

THE HINDU REVIEW

- **Monthly capsule**
- **Current Affairs**

**Economy | Appointment | Awards | Ranking
Government Scheme | Summit | Partnership | GDP
Banking & Financial | Defence | Sports |
Book and Author | Science and technology**

**UNION ₹
BUDGET**

2025-26



The Hindu Review (February 2025)

Index

No. of Chapter	Topic Name
Chapter 1	Appointment (National, International)
Chapter 2	Awards (National, International)
Chapter 3	Government Scheme/ campaign
Chapter 4	Summit/ Conference
Chapter 5	Partnership/ Agreement
Chapter 6	Ranking Index
Chapter 7	Mergers and Acquisitions
Chapter 8	Loan
Chapter 9	App/Website/Portal
Chapter 10	Important MoU
Chapter 11	GDP Forecasting
Chapter 12	Current Affairs (National) In Short
Chapter 13	Current Affairs (International)
Chapter 14	Banking & Financial
Chapter 15	Committee
Chapter 16	Defence News
Chapter 17	Sports News
Chapter 18	Book and Author
Chapter 19	Important Day
Chapter 20	Science & Technology
Chapter 21	Obituary

Union Budget 2025: Highlights

Union Budget 2025 aims to initiate transformative reforms across six domains. During the next five years, **these will augment our growth potential and global competitiveness**

- Taxation
- Power Sector
- Urban Development
- Mining
- Financial Sector
- Regulatory Reforms

Budget Allocation by Sector:

Sector	Expenditure
Defence	4,91,732
Rural Development	2,66,817
Home Affairs	2,33,211
Agriculture and Allied Activities	1,71,432
Education	1,28,650
Health	98,311
Urban Development	96,311
IT & Telecom	95,298
Energy	81,174
Commerce & Industry	65,553
Social Welfare	60,052
Scientific Department	55,679

Economic

- **Investment-friendly index** to be introduced to **boost competition among states.**

- Revised fiscal deficit for FY 2025 set at 4.8%.
- Capital expenditure to reach ₹10.18 lakh crore.

New Tax Regime: Latest Income Tax Slab (FY 2025–26)

The latest income tax slabs under the New Tax Regime for FY 2025–26 feature revised brackets designed to reduce the tax burden on middle-income earners. Here's a simplified breakdown:

Income Range (₹)	Tax Rate (%)
Up to ₹4,00,000	NIL
₹4,00,000 – ₹8,00,000	5
₹8,00,000 – ₹12,00,000	10
₹12,00,000 – ₹16,00,000	15
₹16,00,000 – ₹20,00,000	20
₹20,00,000- ₹24,00,000	25
Above 24,00,000	30

- ₹12 lakh income: ₹80,000 saved (0% effective rate).
- ₹16 lakh income: ₹50,000 saved (7.5% effective rate).
- ₹20 lakh income: ₹90,000 saved (10% effective rate).
- ₹50 lakh income: ₹1.1 lakh saved (21.6% effective rate).
- Revenue Impact: ₹1 lakh crore direct tax revenue forgone.

New Income Tax Bill: Simplified structure with 50% fewer provisions to reduce litigation.

Key highlights:

- No income tax on income up to ₹12 lakh.
- Salaried taxpayers with income up to ₹12.75 lakh will have no tax liability.
- Under the **new tax regime**, income up to ₹4 lakh is tax-free.
- Personal income tax reforms aimed at benefiting the middle class.
- **TDS on rent** threshold increased from ₹2.4 lakh to ₹6 lakh annually.
- **Senior citizens'** tax deduction limit doubled to ₹1 lakh.

Start-ups

- Tax benefits for **start-ups** to continue for **five years** from inception.
- With quality products, MSMEs are responsible for 45 % of our exports. Investment and turnover limit for classification of MSMEs enhanced
- India Post to be transformed into large public logistic **organisation with 1.5 lakh rural post offices** to become catalyst for rural economy.

Banking & Insurance

- A **Grameen Credit Score Framework** will be introduced for rural India.
- **FDI limit in the insurance sector** to be increased to **100%**.

Housing

- **₹15,000 crore fund** allocated to expedite the completion of **one lakh housing units**.

Agriculture & Rural Development

- **Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana:** Targets 100 low-productivity districts, benefiting 1.7 crore farmers.
- **Mission for Pulses Self-Reliance (Tur, Urad, Masoor):** 6-year plan to boost productivity, climate-resilient seeds, and farmer income.
- Kisan Credit Card (KCC): **Kisan Credit Card loan limit** raised from **₹3 lakh to ₹5 lakh** for 7.7 crore farmers, fishermen, and dairy farmers.
- **Rural Prosperity Programme:** Focus on skilling, technology, and reducing under-employment; Phase-1 covers 100 agri-districts.
- **Makhana Board:** To enhance production and marketing of makhana in Bihar.
- Western Koshi Canal Project: Benefits 50,000+ hectares in Bihar's Mithilanchal region.

MSMEs, Entrepreneurship & Employment

- Micro/Small Enterprises: Cover raised to ₹10 crore (additional ₹1.5 lakh crore credit in 5 years).
- **Credit guarantee coverage** for MSMEs to be increased from **₹5 crore to ₹10 crore**.
- Startups: Cover doubled to ₹20 crore; 1% fee for 27 focus sectors.
- **Customized Credit Cards:** ₹5 lakh limit for 10 lakh micro-enterprises on Udyam portal.
- **Fund of Funds for Startups:** ₹10,000 crore corpus.
- **Footwear & Leather Sector:** Aiming ₹4 lakh crore turnover and 22 lakh jobs; duty exemption on wet blue leather.

- **Gig Workers:** Identity cards, healthcare under PM Jan Arogya Yojana for 1 crore workers.

Healthcare & Education

- **Cancer Care:** 200 Day Care Centres in district hospitals by 2025–26.
- **Customs Duty Exemptions:** 36 lifesaving drugs fully exempted; 6 drugs at 5% duty.
- **Medical Education:** 10,000 new seats in 2025–26 (75,000 target in 5 years).
- **Atal Tinkering Labs:** 50,000 to be set up in government schools.
- **Bharat Net:** Broadband for all rural secondary schools and primary health centres.

Infrastructure & Urban Development

- **Three-year projects** to be implemented under **PPP mode**.
- **₹1.5 lakh crore interest-free loans** for states to fund **infrastructure reforms**.
- Over **100 new regional airports** to be developed over the next **10 years**.
- **UDAN 2.0** to connect **120 new airports**, with a focus on **Northeast and Bihar**.
- **SWAMIH Fund 2:** ₹15,000 crore for completing 1 lakh housing units; 40,000 units by 2025.
- **Urban Challenge Fund:** ₹1 lakh crore for cities as growth hubs, water, and sanitation.
- **Maritime Development Fund:** ₹25,000 crore corpus for shipbuilding and port infrastructure.
- **UDAN Scheme Expansion:** 120 new regional connectivity destinations; 4 crore passengers targeted.

Energy & Environment

- **Nuclear Energy Mission:** ₹20,000 crore for Small Modular Reactors (SMRs); 5 operational by 2033.
- **Clean Tech Manufacturing:** Incentives for EV batteries, solar PV cells, and wind turbines.
- **Critical Minerals:** Duty exemptions on cobalt, lithium-ion scrap, and 12 others to boost domestic production.
- Nuclear Energy 100 gigawatts by 2047

Tourism & Export Promotion

- **50 Tourist Destinations:** Upgrade via skill programs, homestay loans, and e-visa streamlining.
- **Export Promotion Mission:** Joint initiative by Commerce, MSME, and Finance Ministries for credit access and cross-border support.

Reforms & Ease of Doing Business

- **FDI in Insurance:** Limit raised to 100% for companies reinvesting premiums in India.
- **Jan Vishwas Bill 2.0:** Decriminalizes 100+ legal provisions.
- **Regulatory Reforms:** High-Level Committee to review non-financial sector licenses and certifications.
- **Extended Deadlines:** Startup incorporation benefits extended till 1.4.2030; IFSC benefits till 31.3.2030.

Indirect Tax Measures

- **Customs Simplification:** Reduced to 8 tariff rates; Social Welfare Surcharge exempted on 82 lines.
- **Import Flexibility:** End-use period for inputs extended to 1 year; quarterly reporting instead of monthly.

Women's Development

- **₹2 crore term loan for women and first-time entrepreneurs** from SC/ST and backward classes.

