsidies, aided by generous policy incentives.

Assam – first 8th Pay Commission

Assam became the first Indian state to form its 8th State Pay Commission, before the 7th Pay Commission term expired on 1 Jan 2026. CM Himanta Biswa Sarma appointed former chief secretary Subhas Das to lead the panel revising salaries and pensions.

First tropical trout farm – Telangana

Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh inaugurated India's first commercial-scale tropical trout farm — the Smart Green Aquaculture Farm and Research Institute in Hyderabad. Using Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS) technology, it enables cold-water trout farming in a tropical climate.

Wayanad – first fully paperless court

CJI Surya Kant inaugurated India's first fully digital district court system at Kalpetta, Wayanad, Kerala. Developed by the Kerala High Court, it handles everything from e-filing to judgments and uses in-house AI for case summaries and voice-to-text transcription.

Tamil Nadu Assured Pension Scheme (TAPS)

Tamil Nadu introduced the Tamil Nadu Assured Pension Scheme (TAPS) from 1 Jan 2026, replacing the CPS. It blends OPS and NPS features, giving a guaranteed pension of 50% of last-drawn pay plus DA; employees contribute 10% of salary, with the state covering shortfalls.

MP Swachh Jal Abhiyan

MP CM Mohan Yadav launched the Swachh Jal Abhiyan after contaminated-water deaths in Indore (21 dead). The two-phase campaign focuses on GIS mapping of water and sewer pipelines, robot leak checks and weekly public hearings (Jal Sunwai).

4

Business and Economy

India GDP FY26 – 7.4% (First Advance Estimate)

The First Advance Estimates pegged India's FY26 GDP growth at 7.4%, up from 6.5%, driven by manufacturing and services. Manufacturing and construction are estimated to grow 7%; nominal GDP is projected at 8%, informing the Union Budget on 1 February.

Forex reserves cross \$700 bn

India's foreign-exchange reserves crossed \$700 billion (record \$704.885 bn), making it the fourth nation after China, Japan and Switzerland to do so. Gold reserves rose to \$65.796 bn; higher reserves strengthen India's ability to weather global volatility.

Core sector grows 1.8% (Nov 2025)

India's eight core sectors grew 1.8% in November 2025, with cement up 14.5%, steel 6.1%, fertiliser 5.6% and coal 2.1%. Crude oil (-3.2%) and natural gas (-2.5%) declined; the index makes up over 40% of the Index of Industrial Production.

UPI – 21.63 bn transactions (Dec)

UPI recorded 21.63 billion transactions in December 2025, up 29% year-on-year, with value rising 20% to ~₹28 lakh crore. Daily transaction count rose to 698 million; IMPS value reached ₹6.62 lakh crore, up 10% year-on-year.

India–Australia ECTA

From 1 January 2026, 100% of Australian tariff lines became zero-duty for Indian exports under the India-Australia ECTA, benefiting gems, textiles, leather and footwear. India grants Australia access on 70%+ of tariff lines, mainly raw materials; bilateral exports grew 8% in 2024-25.

P&NG; Rules 2025

The government notified the Petroleum and Natural Gas Rules 2025, replacing the 1949 and 1959 rules. A single petroleum lease (up to 30 years, extendable for the field's life) is introduced, applications processed in 180 days, and criminal penalties replaced with financial ones.

Electronics exports cross \$47 bn

India's electronics exports crossed a record \$47 billion in 2025, making electronics the third-largest export category. Smartphones contributed ~\$30 bn under the PLI scheme; domestic production rose to ₹11.3 lakh crore, with India the second-largest mobile manufacturer.

First Payments Regulatory Board meeting

The first meeting of the Payments Regulatory Board (PRB) was chaired by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra in Mumbai. Constituted after amendments to the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, it reviewed the draft Payments Vision 2028 and digital-payment trends.

RBI cancels 35 NBFC registrations

The RBI cancelled the Certificates of Registration of 35 Non-Banking Financial Companies for failing to meet regulatory requirements, under Section 45-IA of the RBI Act. Separately, it recognised FEDAI as a Self-Regulatory Organisation for authorised dealers.

HPCL LC-Max unit, Vizag

HPCL commissioned the world's first and largest Liquid Conversion-Maximum (LC-Max) residue upgradation facility at its Vizag refinery (■31,407 crore). Part of the modernisation project, it raised capacity to 15 MMTPA and converts ~93% of bottom-of-the-barrel oils into high-value products.

5 Science & Technology

ISRO launches BlueBird Block-2

ISRO launched the US satellite BlueBird Block-2 on its heaviest vehicle, LVM3-M6, from Sriharikota — the heaviest satellite ever launched from Indian soil. Part of AST SpaceMobile's LEO constellation, it provides direct-to-mobile 4G/5G connectivity worldwide.

Param Rudra supercomputer

Bihar's first Param Rudra supercomputer was inaugurated at IIT Patna under the National Supercomputing Mission, making it the first institution in Bihar to host one. It enables complex computational research locally for faculty and students across eastern India.

AILA – AI lab agent

Researchers from IIT Delhi (with Denmark and Germany) developed AILA, an AI lab assistant that autonomously conducts real scientific experiments. It can control instruments like the Atomic Force Microscope, make real-time decisions and analyse results without human intervention.

PathGennie software

Scientists at the S.N. Bose National Centre, Kolkata (under DST), developed PathGennie, an open-source framework to accelerate drug discovery. It simulates rare molecular unbinding events more accurately by mimicking natural selection, improving drug residence-time prediction.

World's first ITVISMA gene therapy

Abu Dhabi administered the world's first ITVISMA gene therapy (by Novartis) to a patient with spinal muscular atrophy at Sheikh Khalifa Medical City. The one-time therapy replaces the defective SMN1 gene; the UAE is the second country after the US to approve it.

3D-printed Automatic Weather Stations

India developed indigenous 3D-printed Automatic Weather Stations under the ■2,000-crore Mission Mausam, with rollout starting in Delhi. The solar-powered stations record temperature, wind, humidity and rainfall in real time at lower cost than imported units.

Hubble finds 'Cloud-9'

NASA's Hubble Space Telescope discovered 'Cloud-9', a starless, gas-rich dark-matter cloud 14 million light-years away near galaxy M94. A Reionization-Limited HI Cloud (RELHIC) of ~1 million solar masses, it is a 'relic' primordial galaxy that never formed stars.

SCORP

India introduced its first legged mobile manipulator, SCORP, developed by startup xTerra Robotics and incubated at IIT Kanpur. Combining a legged robot's terrain adaptability with a robotic arm, it suits disaster zones, industrial sites and hazardous inspections.

Sunita Williams retires from NASA

Astronaut Sunita Williams retired from NASA after 27 years, having spent 608 days in space (second-most by a NASA astronaut) and performed nine spacewalks — the most by a woman. Her career spanned missions, training and preparation for future lunar exploration.

6 Defence

Pinaka 120-km guided rocket

DRDO successfully conducted the maiden flight test of the Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket at Chandipur, Odisha, achieving a 120-km range with all manoeuvres as planned. Fired from an in-service launcher, it was hailed by Rajnath Singh as a game-changer for the armed forces.

Akash-NG trials completed

DRDO completed User Evaluation Trials of the Next Generation Akash (Akash-NG) missile system, intercepting targets at low altitude/near boundary and at long-range/high altitude. Equipped with an indigenous RF seeker, it strengthens the IAF's air defence.

BrahMos exports

India is set to finalise BrahMos missile deals worth \$450 million (over ₹4,000 crore) with Vietnam and Indonesia, deepening defence exports in Southeast Asia. The India-Russia missile boosts India's standing as a trusted regional defence partner amid South China Sea tensions.

President Murmu in INS Vaghsheer

President Droupadi Murmu undertook a two-hour maiden sortie aboard the indigenous Kalvari-class submarine INS Vaghsheer at Karwar — the second President to board a submarine after Dr Kalam (2006). Built by Mazagon Dock, it features advanced stealth and combat systems.