Rural India

- **Nutritional support for over 8 crore children and 1 crore lactating mothers.**

Make in India & Technology

- **National Manufacturing Mission** to provide **policy support and monitoring.**
- **New clean technology manufacturing mission** to be launched.
- **Nuclear Energy Mission** to boost **R&D efforts.**
- **Jal Jeevan Mission** extended until **2028.**
- **Centre of Excellence in AI** to be set up with an **allocation of ₹500 crore.**
- **25 additional capital goods** to support **EV battery manufacturing.**

Chapter 1: Appointment (National, International)

(National)

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Person</u>
Maruti Suzuki India has re-appointed of as the company's Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)	Hisashi Takeuchi (Updated 1 February)
The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved the proposal of the Ministry of Civil Aviation for the appointment of senior IPS Officer as the Director General of the Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS) under the Ministry of Civil Aviation	Rajesh Nirwan (Updated 2 February)
Citibank appoints as India head	K Balasubramanian (Updated 7 February)
Quits As Chief Minister 2 Years After Manipur Violence Began	Biren Singh (Updated 10 February)
The Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) has a new President	Charanjot Singh Nanda (Updated 13 February)
Takes oath as the new Chief Minister of Delhi	Mrs Rekha Gupta (Updated 20 February)
India's Chief Economic Adviser's term has been extended by two years until March 2027	V Anantha Nageswaran (Updated 21 February)
Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was sworn in as the 4th woman and 9th Chief Minister of the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi	Mrs Rekha Gupta (Updated 21 February)

<p>Former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been appointed Principal Secretary II to Prime Minister Narendra Modi</p>	<p>Shaktikanta Das (Updated 22 February)</p>
<p>Kotak Mahindra Prime, a subsidiary of Kotak Mahindra Bank (KMB), has appointed as the new MD, CEO of the company</p>	<p>Shahrukh Todiwala (Updated 23 February)</p>
<p>The Centre has extended the tenure of NITI Aayog Chief Executive Officer (CEO) by one year</p> <p>NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founded - 1st January 2015 • Preceding - Planning Commission (15th March 1950) • Headquarters - New Delhi • Chairperson - Narendra Modi • Vice Chairperson - Suman K Bery • CEO - BVR Subrahmanyam • NITI Aayog comes under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry 	<p>B V R Subrahmanyam (Updated 24 February)</p>
<p>The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved an extension of tenure as Drug Controller General of India (DCGI) for a one-year term</p>	<p>Rajeev Singh Raghuvanshi (Updated 25 February)</p>
<p>Tata Sons chairman has been appointed as the chairman of the Ratan Tata Endowment Foundation</p>	<p>N Chandrasekaran (Updated 27 February)</p>

<p>Appointed as the new Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for a term of three years</p> <p>About Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Founded - 12 April 1988 • Act - 1992 • Headquarters - Mumbai • Chairman - Tuhin Kanta Pandey (replace Madhabi Puri Buch) • SEBI Set up - Uday Kotak committee 	<p>Tuhin Kanta Pandey (Updated 28 February)</p>
---	---

(International)

<u>Organization / Country</u>	<u>Person</u>
Sworn in as Belgium's new Prime Minister	Bart De Wever (Updated 5 February)
Appointed as the acting chair of the GSMA (Groupe Spécial Mobile Association) board	Gopal Vittal (Updated 5 February)
CEO of Nokia will step down, appointed as his successor	Pekka Lundmark, Justin Hotard (Updated 11 February)
The International Cricket Council (ICC) has been appointed as the brand ambassador of the Champions Trophy 2025	Shikhar Dhawan (Updated 13 February)
Sworn in as the ninth director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation	Kash Patel (Updated 25 February)

<p>(FBI), taking oath on the sacred Hindu text of Bhagavad Gita</p> <p>About Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • FBI was set up on 26 July 1908 by the United States Attorney General Charles Bonaparte when Theodore Roosevelt was the President. • The FBI is the investigating arm of the US Justice Department. • It is the US government's main law enforcement agency and gathers intelligence regarding threats to US national security. • Headquarters - Washington D.C. 	
<p>Unilever CEO is stepping down after less than two years in the job, with current CFO set to take his place leading the company</p>	<p>Unilever CEO Hein Schumacher CFO Fernando Fernandez (Updated 26 February)</p>

Chapter 2: Awards (National, International)

(National)

<u>Award</u>	<u>Person/Organization</u>	<u>Purpose/ Field</u>
<p>The Bronze Award at the Global Best M-Gov Award 2025</p>	<p>Sagar Teotia (team lead), Abhinav Mishra, and Anushka Singh, all fourth-semester computer science students from the Maharaja Agrasen Institute of Technology, Delhi.</p>	<p>They were recognized for their application AccessWay, an AI-powered platform that integrates augmented reality (AR), artificial intelligence, and crowdsourced data to provide accessible navigation, social</p>

		connections, and emergency tools for individuals with disabilities.
Forward Faster Sustainability Award 2025 in the Water Resilience category	NTPC Ltd.	The Forward Faster Sustainability Awards celebrate organisations in India that have made significant strides in advancing sustainability and corporate responsibility, aligning with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) .
"Sarvashrestha Suraksha Puraskar (Golden Trophy)" at the National Safety Council of India (NSCI) Safety Awards 2024 in the 'Service Sector' category	Manohar International Airport (GOX)	This recognition underscores Manohar International Airport's outstanding performance in Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) , its dedication to minimizing workplace injuries , and its implementation of top safety practices

(International)

<u>Award</u>	<u>Person/Organization</u>	<u>Purpose/ Field</u>
Sahitya Akademi Award 2024 in Dogri	Late Chaman Arora.	For Ik Hor Ashwthama (Short Stories)

<p>67th Grammy Awards 2025</p> <p>' Best New Age Album, Ambient or Chant Album category'</p>	<p>Indian-born American musician Chandrika Tandon</p>	<p>For her album Triveni</p>
<p>The University of Sussex has conferred an honorary doctorate</p>	<p>Noel Tata</p>	<p>He is a business leader within the Tata Group and a proud alumnus of the University</p>
<p>The NETPAC Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) 2025</p>	<p>Tamil film 'Bad Girl'</p>	<p>The Tamil coming-of-age drama is presented by ace filmmakers Anurag Kashyap and Vetri Maaran.</p>
<p>The BBC Sportswoman of the Year</p>	<p>Indian shooter Manu Bhaker</p>	<p>The stellar performances from the 22-year-old established her status as one of the elite sporting talents in the country. She became the first Indian shooter to win multiple medals at a single Olympics. Also, she became the first Indian woman to win an Olympic shooting medal.</p>
<p>The insignia of the Knight Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the</p>	<p>Sunil Bharti Mittal</p>	<p>For his significant contributions to UK-India business relations, as stated by the British High</p>

British Empire (KBE)		Commission in New Delhi
---------------------------------	--	------------------------------------

Awards 2025: Complete winners list

Award Winners of the 67th Grammy Awards 2025:

Category	Winner	Album/Song
Album of the Year	Beyoncé	<i>Cowboy Carter</i>
Record of the Year	Kendrick Lamar	<i>Not Like Us</i>
Song of the Year	Kendrick Lamar (Songwriter: Kendrick Lamar)	<i>Not Like Us</i>
Best New Artist	Chappell Roan	—
Best Pop Solo Performance	Sabrina Carpenter	<i>Espresso</i>
Best Pop Vocal Album	Sabrina Carpenter	<i>Short n' Sweet</i>
Best Rock Performance	The Beatles	<i>Now & Then</i>
Best Rock Album	The Rolling Stones	<i>Hackney Diamonds</i>
Best Rap Performance	Kendrick Lamar	<i>Not Like Us</i>
Best Country Album	Beyoncé	<i>Cowboy Carter</i>
Best Score Soundtrack For Visual Media (Film And Television)	Hans Zimmer	<i>Dune: Part Two</i>
Best New Age Album, Ambient or Chant Album	Chandrika Tandon, Wouter Kellerman, Eru Matsumoto	<i>Triveni</i>

Rajnath Singh confers 32 medals on Indian Coast Guard personnel

- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** has conferred gallantry, distinguished service and meritorious service medals to personnel of the Indian Coast Guard at an investiture ceremony in New Delhi.

- A total of 32 medals were presented including six President's Tatrakshak Medals for Distinguished Service, 11 Tatrakshak Medals for Gallantry and 15 Tatrakshak Medals for Meritorious Service.

Chapter 3: Government Scheme/ campaign

SCHEME	PURPOSE
The Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs (MCGS—MSME)	It provides 60 percent guarantee coverage by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC) to Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) for credit facilities up to Rs. 100 crore sanctioned to eligible MSMEs . This fulfils the budget announcement of 2024-25.
The 'Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs'	The scheme facilitates collateral-free loans to MSMEs by providing loans up to Rs 100 crore for the purchase of plant, machinery, or equipment .
'New Programme for Removal of Unused Drugs' (nPROUD) (Kerala)	To collect and scientifically dispose of expired and unused medicines
The Nayab Singh Saini-led BJP government rolled out the "Haryana Witness Protection Scheme, 2025" (Haryana)	To ensure the protection of the witnesses as the state gears up to implement the three new criminal laws .
Shiksha Sanjeevani Bima Yojana (Rajasthan)	To provide accidental insurance to schoolchildren in the state .