ICGS Samudra Pratap

The Coast Guard commissioned 'Samudra Pratap', its first indigenously designed pollution-control vessel, at Goa Shipyard. The 114.5-m, 4,200-tonne vessel (60%+ indigenous) enforces marine-pollution control, maritime law and search-and-rescue in India's EEZ.

Army – 'Year of Networking & Data Centricity' 2026

The Indian Army declared 2026 the 'Year of Networking & Data Centricity' to hasten digital transformation and improve real-time decision-making. Army Chief Gen. Upendra Dwivedi tied it to the force's 'Decade of Transformation' built on jointness and self-reliance.

DRDO scramjet engine

DRDO conducted a successful 12-minute long-duration ground test of a full-scale scramjet engine at Hyderabad, boosting its Hypersonic Cruise Missile programme. The test validated the combustor design and placed India among a select group with advanced hypersonic capability.

DRDO MPATGM

DRDO flight-tested a third-generation, fire-and-forget Man-Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM) with top-attack capability against a moving target in Maharashtra. With an IIR seeker for day-night use, it can defeat modern main battle tanks.

Exercise Sanjha Shakti

The Army conducted its first Military-Civil Fusion exercise, 'Sanjha Shakti' (8–9 Jan), at Khadki Military Station, Pune. Involving 16 civilian agencies and 350+ personnel, it tested civil-military coordination, SOPs and rapid response for emergencies.

7

Appointments

Anu Garg

Senior IAS officer Anu Garg was appointed Odisha's next Chief Secretary, becoming the first woman to hold the post. She succeeds Manoj Ahuja and currently heads the Planning & Convergence and Water Resources departments.

Hardeep Singh Ahluwalia

Hardeep Singh Ahluwalia took additional charge as interim MD & CEO of Canara Bank from 1 January 2026, succeeding K. Satyanarayana Raju. He will serve for three months or until a permanent MD & CEO is appointed.

A. K. Balasubrahmanian

A.K. Balasubrahmanian was appointed Chairman of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB) from 1 Jan 2026, succeeding D.K. Shukla. A distinguished scientist with ~40 years in nuclear reactor technology and safety, he is an expert on PHWR ageing management.

A. Sakthivel

A. Sakthivel, founder of Poppys Knitwear, assumed charge as Chairman of the Apparel Export Promotion Council (AEPC) for a historic fifth term. A 43-year AEPC board member, he received the Padma Shri in 2009 for service to the export sector.

Dina Powell McCormick

Meta appointed Dina Powell McCormick its President and Vice Chairman as part of a leadership restructuring focused on AI strategy. She brings 25+ years in finance and national security, including 16 years at Goldman Sachs and a stint as US Deputy National Security Advisor.

MS Dhoni

Former India cricket captain MS Dhoni was named Goodwill Ambassador for the Bajaj Pune Grand Tour 2026, India's first international multi-stage road-cycling race (19–23 Jan). The UCI 2.2 event spans 437 km with 171 riders from 29 teams.

Praveen Kumar / S.S. Kapoor

Praveen Kumar, a 1993-batch IPS officer, was appointed Director General of the BSF (tenure to Sep 2030). Shatrुजेत Singh Kapoor, a 1990-batch IPS officer from Haryana, was named DG of the ITBP (term to Oct 2026).

Nitin Nabin

Nitin Nabin was appointed the BJP's youngest-ever national president at age 45. PM Modi referred to him as a 'millennial'; his role includes managing the party and coordinating NDA allies, signalling a generational leadership transition.

Ida Liu

HSBC Private Bank appointed Ida Liu its new CEO from 5 January 2026, succeeding interim CEO Gabriel Castello. Previously global head of Citi Private Bank, she will focus on ultra-high-net-worth clients and cross-border wealth corridors.

8

MoUs

IOL–Safran defence systems

India Optel Limited (a Mini Navratna) signed an agreement with France's Safran to manufacture two combat-proven systems in India — the SIGMA 30N ring-laser-gyro navigation system (for artillery, air defence, missiles, radars) and the CM3-MR direct-firing sight (for guns and anti-drone systems).