Chapter 4: Summit/ Conference

Summit/Conference	Location	About
-------------------	----------	-------

The BRICS Youth Council Entrepreneurship Working Group Meeting	India	The theme of the meeting is “Youth Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Growth”
The BIMSTEC Youth Summit 2025	Gandhinagar, Gujarat	Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya will formally inaugurate the event on 8th February 2025 , marking the beginning of the BIMSTEC Youth Summit .
The 32nd session of the Indian Art History Congress	Noida, UP	The theme for this year event is “Rendering of Indian Epics in Art and Culture,” which aims to highlight the diverse forms of artistic expressions based on the epics.
The first World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit (WAVES)	Mumbai	This summit will bring together the world's top media CEOs, biggest entertainment icons, and creative minds from around the globe, unifying entertainment, creativity, and culture.
The Second India-France AI Policy Roundtable	Sciences Po University, Paris	The event was organized by the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser (PSA) to the Government of India , in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru , the IndiaAI Mission , and Sciences Po Paris .
A meeting of the Parliamentary Consultative Committee for the Ministry of Home Affairs on the topic of 'Cyber Security and Cyber Crime'	New Delhi	Cyber Crime Forensic Training Labs have been established in 33 states and union territories . On the 'CyTrain' platform, a "Massive Open Online Course (MOOC)" platform, 101,561 police officers have registered, and over 78,000 certificates have been issued.
The 14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (14AFAF)	New Delhi	The Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (AFAF) is a triennial event of the Asian Fisheries Society with its Headquarters in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
The first edition of the SOUL Leadership Conclave	New Delhi	The two-day SOUL Leadership Conclave will serve as a premier platform where leaders from diverse domains like politics, sports, arts and media, the spiritual world,

		public policy, business and the social sector will share their inspiring life journeys.
The G20 Foreign Ministers' Meeting	Johannesburg, South Africa	Jaishankar will attend the meeting at the invitation of South Africa's Minister of International Relations and Cooperation, Ronald Lamola
The 9th Asia Economic Dialogue	Pune, Maharashtra	The theme of the Dialogue is " Economic Resilience and Resurgence in an Era of Fragmentation. "
12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific	Jaipur	The event will centre on the theme of " Realizing Circular Societies Towards Achieving SDGs and Carbon Neutrality in Asia-Pacific ".
The Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment & Infrastructure Summit 2025	Guwahati, Assam	It includes an inaugural Session, seven ministerial sessions and 14 thematic sessions . It also includes a comprehensive exhibition illustrating the state's economic landscape, with a focus on its industrial evolution, global trade partnerships, booming industries, and the vibrant MSME sector, featuring over 240 exhibitors .
Conference on women peacekeepers, titled "Women in Peacekeeping: A Global South Perspective,"	New Delhi	The two-day event is organized by the MEA, Ministry of Defence, and Centre for UN Peacekeeping , with participation from 35 Troop Contributing Countries (TCCs) from the Global South .
The first International Conference on Carbon Markets-Prakriti	New Delhi	The Conference was organised with the aim of understanding the workings of the Indian carbon market and how to deepen and develop it. It also discussed the latest trends in the global carbon credit market and their dynamic .
A startup conclave -- Rise Up--	Kozhikode	To generate innovative ideas and foster entrepreneurship in spice cultivation, processing and value addition

Chapter 5: Partnership/ Agreement

Partnership/ Agreement	Aim
KPI Green Energy Limited has signed a agreement with Coal India Limited	To develop a 300 MW AC grid-connected solar PV plant in Gujarat's Khavda region
India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) and PNB MetLife India Insurance Company Limited (PNB MetLife) entered into a strategic bancassurance alliance	To extend access to life insurance solutions for millions of individuals nationwide .
Lift insurance firm PNB MetLife has partnered with Policybazaar	To launch the PNB MetLife Smart Invest Pension Plan, a Unit-Linked, Non-Participating Individual Pension Plan , designed to help individuals plan for their golden years
Airtel Payments Bank has partnered with the Karnataka Bulldozers	For the Celebrity Cricket League (CCL) 2025
Madhya Pradesh government has formed a strategic partnership with the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) Delhi	To seek its regular assistance
The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has signed an agreement with the Korea Transport Institute	To enhance cooperation in logistics and infrastructure development
State-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corporation has signed a pact with global oil major BP	To explore collaboration in exploration and production, trading and other energy vectors , in India and internationally
Policybazaar has partnered with HDFC Life, a private life insurer	To offer HDFC Life Click 2 Protect Ultimate , a term product with 100 per cent claim assurance.

<p>Bharti Airtel has entered into a contract with Nokia</p>	<p>To expand 5G Fixed Wireless Access (FWA) and Wi-Fi solutions for regions with low or nil fiber connectivity.</p>
<p>Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) signed an agreement to drive end-to-end IT transformation of UPM, a global company</p>	<p>The partnership further solidifies TCS' leadership in Finland, where it has been operational for over 25 years.</p>
<p>Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) and the Department of Horticulture and Food Processing (DHFP), Government of Uttarakhand, have signed the 'Records of Discussions', an official agreement document</p>	<p>For a Technical Cooperation Project (TCP) titled 'Uttarakhand Integrated Horticulture Development Promotion Project'</p>
<p>The Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) signed a Programme Agreement with Reliance New Energy Battery Limited under the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme</p>	<p>For Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC), awarding a 10 GWh ACC capacity</p>
<p>Eurobank has established a strategic multi-year partnership with Indian IT giant LTIMindtree</p>	<p>To modernise its banking operations and enhance its technology ecosystem. As part of this collaboration, Eurobank has established a new global delivery centre at LTIMindtree's Pune office</p>
<p>Tata Power has entered into a partnership with Amazon Web Services</p>	<p>To initiate a data-driven transformation to speed up India's energy transition</p>
<p>Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd (TRIFED), under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, has entered into a strategic</p>	<p>In a significant move to transcend from business-to-consumer (B2C) to business-to-business (B2B) approach for tribal marketing,</p>

partnership with Rooftop to facilitate tribal businesses	
IndusInd Bank has partnered with the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) as its official Banking Partner	This collaboration underscores the bank's commitment to providing a superlative experience to its Ultra High Net Worth Individuals (UHNIs) & High Net Worth Individuals (HNIs) under the umbrella of PIONEER banking.
The Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed a contract with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Bengaluru	For the procurement of 149 Software Defined Radios for the Indian Coast Guard at a total cost of Rs 1220.12 crore under Buy (Indian-IDDM) category
The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has partnered with Paytm	To promote innovation and support manufacturing and fintech startups in India.
Paytm has partnered with Perplexity AI	To help users with real-time financial assistance. The payment gateway will be integrating the AI startup's search engine to expand access to Paytm's user base of 100 million active users in the country.

Chapter 6: Ranking Index

Index	Index released by	India's Rank	1st Rank
US Green Building Council's (USGBC) for LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) in 2024	USGBC	3rd	China

2025 Henley Passport Index	Henley & Partners	80th	Singapore
Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2024	Transparency International report	96th	Denmark
The World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI), 2023 Global Ranking in International Shipments category	World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI) Report-2023	38th	Singapore
Bloomberg's Asia's 20 Richest Families list	-	-	Reliance Industries (India)
The 2024 Burgundy Private Hurun India 500 list	Axis Bank's banking unit Burgundy Private and Hurun India	-	Reliance Industries

Chapter 7: Mergers and Acquisitions

Merger Company	About
TVS Holdings Ltd. has completed the acquisition of 80.74% equity stake in Home Credit India Finance Private Ltd. for ₹554 crore	This acquisition aligns seamlessly with TVS Holdings' mission to strengthen its presence in the financial services sector
Reliance Industries (RIL)-owned Mumbai Indians (MI), through its subsidiary RISE Worldwide, has announced the acquisition of a 49 per cent stake in London-based Oval Invincibles, a franchise in the	The completion of the transaction is subject to customary diligence and documentation , including the acquisition of its shareholding.

England and Wales Cricket Board's (ECB) The Hundred, for an undisclosed amount.	
Fintech firm MobiKwik will acquire a 3.39 per cent stake in business-to-business (B2B) banking infrastructure platform Blostem for ₹1.49 crore	The aggregate shareholding of the Gurugram-based listed firm in the platform is expected to grow to 6.79 per cent after the deal.

Chapter 8: Loan

Organization/Bank	Loan Amount	To which country	Purpose
France	\$100 million	Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) and AFD	To scale up green finance solutions for Indian micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
SACE	\$500 million	Shriram Finance	SACE is an Italian export credit agency run under the government of Italy. Shriram Finance has raised over \$2.5 billion in offshore funding in the current financial year.

Chapter 9: App/Website/Portal

App/Website/Portal	Company / Department	Purpose
SuperApp	The Railway Ministry	The app provides easy access to services like reserved and unreserved ticket bookings, platform and parcel bookings, train inquiries, PNR inquiries, help through RailMadad and more.