DRDO–Rashtriya Raksha University

DRDO and Rashtriya Raksha University signed an MoU to collaborate on research, education and training for defence and internal security. Aligned with Aatmanirbhar Bharat, it covers joint research, PhD programmes and specialised training for security forces.

India–New Zealand FTA (Financial Services)

India and New Zealand concluded negotiations on the Financial Services Annex of their FTA. With 18 articles going beyond GATS, it enables cooperation on real-time payments with UPI/NPCI interoperability, fintech sandboxes, and up to 15 Indian bank branches in New Zealand.

Delhi Govt–RBI

The Delhi Government signed an MoU with the RBI, bringing Delhi under the central bank's full banking, cash-management and debt framework for the first time. The RBI will act as banker, debt manager and financial agent, enabling market borrowings via State Development Loans.

India–UAE

India and the UAE announced ~twelve outcomes during President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed's visit, setting a target to more than double bilateral trade to over \$200 billion by 2032. They will deepen cooperation in nuclear energy, infrastructure financing and GIFT City.

Maruti Suzuki–IOCL

Maruti Suzuki partnered with Indian Oil to set up vehicle service facilities at fuel retail outlets across India, offering routine maintenance, minor repairs and major services. It expands Maruti's network of 5,780+ service touchpoints by leveraging IOCL's 41,000 fuel stations.

India–Germany

India and Germany signed multiple agreements during Chancellor Merz's visit, including a Global Skills Partnership for healthcare workers, visa-free transit for Indians, and an India-Germany Centre of Excellence for green technologies and climate action. Bilateral trade exceeds \$50 billion.

India–Israel fisheries

India and Israel signed a Joint Declaration of Intent to deepen cooperation in fisheries and aquaculture. It focuses on technology transfer (Israel's RAS and intensive fish farming), genetic improvement, deep-sea fishing expertise and reducing post-harvest wastage.

MMRDA at WEF 2026

The Mumbai Metropolitan Region Development Authority signed 10 MoUs worth ₹8.73 trillion (\$96 billion) on day one of WEF 2026, signalling investor confidence in Maharashtra's infrastructure. Projects include logistics parks and developments around the Bullet Train station, aligned with 'Mumbai 3.0'.

9

Summits

Anti-Terrorism Conference 2025

Amit Shah inaugurated the NIA-organised Anti-Terrorism Conference 2025 in New Delhi, unveiling the updated NIA Crime Manual, an Organised Crime Network Database and a Lost/Looted Weapon Database. He stressed India's zero-tolerance policy and a stronger anti-terror grid.

5th National Conference of Chief Secretaries

PM Modi chaired the 5th National Conference of Chief Secretaries in New Delhi (theme: 'Human Capital for Viksit Bharat'). The three-day conference covered education, skilling, sports and special sessions on tourism, AgriStack and post-LGD governance tech.

BRICS 2026 logo & website

India launched the lotus-inspired BRICS 2026 logo and website as it assumed the chairmanship from 1 January. With 11 members covering ~50% of the world's population and 40% of GDP, the 2026 theme is 'Building for Resilience, Innovation, Cooperation and Sustainability'.

28th CSPOC

India hosted the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of the Commonwealth in New Delhi (13–16 Jan), with 60+ countries participating. Chaired by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, it discussed AI in Parliament and best practices in parliamentary democracy.

WEF Davos 2026

The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2026 was held in Davos (theme: 'A Spirit of Dialogue'), drawing ~3,000 leaders. Discussions focused on cooperation amid geopolitical tension, technological disruption and concern over the weakening rules-based global order.

9th India–Myanmar Joint Trade Committee

The 9th India-Myanmar Joint Trade Committee met in Nay Pyi Taw, covering connectivity, border infrastructure and Rupee-Kyat trade settlement. Bilateral trade stood at \$2.15 billion (2024-25) with a target of \$5 billion by 2030; Myanmar valued India's pulses-import policy.