'Haj Suvidha App'	The Government of India	To improve the Haj pilgrimage experience by introducing the ' Haj Suvidha App ' and providing comprehensive healthcare services to Indian pilgrims, with a special focus on the elderly.
MAITRI (Maharashtra Industry, Trade and Investment Facilitation Cell) 2.0 Portal	Maharashtra government	To make the investment process hassle-free and without administrative and procedural delays

Chapter 10: Important MoU

MoU	Between Which Countries
Signed an MoU to boost international urban cooperation	Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) with Expo City Dubai during the Cities in Action Forum 2025
Signed an MoU to advance carbon capture and sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) in India	Honeywell and AM Green
Signed an MoU as per the deal, the two companies will collaborate to create a dedicated, efficient, and future-ready maritime infrastructure	Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited with the Shipping Corporation of India (SCI)
Signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore collaboration opportunities in ship repair, maintenance, and building activities in India	A.P. Moller - Maersk (Maersk) and Cochin Shipyard Ltd. (CSL)
Signed MoUs to implement a B2B approach, enhancing market access for tribal products	Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd

	(TRIFED) with Meesho, IFCA, and MGIRI during the ' Aadi Mahotsav ' event
Signed an MoU to expand cooperation in lithium exploration and investment	India and Argentina
Signed an MoU to enhance scientific and technological collaboration	India's Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) and Nepal's Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST)
Signed an MoU to integrate heritage conservation with sustainable water management	Bisleri International Pvt. Ltd. with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) under the 'Adopt a Heritage 2.0 Programme'
Signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote cutting-edge research in the aerospace sector and drive technological advancements	Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)'s nodal training institute, HAL Management Academy (HMA) with the Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT)
Signed an MoU for setting up 200 MW Solar Project in Dhar under the CPSU Scheme and a 1000 MWh Battery Storage Project in the state	Solar Energy Corporation of India Limited (SECI), a Navratna CPSU under the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy with the Government of Madhya Pradesh
Signed an MoU for setting up a 200 MW solar project in Dhar under the CPSU Scheme and a 1,000 MWh battery storage project in the state	Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) , a Navratna CPSU under the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) with the Government of Madhya Pradesh
Signed an MoU to implement a student skilling programme for the youth of Assam in the Banking, Financial Services and Insurance (BFSI) sector at the Advantage Assam 2.0 Summit	National Stock Exchange (NSE) and the Government of Assam

Chapter 11: GDP Forecasting

India's GDP Growth Projected at 6.4% for FY 2025

- **India's real GDP is estimated to grow by 6.4 percent in the financial year 2025, and the growth is likely to range between 6.3 and 6.8 percent in the financial year 2026.**
- This was projected in the Economic Survey presented by the Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in both Houses of Parliament.
- The survey highlights that the country's GDP at constant (2011-12) prices grew by 6.7 percent in Quarter one and 5.4 percent in Quarter two of the financial year of 2025.

Budget 2025-26: Fiscal Deficit for FY26 estimated at 4.4% of GDP

- **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman pegged fiscal deficit, the difference between expenditure and income, to 4.4 per cent of GDP (gross domestic product) for fiscal year 2025-26.**
- The fiscal deficit target has been set at 4.4 per cent of GDP, down from 4.8 per cent in the previous year's revised estimates, as the government moves forward with fiscal consolidation plans.
- Under the revised Fiscal Responsibility and Budget Management (FRBM) Act 2003, the government is mandated to reduce the fiscal deficit below 4.5 per cent by FY26.

India's GDP growth rate to slow to 6.4% in 2025: Moody's Analytics

- **India's growth is anticipated to decelerate to 6.4% in 2025 from 6.6% in 2024, due to new US tariffs and weaker global demand affecting exports, according to Moody's Analytics.**
- In its report titled 'Asia-Pacific Outlook: Chaos Ahead', Moody's Analytics said growth across the Asia-Pacific economy will slow in 2025 as trade tensions, policy shifts, and, uneven recoveries knock the region's fortunes.

Chapter 12: Current Affairs (National)

Pramod Sawant inaugurates the Sci-FI Science Film Festival of India

- **Goa Chief Minister Pramod Sawant has inaugurated the 10th Sci-FI Science Film Festival of India in Panaji.**
- The annual Sci-FI Science Film Festival of India is organised by the Goa government every year to foster curiosity, scientific temperament, and enthusiasm amongst the students.
- The theme of the 10th Sci-FI Science Film Festival of India is the Green Revolution. It is a tribute to the father of the Indian Green Revolution Dr M S Swaminathan.

Garuda Aerospace commits ₹100 crore for developing India's first drone city in Andhra Pradesh

- **Chennai-based Garuda Aerospace**, a drone manufacturer, has announced an investment of ₹100 crore for the development of **Andhra Pradesh as India's first 'Drone City'**.
- The project aims to foster drone innovation, research, and development, transforming the nation into a global hub for drone technology.
- Founder & CEO of Garuda Aerospace - Agnishwar Jayaprakash

Govt forms GoM on financial viability of Discoms

- **The Government of India** has set up a Group of Ministers to address issues related to **the viability of the electricity distribution utilities in the country. Union Minister of State for Power and New and Renewable Energy, Shripad Yesso Naik, is the Chairman** of the Group of Ministers.
- The Group of Ministers will analyze and make recommendations to the government on the following issues -
 - Analyze the debt of the Electricity distribution boards in key states of India.
 - Identify parameters that need to be monitored to ensure borrowings by electricity distribution utilities are productive.
 - Identify States that are in urgent need of liquidity support (cash) and suggest a fiscal discipline program to enable them to avoid a debt trap.
 - Recommend guidelines for investment plans concerning capital expenditure targeted at overall improvement.
 - Suggest measures for improvement in the overall health of the electricity distribution sector to attract further investment from private participants.

Tata Steel becomes 'India's 1st' to develop hydrogen transportation pipes

- **Tata Steel** has become the **first Indian company to develop pipes for transporting hydrogen**, contributing to India's clean energy goals.
- The company's hydrogen-compliant API X65 pipes were processed at Tata Steel's Khopoli plant using steel produced at its Kalinganagar facility.
- Tata Steel managed the entire production process, from designing and manufacturing hot-rolled steel to producing the final hydrogen transportation pipes.
- India aims to produce at least 5 MMT of Green Hydrogen annually by 2030, with potential expansion to 10 MMT per year, requiring advanced transportation infrastructure like Tata Steel's pipes.
- RBI imposes monetary penalty on Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed penalties on Equitas Small Finance Bank and India Post Payments Bank for deficiencies in regulatory compliances.

India Adds 4 New Ramsar Sites, taking total to 89

- The Centre has announced the addition of four new Ramsar sites in India, taking the tally to 89.
- Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary and Therthangal Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu, Khecheopalri Wetland in Sikkim, and Udhwa Lake in Jharkhand have been included in the list of Ramsar sites in the country.
- India still stands as the country with the highest number of Ramsar sites in Asia and third in the world.
- Tamil Nadu for becoming the state with the maximum number of Ramsar sites, with a tally of 20. This a special achievement for Sikkim and Jharkhand, which have added their first Ramsar sites

Maharashtra to establish country's first Artificial Intelligence university

- **Maharashtra** will establish the **first Artificial Intelligence (AI) university in the country** and a task force has been formed for the planning and implementation of the project.
- The task force includes experts from the academia, industry and government. The task force will be chaired by the Information Technology department's principal secretary.
- It includes directors of the IIT Mumbai and IIM Mumbai, representatives from organisations like Google India, Mahindra Group, and L&T, and officials from the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India.

DGCA imposes Rs 30 lakh penalty on Air India for regulatory norms violation

- Aviation safety regulator DGCA has imposed a penalty of Rs 30 lakh on Tata Group-owned Air India for allegedly allowing one of its pilots to operate a flight without complying with certain regulatory requirements.
- The order to slap penalty came after the response of a show-cause notice to Air India's head of operations and head of rostering, among other executives, on December 13, 2024 was found "unsatisfactory."

Maharashtra makes Marathi mandatory for all official communication

- The **Maharashtra government** has made it **mandatory for all officials in government and semi-government offices to speak only in Marathi**.
- The planning department issued the notification, warning that employees who do not follow the directive will face disciplinary action. The decision applies to all communication, official signage, and documentation across the state.

India's First White Tiger Breeding Centre Approved in Madhya Pradesh

- **Central Zoo Authority (CZA)**, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), has **approved the proposal to set up India's 1st white tiger breeding centre in Govindgarh area of Rewadistrict in Madhya Pradesh.**
- The breeding centre is expected to enhance biodiversity conservation, promote wildlife tourism, and create job opportunities for the local population.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan launches a national-level mass outreach campaign "Watershed Yatra"

- Union Minister of Rural Development **Shivraj Singh Chouhan** has **launched a national level mass outreach campaign "Watershed Yatra"**, in Hybrid mode to generate people's participation and create awareness about the Watershed Development activities carried **out under Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY 2.0)** in project areas.
- A total of about 800 Gram Panchayats and more than one lakh people participated in the Watershed Yatra launch program. The Watershed Yatra will consist of Van movement for around 60-90 days across 805 projects, which cover 6673 GPs (13587 villages) in 26 States and 2 UTs.

ECI's 'Chandrayaan Se Chunao Tak' initiative boosts voter enthusiasm in West Delhi

- A captivating and futuristic initiative by the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** has been turning heads and generating excitement in West Delhi.
- At a special polling booth in Vikaspuri, voters are greeted with a remarkable theme: **"India's Flight from Chandrayaan to Election."**
- The booth is unlike any other, featuring models of the Chandrayaan and Gaganyaan, as well as interactive displays of planets through a bioscope and telescope.

Zepto world's second-most-downloaded app in food and drink category

- **Zepto**, the Indian quick commerce startup, last year became the **world's second most downloaded mobile app on mobiles in the foods and drinks category**, according to data Sensor Tower released.
- McDonald's, the US fast food chain, was the most downloaded. Zepto's rival Blinkit was the tenth most downloaded app in the category.
- Other Indian companies in the category were food and grocery delivery companies Zomato at number five and its competitor Swiggy at number nine.

Jayant Chaudhary inaugurates NSDC International Academy at Greater Noida

- **Jayant Chaudhary**, Minister of State (I/C), Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and Minister of State, Ministry of Education **inaugurated the NSDC International Academy at Greater Noida, Uttar Pradesh.**
- The academy is a state-of-the-art facility designed to provide world-class skill development and training programmes.
- With a target of training over 1,000 candidates annually, the NSDC International Academy is committed to addressing the demands of both local and international job markets.

Guneri village in Gujarat declared the first biodiversity heritage site

- **The 32.78-hectare area of Guneri village in Lakhtar tehsil of Kutch district**, which is a natural inland mangrove site, has been **declared as the first Biodiversity Heritage Site of Gujarat.**
- The Gujarat government made the announcement after considering a recommendation from the Gujarat Biodiversity Board. This will ensure conservation and enrichment of the flora and fauna in the area "through a management plan".

Zomato renamed 'Eternal', food delivery company unveils new logo

- **Food and grocery delivery platform Zomato will rename the company to "Eternal"** and unveil a new logo.
- The change of name is subject to the approval of shareholders, the corporate affairs ministry, and other statutory authorities. After the approval, the company's corporate website will transition from zomato.com to eternal.com
- Eternal will comprise the company's four major businesses - food delivery platform Zomato, quick commerce arm Blinkit, going-out business District, and business-to-business supplies vertical Hyperpure. The development comes over two years after the company began using the new name internally.

Odisha Govt. launches multiple initiatives to empower girl 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao'

- The **Odisha government** has launched **a series of initiatives under the 'Beti Bachao Beti Padhao' scheme**, which aims to address the alarming gender imbalance and declining child sex ratio in India.
- Key programs such as "Nirbhaya Kadhi" (Fearless Bud), "Mo Gelha Jiya" (My Dear Daughter) in Ganjam, "Kalpana Avijan" in Dhenkanal, "Swarna Kalika" in Keonjhar, and "Veerangana Yojana" in Deogarh district are designed to empower adolescent girls.

- These initiatives focus on preventing child marriage, combating sex selection and female foeticide, promoting higher education, and building self-esteem and confidence through martial arts and self-defense.
- “Nirbhaya Kadhi” (Fearless Bud) and “Mo Gelha Jhia” (My Lovely Daughter) in Ganjam District: The “Nirbhaya Kadhi” initiative by Ganjam district administration under BBBP aims to create a just society for girls. It has reached 183,933 adolescent girls in 3,309 villages, focusing on raising awareness.
- Another initiative, “Mo Gelha Jhia,” addresses sex selection and female foeticide. Ganjam was declared child marriage-free on 3rd January 2022. From 2019 to October 2024, 20 out of 953 child marriages were successfully prevented with the help of various agencies.

\38th Surajkund International Crafts Mela kicks off in Faridabad

- The **38th edition of the Surajkund International Crafts Mela**, one of India’s biggest cultural events, kicked off and will run until **February 23 in Faridabad**.
- This highly anticipated event promises an extraordinary showcase of regional and international crafts, handlooms, traditions, and a variety of multi-cuisine food.

Cabinet approves extension of tenure of National Commission for Safai Karamcharis for 3 years

- **The Centre has approved eight thousand 800 crore rupees for the Skill India programme for the period from 2022-23 to 2025-26.**
- Demand-driven skill development is the focus of the government, and emphasis will be placed on convergence and quality enhancement.
- The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0, the Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme, and the Jan Shikshan Sansthan Scheme are now combined under the composite central sector scheme of the Skill India Programme.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurates Asia’s biggest Aero India show in Bangalore

- **Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** has inaugurated **Asia’s biggest 15th Aero India show in Bengaluru**.
- The five-day event with the theme of Runway to a billion Opportunities will showcase India’s defence capabilities and indigenous innovations.
- Indian MSMEs and Startups have an opportunity to forge Joint ventures or collaborations with the global manufacturers and provide a resilient supply chain.

Assam to host World’s Largest Jhumur Festival

- **Assam will host the world's largest Jhumur dance**, also called Jhumoir, on February 24, 2025, ahead of the Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment Summit.
- With over 7,500 dancers, the event aims for a Guinness World Record and will be attended by PM Narendra Modi.
- This summit is a platform to showcase Assam's rich traditions to a global audience and attract investors.

Pir Panjal winter festival begins in Jammu and Kashmir's Poonch with focus on youth

- **The Indian Army launched the 51-day Pir Panjal Winter Festival in the border district of Poonch.**
- Scheduled to conclude on March 31, the festival highlights the army's dedication to youth empowerment, cultural preservation, and efforts being made to combat issues like drug abuse.
- The event will feature a range of sports and cultural activities, including a U-25 men's cricket tournament, volleyball tournaments for men under-25 and women U-21, an open kho-kho competition for girls, as well as Gujari and Pahari folk dances and a dance talent hunt.

India launches its first indigenous Automated Bio Medical Waste Treatment Plant in New Delhi

- **Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh has launched India's first indigenous Automated Biomedical Waste Treatment Rig, named Srjanam**, at AIIMS New Delhi.
- Developed by the CSIR National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology, NIIST, in Thiruvananthapuram, the rig is the first of its kind in the country.
- The Automated Biomedical Waste Treatment Rig, named "Srjanam," was officially dedicated to the nation by the Minister at a ceremony held in the AIIMS auditorium.
- This innovative, environment friendly technology, developed by CSIR-NIIST (National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology), offers a significant advancement in the sustainable management of biomedical waste.

Indian Cricket Team Urges People To Join Donate Organs, Save Lives'

- **Ahead of the third ODI against England** at the Narendra Modi Stadium in Ahmedabad, the **Indian team players** including former captain Virat Kohli **urged people to join the 'Donate Organs, Save Lives' campaign and pledge for organ donation.**
- Recently, the International Cricket Council (ICC) took a major step towards raising awareness about organ donation through the 'Donate Organs, Save Lives' initiative.

3rd Kashi Tamil Sangamam to be held from Feb 15

- **The third edition of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam** is to be held from the **15th of February**. This year's **theme will be 'Sage Agasthiyar'**.
- The participants will also be experiencing Mahakumbh and a visit to the Ram Mandir at Ayodhya.

Reliance Consumer launches sports drink 'Spinner' at ₹10

- **Reliance Consumer Products** has **launched the sports drink 'Spinner'** at an affordable price of ₹10 and the beverage would lead the movement to create a sports beverage category of up to \$1 billion in the next three years.
- **The sports drink has been co-created** with former Sri Lankan cricketer and current coach of Sri Lanka, **Muttiah Muralitharan**.
- The beverage brand has partnered with top IPL franchises such as Lucknow Super Giants, SunRisers Hyderabad, Punjab Kings, Gujarat Titans, and Mumbai Indians, which will drive awareness and increase brand visibility across the country, the company said.

India introduces new HS code to allow exports of GI-recognised rice varieties

- **India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** has come up **with an amendment to the Customs Tariff Act to provide for an HS (Harmonised System) code, for the export of geographical indication (GI) recognised rice**.
- It is the first time in the world that an HS code has been introduced for GI-recognised rice
- The amendment was introduced in the Budget proposals for the 2025-26 financial year on February 1, under HS Code 1006-30-11 (parboiled) and 1006-30-91 (white).

Govt revises guidelines for Market Intervention Scheme

- **The agriculture ministry has revised guidelines for the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS), increasing the procurement limit of crops to 25% from 20%**. The guidelines have been revised to encourage states to implement the MIS.
- The MIS is implemented on the request of the state/UT government for procurement of various perishable agricultural/horticultural commodities such as tomato, onion, potato, etc, for which minimum support price (MSP) is not applicable and there is a reduction of at least 10% in market prices in states/UTs as compared to the rates of the previous normal season.
- Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) is a component of PM-AASHA scheme.

THDC India enters thermal energy sector, begins operations of 660-MW unit at Khurja plant

- **THDC India Ltd THDCIL** has started **commercial operations of a 660-MW unit at its Khurja Power Plant**, marking an entry into the domestic thermal energy sector.
- Until now, the company was generating 1,424 MW from hydro, 113 MW from wind and 50 MW of solar energy.
- THDCIL is setting up a 1,320-megawatt (2X660 MW) super thermal power project at Bulandshahr district in Uttar Pradesh (UP) at an investment of around ₹13,000 crore.

Dubai hosts largest MRO Middle East and AIME 2025 edition

- **MRO Middle East and AIME 2025** is the largest edition ever, **hosted in Dubai**, focusing on aircraft modernization and MRO services.
- Over 250 international exhibitors participated, reflecting strong aviation sector growth amid record-high passenger demand.
- GE Aerospace announced a \$10 million investment to expand engine service capacity in the Middle East.
- Airbus' Middle East Services Forecast 2024-2043 projected global services demand to reach \$32 billion, with a 4.5% CAGR over 20 years.

FAO Launches \$95M Climate Resilient Agriculture Project in Somalia

- The **Food and Agriculture Organisation** of the United Nations (FAO) officially **launched a seven-year project with Somalia** that aims to enhance climate adaptation and resilience for vulnerable communities in the country.
- The 95 million dollar "Climate Resilient Agriculture in Somalia" project, dubbed "Ugbaad," which means hope in Somalia, will tackle climate change challenges and strengthen agrifood systems through large-scale investment.

Kashi Tamil Sangamam 3.0 begins in Uttar Pradesh

- **The third edition of the Kashi Tamil Sangamam**, an initiative fostering cultural and intellectual ties between Tamil Nadu and Kashi, **commence at Varanasi in Uttar Pradesh**.
- Union Education Minister, Dharmendra Pradhan; Union Minister of State for Information and Broadcasting Dr. L. Murugan and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath have inaugurated the prestigious cultural event.
- The main theme of this year's event is highlighting the significant contributions of Sage Agasthya to the world of Health, Philosophy, Science, Classical Tamil Literature, and cultural unity of the Nation.