10 Reports

RBI – Trend & Progress of Banking 2024-25

The RBI released its 'Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2024-25' report on 29 December, highlighting a resilient banking sector. It noted strong balance-sheet growth, improved asset quality and robust profitability across scheduled commercial banks, despite slight moderation.

India solar capacity crosses 130 GW

India's solar power capacity crossed 130 GW as of November 2025, a 41% rise from 94 GW a year earlier. Growth was driven by the Solar Parks scheme and other government initiatives, supporting the goal of 500 GW non-fossil capacity by 2030.

NITI Trade Watch Quarterly (5th)

NITI Aayog member Arvind Virmani launched the 5th 'Trade Watch Quarterly' for Q1 FY26. It found India's auto-component exports nearly doubled to \$16.9 billion (7% CAGR), with services as the main driver of trade performance amid shifts to technology-intensive exports.

Uttarakhand Police tops ICJS 2.0

Uttarakhand Police topped the nationwide Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) 2.0 rankings with a score of 93.46, released by the NCRB. ICJS 2.0 unifies criminal-justice procedures on a 'One Data, One Entry' principle for evidence-based investigations.

NITI Export Preparedness Index 2024

NITI Aayog released the 4th edition of the Export Preparedness Index (EPI) 2024, evaluating states' export readiness across four pillars — business ecosystem, export infrastructure, policy & governance and export performance — to support the \$1-trillion merchandise-export goal by 2030.

Henley Passport Index 2026

India rose five spots to 80th in the Henley Passport Index 2026, sharing the rank with Niger and Algeria (visa-free/ETA access to 55 destinations). Singapore was first (192 destinations), the UAE reached its best-ever 5th, and Afghanistan ranked last.

WEF Global Risks Report 2026

The WEF's Global Risks Report 2026 described the current era as the 'Age of Competition', where economic confrontation replaced armed conflict as the top concern. It cited rising tariffs, investment checks and resource controls, with AI-governance fears ranking high long-term.

World Bank GEP

The World Bank's Global Economic Prospects projected India as the fastest-growing major economy at 7.2% in FY26, driven by domestic demand, tax reforms and improved rural incomes. Growth is seen easing to 6.5% (FY27) on US tariffs; global GDP growth is pegged at 2.6%.

11 Sports

Pakistan U-19 win Asia Cup

Pakistan's under-19 team won the Asia Cup, beating India by 191 runs in the Dubai final after posting 347/8 and bowling India out for 156. Sameer Minhas (172 off 113) — the highest individual score in a Youth ODI final — was named Player of the Match and Tournament.

Satwik–Chirag bronze

Satwiksairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty won bronze at the BWF World Tour Finals 2025 in Hangzhou, losing the semi-final to China's Liang/Wang. It was only the second-ever World Tour Finals medal won by Indian shuttlers, after PV Sindhu's 2018 title.

Praggnanandhaa & Anish Giri

R Praggnanandhaa and Anish Giri led Alpine SG Pipers to the Global Chess League 2025 (Season 3) title in Mumbai, beating defending champions Triveni Continental Kings. Giri's consistency and Praggnanandhaa's win over Vidit Gujrathi sealed their maiden GCL crown.

Tilottama Sen

Karnataka's Tilottama Sen won the women's 50 m Rifle Three Positions title at the National Shooting Championships in Bhopal (466.9), becoming the youngest Indian shooter to secure a Paris Olympics quota place.

Sanjay Takale – Dakar Rally 2026

Sanjay Takale won the H3 class in the Dakar Rally 2026 prologue (Toyota HDJ 100), finishing 35th overall, ahead of Spain's Sole and Cerezo. It made him the first Indian on the Dakar podium in the Cars category, enhancing India's reputation in global rallying.

Karnataka tops Khelo India Beach Games 2026

Karnataka was crowned overall winner of the second Khelo India Beach Games 2026, held at Ghoghla Beach, Diu (5–10 Jan). Organised by the DNHDD administration with SAI oversight, it strengthened beach sports in India following the inaugural 2025 edition.

Saina Nehwal retires

Legendary shuttler Saina Nehwal confirmed her retirement from competitive badminton on a podcast. India's first Olympic badminton medallist (London 2012 bronze) and a former world No. 1, she left the sport on her own terms after severe knee issues.

National Sports Governance Rules 2026

The Centre issued the National Sports Governance (National Sports Bodies) Rules, 2026, mandating at least four Sportspersons of Outstanding Merit in the general bodies of national sports bodies. To ensure representation, 50% of the women SOMs must be in the general body.

12 Awards & Honours

Ravi Deecee (DC Books)

French Ambassador Thierry Mathou conferred the Chevalier de l'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres on Ravi Deecee, MD of DC Books, for promoting multilingualism and global cultural collaboration. DC Books has translated French authors like Annie Ernaux and Sartre into Malayalam.

Vaibhav Suryavanshi

14-year-old cricket prodigy Vaibhav Suryavanshi received the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar from President Murmu for his domestic and Under-19 performances. The award is India's highest civilian honour for children aged 5–18.

Toby Kiers – 2026 Tyler Prize

American evolutionary biologist Toby Kiers won the 2026 Tyler Prize for Environmental Achievement (the 'Environment Nobel') for her research on mycorrhizal fungal networks. These underground webs act as climate regulators, drawing down ~13 billion tonnes of carbon a year.

Jensen Huang – 2026 IEEE Medal of Honour

NVIDIA CEO Jensen Huang received the 2026 IEEE Medal of Honour (with a \$2 million prize) for visionary leadership in accelerated computing. Under him, NVIDIA became the first company to exceed a \$5-trillion market cap in October 2025.

Major Swathi S. Kumar

Indian Army officer Major Swathi Shantha Kumar won the UN Secretary-General's Award 2025 for gender-inclusive peacekeeping. Her project 'Equal Partners, Lasting Peace' engaged over 5,000 women in South Sudan and topped the Gender Category in a UN-wide vote.

Golden Globes 2026

The 83rd Golden Globes (11 Jan, California) saw 'One Battle After Another' (Comedy) and 'Adolescence' (TV) win four each, while 'Hamnet' won Best Drama. No Indian films were nominated, though Priyanka Chopra Jonas presented an award.

Ilaiyaraaja

Composer Ilaiyaraaja was honoured with the Padmapani Award at the 11th Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival (28 Jan–1 Feb). The award — a memento, citation and ₹2 lakh — recognises lifetime contribution to Indian cinema.

BSE

The Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) won the Asia Best Employer Brand Award 2026 at the Hong Kong Leadership Awards. It was recognised for its people-first approach, professional development and efforts to build an inclusive, high-performance workplace.

13

Government Schemes

REPM magnet scheme

The government approved ₹7,000+ crore under the Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM) to build India's first integrated magnet ecosystem (6,000 MT/year). It also signed mineral-cooperation pacts with Australia, Argentina and Zambia to cut import dependence.

PM-YUVA 3.0

The Education Ministry announced PM-YUVA 3.0 results, selecting 43 book proposals in 22 Indian languages plus English. Selected young authors get a six-month mentorship, a ₹50,000/month scholarship and 10% lifetime royalty, with the first books to be published in 2026.

PMMVY – 9 years

The Pradhan Mantri Matru Vandana Yojana completed nine years on 1 January 2026. The maternal-health scheme gives ₹5,000 for the first child and ₹6,000 for a second girl child; over 4.5 crore women have enrolled and ₹19,000+ crore disbursed since 2017.

Auto PLI scheme

The Production-Linked Incentive scheme for automobiles (₹26,000-crore outlay, 2023-28) has attracted cumulative investment of ₹35,657 crore. It has incentivised 10 lakh+ electric two-wheelers, 2.38 lakh e-three-wheelers, ~80,000 e-four-wheelers and 1,400 electric buses.

Market Access Support (MAS) scheme

The government launched a ₹4,531-crore Market Access Support scheme (FY26–31) under the Export Promotion Mission to boost exporters' global reach. It targets first-time exporters and MSMEs in priority sectors like agriculture, leather, handloom and toys.