Shivraj Singh Chouhan inaugurated NAKSHA program for urban land survey

- **Rural Development Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan** has inaugurated the **National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA)** in 152 urban local bodies across 26 States and three Union Territories in Madhya Pradesh.
- The programme aims to create and update land records in urban areas to ensure accurate and reliable documentation of land ownership.
- This initiative will empower citizens, improve ease of living, enhance urban planning, and reduce land-related disputes. The IT-based system for property record administration will foster transparency, efficiency and support sustainable development.

Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana turns Nine

- The **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY)**, a scheme providing comprehensive coverage for farmers against crop losses caused by unpredictable natural disasters, has **disbursed Rs 1.75 lakh crore in claims to more than 23.22 crore farmers over the past nine years, according to the Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.**
- Launched on 18 Feb 2016 by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, PMFBY has played a crucial role in stabilizing farmers' incomes while promoting the adoption of innovative agricultural practices.

One Man Office: That's LIC's latest bet

- **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** has launched the "**One Man Office**" (OMO) service to provide its sales force with a comprehensive digital ecosystem, enabling them to serve policyholders seamlessly.
- The initiative aims to enhance efficiency and productivity among LIC agents, development officers, senior business associates, LIC's CEO and Managing Director, Siddhartha Mohanty, described the service as a significant step towards promoting life insurance and improving customer service at any time and from any location. The initiative aligns with LIC's long-term goal of achieving 'Insurance for All by 2047'.
- OMO is designed to facilitate digital policy sales, provide after-sales services, track business performance, and act as a training and knowledge resource for agents. LIC describes it as a mobile digital office that aims to become a single platform for all business and service-related tasks, accessible via mobile phones.
- The service is built on LIC's ANANDA (Atma Nirbhar Agents New Business Digital Application) platform, which helps agents onboard customers. It offers features such as a premium calculator, benefit illustrations, E-NACH registration, change of address requests, online loan applications, renewal premium payments, and claim-related document submissions.

- Additionally, it provides access to a knowledge centre, insurance and health-related calculators, an office locator, and NEFT search tools to assist agents in customer interactions.

Centre launches AI programme to empower 1 lakh young innovators

- The **Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE), National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC), and Intel India** have **launched the 'AI for Entrepreneurship'** micro-learning module.
- The initiative is designed to simplify artificial intelligence (AI) concepts and encourage entrepreneurial thinking among young innovators across India.
- The programme aims to empower 1 lakh youth by 2025 by equipping them with essential skills to thrive in a technology-driven economy.

Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela 2025 to be held in Delhi

- **Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan** will **inaugurate the 'Pusa Krishi Vigyan Mela' 2025 in New Delhi** from February 22-24, showcasing the latest seed varieties and agricultural technologies.
- The three-day event, organized by ICAR-IARI, is expected to attract around 1 lakh participants, including farmers, students, and stakeholders.
- The theme of the mela is "Unnat Krishi Viksit Bharat," with Minister of State for Agriculture Ramnath Thakur as the Guest of Honour.

Zomato unveils AI-powered platform Nugget to help businesses scale up

- **Food and delivery platform Zomato** has **introduced Nugget**, an artificial intelligence (AI)-powered customer support platform designed to help businesses streamline their operations.

What is Nugget?

- Nugget is a no-code, AI-powered customer support solution that enables businesses to automate customer service without requiring technical expertise.

Manohar Lal Khattar opens Delhi Metro's first vertical solar plant

- Housing and Urban Affairs Minister **Manohar Lal Khattar** has **inaugurated the country's first vertical bi-facial solar plant installation**.
- He also inaugurated a **one-megawatt (MW) rooftop solar plant** at Khyber Pass depot of the Delhi Metro.
- The 50 kilowatt (KW) capacity vertical solar plant at Okhla Vihar station will use bi-facial panels designed to capture sunlight from both sides. This is a pilot project and more such plants will be installed based on its performance.

CCI approves amalgamation of Chaitanya India Fin Credit and Svantra Holdings into Svantra Microfin

- The Competition Commission of India has approved amalgamations of Chaitanya India Fin Credit Private Limited and Svatantra Holdings Private Limited into Svatantra Microfin Private Limited.
- SHPL is engaged in the business of making investments in equity shares, preference shares and other securities.
- The proposed transaction relates to the amalgamation of Svatantra Holdings Private Limited (SHPL) and Chaitanya India Fin Credit Private Limited (CIFCPL) into Svatantra Microfin Private Limited (SMPL), through the Scheme of Amalgamation entered into between SHPL, CIFCPL, SMPL and their respective shareholders as has been approved by the board of directors.

Jitendra Singh Inaugurates India's First "Open-Air Art Wall Museum" at Mausam Bhawan

- Union Minister Jitendra Singh has inaugurated India's first 'Open Air Art Wall Museum' at Mausam Bhawan in New Delhi.
- It depicts and celebrates the 150-year milestone journey of the India Meteorological Department (IMD).

Google opens new office Ananta in Bengaluru

- Google has officially opened Ananta, its newest and one of its biggest campuses globally, in Bengaluru.
- Situated in Mahadevapura, the campus marks another step in the company's long-standing presence in India.
- Ananta is designed to support teams working across various Google services, and with the launch of this large office space, Google now has over 10,000 employees across multiple locations in India, including Bengaluru, Hyderabad, Gurugram, Mumbai, and Pune.

Meesho launches 'creator marketplace' to ramp up influencer-driven traffic

- Meesho has introduced a 'creator marketplace platform' to strengthen its influencer-driven content commerce strategy after seeing success with over 14 million influencer-driven purchases in the past year.
- The company is collaborating with content creators who reflect diverse lifestyles, aiming to provide a personalized shopping experience tailored for the Indian market.
- Meesho's influencer-driven approach has led to nearly 10 times growth in categories such as women's Western wear, jewellery, footwear, home décor, kidswear, and beauty products.

Govt removes caste, income restrictions for free coaching under PM-CARES

- The government has introduced an updated scheme to provide high-quality coaching to children covered under the PM CARES scheme along

with students from Scheduled Castes (SCs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

- Originally launched during the Sixth Five-Year Plan, the free coaching scheme has undergone multiple revisions over the years to enhance its effectiveness. The latest update extends its benefits to **PM CARES beneficiaries, removing caste and income-related restrictions for these students.**
- Under the scheme, students will receive coaching for a wide range of competitive examinations, according to the guidelines of the updated scheme. These include Civil Services examinations conducted by the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) and State Public Service Commissions, as well as officer-grade recruitment tests for banks, insurance companies, and public sector undertakings (PSUs).
- Additionally, the scheme covers entrance exams for premier institutions in fields such as engineering (IIT-JEE), medicine (NEET), management (CAT), and law (CLAT). Students aspiring for international studies will also receive coaching for standardized tests like GRE, GMAT, IELTS, TOEFL, and SAT. Furthermore, coaching will be provided for defence-related examinations such as those for the National Defence Academy (NDA) and Combined Defence Services (CDS).
- Among these, 70 per cent of the seats will be allocated to SC students, while 30 per cent will be reserved for OBC students. Additionally, 30 per cent of the total seats in each category will be reserved for female candidates. If there are not enough female applicants in any category, the remaining seats will be filled by male candidates from the same category.
- To be eligible for the scheme, SC and OBC students must come from families with an annual income of Rs 8 lakh or less. Applicants must also have scored at least 50 per cent in their previous board examinations to qualify.

Union Health Ministry launches Intensified Special NCD Screening Drive to ensure 100% coverage of all individuals

- In view of the escalating burden of Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) in the country, the **Ministry of Health & Family Welfare** has launched an **Intensified Special NCD Screening Campaign.**
- Running from 20th February to 31st March 2025, this ambitious initiative aims to achieve 100% screening of all individuals aged 30 years and above for prevalent NCDs, including Diabetes Hypertension, and three common cancers—Oral, Breast, and Cervical.
- The Intensified Screening Campaign aims to achieve the following-

- **100% Screening Coverage-** The campaign aims to ensure early detection and timely intervention for NCDs.
- **Improved Linkage to Care-** By establishing structured treatment and follow-up protocols, the campaign seeks to reduce complications associated with NCDs.
- **Better Health Outcomes-** The initiative is expected to lower healthcare costs and enhance the overall quality of life for individuals across the nation.

Indian student wins memory championship by recalling 80 digits in 13.50 seconds

- A 20-year-old Indian student, **Vishvaa Rajakumar** has made headlines by **winning the Memory League World Championship**, an intense online competition where participants compete in **rapid memorisation challenges**.
- Vishvaa Rajakumar, a student at Manakula Vinayagar Institute of Technology in Puducherry, stunned competitors by memorising 80 random digits in just 13.50 seconds. This is an incredible speed of nearly six digits per second.

PM Modi to be guest of honour at Mauritius National Day celebrations

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will be the **guest of honour at Mauritius' National Day celebrations**, his Mauritian counterpart Navin Ramgoolam has announced, calling it a testimony of the close bilateral ties.
- Mauritius commemorates its **National Day on March 12th every year**. The day marks the anniversary of **Mauritius's independence from British rule in 1968**.

PM Modi released 19th installment of PM-KISAN scheme from Bihar

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** has released the **19th installment of the Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN) scheme from Bhagalpur** in Bihar.
- The Prime Minister installment was released to 9.8 crore beneficiary farmers via Direct Benefit Transfer. More than 22 thousand 700 crore rupees in assistance directly released to the bank accounts of beneficiaries of the scheme.
- The PM-KISAN scheme provides six thousand rupees annually to landholding farmers in three equal installments. Programmes will also be organized in 731 Krishi Vigyan Kendras across the country with nearly two and a half crore farmers joining the programme physically or virtually.

Telangana to host Miss World pageant in May 2025

- **The 72nd edition of the Miss World pageant** will be **held in Telangana from May 7 to May 31**. The opening and closing ceremonies, including the grand finale, are scheduled to take place in Hyderabad.

- Nandini Gupta to Represent India at 72nd Miss World in Telangana.
- The 71st Miss World was previously held in New Delhi and Mumbai.

Datia becomes Madhya Pradesh's 8th public airport

- The **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)** has granted **Datia Airport** a license as a public aerodrome, under the 3C/VFR category.
- With this approval, Datia Airport has become the **8th public airport in Madhya Pradesh**, available for general public use.
- Before September 2024, there were only five airports licensed for public use in Madhya Pradesh which include Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur, Khajuraho, and Gwalior.

RailTel Secures Rs 288 Cr Contract To Implement Kavach Anti-collision System

- **RailTel Corporation of India Limited (RailTel)**, a public sector enterprise under the Ministry of Railways, has **won a Rs 288 crore contract to install the Kavach anti-collision system across 71 stations**.
- The project will cover 502 route kilometers (RKM) under the Danapur and Sonpur divisions of East Central Railway. The implementation of Kavach, an advanced automatic train protection system, aims to enhance railway safety and improve operational efficiency.

CBDT introduces self-help tool to provide instant answers to I-T bill 2025

- The **Income Tax Department** has **introduced an online self-help tool** to assist taxpayers in understanding the changes proposed in the Income Tax Bill 2025.
- This tool, available on the official income tax department's website, allows taxpayers to compare the provisions of the new bill with those of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
- The comparison tool enables taxpayers to choose a specific section from the current Income Tax Act using a dropdown menu. Upon selection, the corresponding clause from the new Income Tax Bill will be displayed on the right-hand side. To enhance clarity, the mapping can also be presented in a table format.

SWAYATT initiative on GeM celebrates 6 years of transformative impact

- The **Government e Marketplace (GeM)** commemorated **six years of Startups, Women, and Youth Advantage through eTransactions (SWAYATT) initiative** at its New Delhi headquarters (HQ).
- Launched on 19 February 2019, SWAYATT was conceptualised with the clear objective of invigorating the participation of women-led enterprises and youth in public procurement.

Second 'India in Bahrain Festival' draws record crowd

- The second edition of the “India in Bahrain Festival” drew more than 2,000 visitors to Dana Mall in Sanabis, showcasing India’s cultural diversity through performances, art, and cuisine.
- The event, organized by the Indian Embassy in collaboration with Lulu Hypermarket Bahrain and Dana Mall.

51st Khajuraho Dance Festival 2025

- The Khajuraho Dance Festival is a famous cultural event held every year. In 2025, it will take place from February 20 to 26.
- Organized by the Department of Culture, Madhya Pradesh, with support from Madhya Pradesh Tourism, this festival has been showcasing India’s classical dances since 1975.
- Set against the beautiful Khajuraho Temples, the festival celebrates India’s rich heritage while also encouraging new ideas in traditional dance.
- The 51st edition promises an exciting experience with amazing dance performances, heritage tours, craft exhibitions, delicious food, adventure activities, and much more.

India’s First Wildlife Biobank Inaugurated at Darjeeling Zoo

- India has achieved a milestone in wildlife conservation with its first zoo-based biobank at Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHZZP) in Darjeeling, West Bengal.
- The biobank has been operational since July 2024. Often called a ‘frozen zoo,’ it focuses on preserving genetic materials from endangered species.
- The initiative aims to enhance conservation and research efforts.

Operative Kisan Credit Card (KCC) amount crosses ₹10 Lakh Crore benefiting 7.72 Crore Farmers

- The amount under operative Kisan Credit Card (KCC) accounts has more than doubled from ₹4.26 lakh crore in March 2014 to ₹10.05 lakh crore in December 2024.
- This indicates significant increase in quantum of affordable working capital loans provided to the farmers for agriculture and allied activities.

Punjab govt makes Punjabi compulsory in all Punjab schools

- The Punjab government has made it mandatory for all schools in the state, irrespective of their educational board, to teach Punjabi as a main and compulsory subject.
- Education Minister Harjot Singh Bains announced the decision through a fresh notification, applicable immediately.
- Under the new directive, all schools, whether affiliated with the Punjab School Education Board (PSEB), Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE), or Council for the Indian School Certificate Examinations (CISCE), will be required to include Punjabi in their curriculum.

Sarbananda Sonowal unveils 'One Nation-One Port' to enhance efficiency with ease of doing business

- **Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal** has launched a series of **major initiatives of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW)** aimed at modernising India's maritime infrastructure, strengthening its global trade presence, and to promote sustainability.
- These initiatives were launched during a stakeholder meeting in Mumbai, to discuss on various possibilities from the major announcements made in the Union Budget for the maritime sector.
- **Sonowal launched the 'One Nation-One Port Process (ONOP)'** an initiative to standardise and streamline operations across India's major ports.
- The step aims at removing inconsistencies in documentation and processes that led to inefficiencies, increased costs, and operational delays.

Rajnath Singh releases first edition of MoD's bi-annual Hindi magazine 'Sashakt Bharat'

- **Raksha Mantri Rajnath Singh** has released the **first edition of Ministry of Defence's bi-annual Hindi magazine 'Sashakt Bharat'** at South Block, New Delhi.
- The magazine comprises poems on the valour, patriotism and sacrifices of the Armed Forces personnel as well as articles on the policies of the Government written by the personnel of the Ministry, irrespective of their ranks, showcasing inclusivity and unity in diversity.

K. RamMohan inaugurates Udan Yatri Cafe at Chennai Airport

- Union Minister for Civil Aviation **Kinrappu RamMohan Naidu** has inaugurated the **Udan Yatri Cafe at Chennai International Airport**.
- This would benefit all passengers as five to six items like water, tea, coffee, snacks and local sweets will be sold at Rs.10 and Rs. 20.
- The first such cafe inaugurated at Kolkata airport last December has registered Rs. 30 thousand sales per day.

Vice President Dhankhar attended Nyokum Yullo celebration in Arunachal Pradesh

- **Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar** attended and addressed the **first-ever joint mega Nyokum Yullo Celebration in Boasimla, Kamle District of Arunachal Pradesh**.
- The Nyokum Yullo Celebration is an agrarian festival of the Nyishi tribe of Arunachal Pradesh.

- The word Nyokum is derived from Nyok meaning land (earth) and Kum meaning collectiveness or togetherness. The festival is linked with cultivation.
- The vice president also felicitated Kabak Yano on the occasion. Kabak Yano is the 5th woman from Arunachal Pradesh and the first woman from the Nyishi tribe to conquer the world's highest peak, Mount Everest.

Chapter 13: Current Affairs (International)

Niger becomes first African country to eliminate onchocerciasis

- **Niger becomes the first African country to eliminate onchocerciasis (river blindness), as recognized by the World Health Organization (WHO).**
- Onchocerciasis is a parasitic disease transmitted by black flies, primarily affecting rural populations in sub-Saharan Africa, Yemen, and parts of Latin America.
- Niger's elimination efforts included vector control measures (spraying insecticides) and mass drug administration (MDA) using ivermectin and albendazole from 2008 to 2019.
- The prevalence of onchocerciasis in Niger dropped from approximately 60% to 0.02% after extensive control programs and medical interventions.

International Big Cat Alliance officially comes into force as fully functional international legal entity

- **The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) has officially come into force as a treaty-based, inter-governmental organisation, becoming a fully functional international legal entity on January 23.**
- The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), acting as the Depository for the Framework Agreement, confirmed that five countries – **the Republic of Nicaragua, the Kingdom of Eswatini, the Republic of India, the Federal Republic of Somalia, and the Republic of Liberia** – have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, or approval, making them the **founding members of the IBCA.**

UK becomes first nation to outlaw AI tools used to generate child sexual abuse content

- **The United Kingdom has become the first country to introduce laws against artificial intelligence tools used to generate sexualised images of children.**
- The government announced that it would make it illegal to possess, create or distribute AI tools that generate abusive images, making it a crime punishable by up to five years in prison.

BAPS inaugurates South Africa's largest Hindu Temple in Johannesburg

- **The Bochasanwasi Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS)** has inaugurated **the largest Hindu Temple of South Africa in Johannesburg.**
- The inauguration of BAPS Shri Swaminarayan Mandir and Cultural Complex marks a historic milestone for the Hindu community in the country.
- This new temple joins a growing network of 35 BAPS temples across Africa, including seven in South Africa.

President Trump signs executive order withdrawing US from UNHRC

- **President Donald Trump** signed an **executive order withdrawing the US from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)**, prohibiting any future funding for the UN agency for Palestinian refugees.
- President Trump also directed the US to review its participation in the UN's Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO).