Paripoorna Mediclaim Ayush Bima

The Finance Ministry launched the Paripoorna Mediclaim Ayush Bima for CGHS beneficiaries — an optional health-insurance plan offering ₹10 lakh or ₹20 lakh cover (provided by New India Assurance), with co-payment options and cumulative no-claim bonuses.

NBS rates – Rabi 2025-26

The government approved Nutrient-Based Subsidy rates for P&K; fertilisers for Rabi 2025-26 (1 Oct 2025–31 Mar 2026), with a ₹37,952.29-crore budget. Rates were fixed per kg for nitrogen, phosphorus, potassium and sulphur to promote balanced fertilisation.

14 Obituary

Khaleda Zia

Khaleda Zia, Bangladesh's first female Prime Minister and a central figure in its politics, died at 80 after a long illness. She served as PM three times; her decades-long rivalry with Sheikh Hasina — the 'battling begums' — dominated Bangladeshi politics.

Suresh Kalmadi

Senior Congress leader Suresh Kalmadi, former Union Minister of State for Railways and president of the Indian Olympic Association, died at 81. A prominent figure from Pune, he represented the city multiple times in the Lok Sabha.

Madhav Gadgil

Renowned ecologist Madhav Gadgil, who led the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel (the Gadgil Commission), died at 83. A 2024 UN Champions of the Earth awardee, he was key to founding the Nilgiri Biosphere Reserve and India's Biological Diversity Act.

Kannan Pattambi

Malayalam actor and production controller Kannan Pattambi died at 62. Associated with the industry for decades, he worked on films including 'Pulimurugan' — the first Malayalam film to gross over ₹100 crore — across a filmography of 23 films.

15 Books & Authors

Sanatan Sanskriti Ki Atal Drishti

Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan released 'Sanatan Sanskriti Ki Atal Drishti', a book on Atal Bihari Vajpayee authored by Rajasthan Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani. It was described as a timely contribution during Vajpayee's centenary birth-anniversary year.

GUTS (Hindi)

VP C.P. Radhakrishnan launched the Hindi edition of 'GUTS', the autobiography of renowned surgeon Dr C. Palanivelu. The memoir — chronicling his rise from a modest upbringing to international surgical acclaim — was praised as a testament to courage and persistence.

16 Important Days

National Farmers' Day – 23 December

National Farmers' Day marks the birth anniversary of former PM Chaudhary Charan Singh, remembered for his work on farmers' welfare. It recognises farmers' role in feeding the nation and highlights schemes like PM-KISAN and PM Fasal Bima Yojana.

National Consumer Day – 24 December

National Consumer Day marks the President's assent to the Consumer Protection Act, 1986. The 2025 theme, 'Efficient and Speedy Disposal through Digital Justice', stresses technology-enabled grievance redressal under the three-tier dispute mechanism.

World Braille Day – 4 January

World Braille Day commemorates the birth of Louis Braille (1809–1852), the French inventor of the Braille tactile code who lost his sight at three. The six-dot system, inspired by army 'night writing', remains vital for the visually impaired despite AI and voice tech.

National Youth Day – 12 January

National Youth Day, observed since 1985, marks the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda (born 1863, Kolkata). It encourages young Indians to connect with his teachings and play an active role in nation-building.

National Startup Day – 16 January

National Startup Day, established in 2022, celebrates entrepreneurship and the contribution of startups to India's economy. India has grown from 4 unicorns (2014) to 120+ in 2026, with 2,00,000+ DPIIT-recognised startups, nearly half from Tier-2/3 cities.

Earth's Rotation Day – 8 January

Earth's Rotation Day honours French physicist Léon Foucault's 1851 pendulum experiment, which gave definitive evidence of Earth's rotation. The day raises awareness of how rotation drives the day-night cycle and influences climate and wind patterns.

Intl Mind-Body Wellness Day – 3 January

International Mind-Body Wellness Day emphasises the link between mental and physical health, promoting balanced living and preventive care. It draws on ancient wellness traditions and modern science to encourage mindfulness, activity and emotional balance.