Following USA, Argentina withdraws from World Health Organization

- **Argentina** announced its **decision to withdraw from the World Health Organization (WHO)**, following the United States' similar move under President Donald Trump.
- The decision was made by Argentina's libertarian President Javier Milei, who instructed Foreign Minister Gerardo Werthein to initiate the withdrawal.
- President Milei cited "deep differences" regarding the WHO's management of health issues, particularly its handling of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Trump signs executive order banning transgender athletes from women's sports

- **President Donald Trump** has **signed an executive order aimed at prohibiting transgender women and girls from competing in women's sports.**
- This move, framed as a restoration of fairness in sports, has ignited a fierce debate across political and social landscapes. Critics argue that the order discriminates against transgender individuals, while supporters hail it as a necessary step to uphold the integrity of women's sports.
- Trump signed the executive order, titled "Keeping Men Out of Women's Sports," on National Girls and Women in Sports Day, a symbolic nod to its intent.

Trump Declares February 9 'Gulf of America Day' After Renaming 'Gulf of Mexico'

- **US President Donald Trump** has officially **renamed the Gulf of Mexico as the "Gulf of America"** and designated **February 9 as "Gulf of America Day"** through an executive order.

- The order, titled "Restoring Names That Honour American Greatness" (Executive Order 14172), instructs the US Secretary of the Interior to formalise the name change within 30 days.

Musk's AI Startup Unveils Grok-3 Chatbot

- **Elon Musk's artificial intelligence startup xAI has introduced Grok-3, the latest iteration of its chatbot**, as it looks to compete with Chinese AI firm DeepSeek, Microsoft-backed OpenAI, and Alphabet's Google.
- Grok-3 debut comes at a critical moment in the AI arms race, just days after DeepSeek unveiled its powerful open-source model and as Musk moves aggressively to expand xAI's influence.
- "Grok-3 across the board is in a league of its own," Musk said during a livestream alongside three xAI engineers late on Monday, adding that the model significantly outperforms its predecessor, Grok-2.

India elected vice president of International Organization of Aids to Marine Navigation

- **India has been elected to the vice presidency of the International Organization of Aids to Marine Navigation (IALA) in Singapore.**
- The first General Assembly of IALA also marks its transition from a non-governmental organization (NGO) to an inter-governmental organization (IGO), where India was elected to its Vice Presidency.
- India is hosting the IALA Council meeting in December 2025 and the IALA Conference & General Assembly in September 2027 in Mumbai.

Microsoft unveils quantum chip 'Majorana 1'- powered by new state of matter

- **Microsoft has introduced its first quantum chip.** The chip, called **Majorana 1**, is powered by a new Topological Core architecture.
- Microsoft developed topological superconducting nanowires using indium arsenide (semiconductor) and aluminum (superconductor), forming MZMs, which are essential building blocks for quantum bits (qubits).
- Microsoft aims to scale up to one million qubits on a single chip while claiming that its design is less prone to errors than competing quantum chips.

Brazil Joins OPEC+ Forum to Balance Oil Production and Energy Transition Goals

- **Brazil has joined the OPEC+ Forum** as an observer, signaling a calculated move to balance its role as a major oil producer with its energy transition ambitions.
- The decision by the National Council for Energy Policy, allows Brazil to participate in discussions without committing to policies like production cuts or price controls.
- As the world's seventh-largest oil producer, Brazil pumps 4.3 million barrels of crude daily, contributing 4% of global output. In 2024, crude oil

became the country's top export, accounting for 13.3% of total sales and surpassing soybeans.

- **OPEC+, which includes 23 countries** producing nearly 40% of the world's crude oil, coordinates production policies to stabilize markets.

India, Bangladesh agree to launch new 'hotline' between border forces

- **India and Bangladesh** have **decided to establish a new communication link between** the deputy commanders of their respective border-guarding forces and identified about 99 fresh patches for erecting a fence along their shared border.
- The decisions were finalised during the biannual director general-level talks between the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Border Guard Bangladesh (BGB) that concluded here.

The Cali Fund launches in the margins of the resumed session of COP16

- **A new international fund has been created to help protect biodiversity. The 'Cali Fund'** was launched at the resumed **16th Conference of Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Rome.**
- The Cali Fund will receive money from businesses that rely on Digital Sequence Information (DSI). DSI includes genetic data from plants, animals, and microorganisms. Industries like pharmaceuticals, cosmetics, agriculture, and biotechnology use DSI to develop products.
- Under this new system, they will now have to contribute a part of their revenue to support biodiversity efforts.

UAE launched 10-Year Blue Residency Visa System

- **The first phase of the Blue Visa system has been formally launched by the United Arab Emirates (UAE),** which grants international nationals a 10-year residency visa.
- By attracting people who support environmental sustainability, this project hopes to strengthen the UAE's commitment to a more environmentally friendly future.

Chapter 14: Banking & Financial

IRDAI caps senior citizen health premium hike at 10% annually

- The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (Irdai)** has stepped in to **curb steep health insurance premium hikes.**
- Insurers can no longer raise premiums **for policyholders aged 60 and above by more than 10% per year without prior approval,** which will ensure accessibility of health insurance to those who are the most vulnerable to medical inflation.

IBA honours Karnataka Bank with six awards for banking technology excellence

- **Karnataka Bank** has **won awards in six categories** at the '20th Annual Banking Technology Conference, Expo & Citations, 2024', instituted by the Indian Banks' Association, recently.
- The awards were: 'Best Tech Talent and Organization', 'Best IT Risk Management', 'Best Technology Bank', and 'Best Fintech and DPI Adoption' (all runner-ups); and 'Best Digital Sales, Payments and Engagement' and 'Best AI and ML Adoption' (special mention).

Shriram GI Unveils Shri Health Suraksha Insurance – A Comprehensive and Affordable Health Plan

- **Shriram General Insurance (SGIC)** has unveiled its **first indemnity health insurance plan, Shri Health Suraksha Insurance**, aimed at providing comprehensive coverage at an affordable premium.
- The plan covers a diverse range of treatments, including modern medical procedures and AYUSH treatments (Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy), catering to the varied healthcare needs of individuals and families.

RBI imposes monetary penalty on Equitas Small Finance Bank Limited

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has imposed **penalties on Equitas Small Finance Bank and India Post Payments Bank** for deficiencies in regulatory compliances.
- RBI has imposed a penalty of Rs 65 lakh on Equitas Small Finance Bank for non-compliance with certain directions on 'Levy of Foreclosure Charges/Pre-payment Penalty on Floating Rate Term Loans' and 'Credit Flow to Agriculture -- Collateral free agricultural loans'.
- A penalty of Rs 26.70 lakh has been imposed on India Post Payments Bank Ltd for non-compliance with certain directions on 'Customer Service in Banks'.

CreditAccess Grameen secures USD 50 million commitment from IFC

- **CreditAccess Grameen** has secured **approval for a USD 50 million commitment** from the **International Finance Corporation (IFC)**.
- This transaction is a testament to CA Grameen's ongoing efforts to strengthen its asset liability management (ALM) position given flexible repayment structures and maintaining geographical diversification to hedge against market volatility.

RBI Approves Tata Communications' Rs. 330 Crore ATM Business Sale to Findi

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved **Tata Communications' plan** to sell its entire stake in Tata Communications Payment Solutions (TCPSP) to **Transaction Solutions International (TSI), the Indian arm of Australian fintech company Findi.**
- The deal, first announced in November 2024, is valued at Rs 330 crore, with an additional Rs 75 crore based on interchange rate adjustments.
- TSI currently operates more than 7,500 "brown label" ATMs, partnering with banks like SBI, PNB, Central Bank of India, and HDFC. It also manages back-end operations for over 10,000 "white label" ATMs and facilitates digital payments through 50,000+ merchants under its FindiPay brand.

NaBFID raises Rs 5,000 crore via 15-year bonds at 7.25% cut-off rate

- **State-owned National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID)** has raised Rs 5,000 crore through 15-year bonds at a cut-off rate of 7.25 per cent.
- Additionally, the state-owned Power Finance Corporation (PFC) raised Rs 3,950 crore through bonds maturing in approximately 10 years and 20 years, with cut-off rates of 7.24 per cent and 7.25 per cent, respectively.

L & T Finance launches AI-powered Virtual Home Loan Advisor 'KAI'

- **L & T Finance Limited (LTF)** has introduced **Knowledgeable AI (KAI)**, an AI-powered virtual home loan advisor, designed to simplify and personalize the home loan journey, accessible on their newly redesigned corporate website.
- KAI addresses challenges like complex terminology, intricate calculations, and lengthy processes, offering intuitive, efficient support to first-time homebuyers, helping them navigate the home loan process smoothly.

IDFC FIRST Bank Launches Exclusive Banking Package for Senior Citizens

- **IDFC FIRST Bank** has introduced a **specialised range of banking products and services tailored for senior citizens**, reaffirming its commitment to offering secure, customised, and superior financial solutions for this important customer segment.
- As part of this initiative, the bank has also introduced a dedicated feature on its Mobile Banking App called 'Senior Citizen Specials', providing exclusive benefits such as:
 - Safe, secure, and customised investment solutions based on senior citizens' life-stage needs.
 - Additional 0.5% interest rate on fixed deposits.
 - No penalty on premature closure of fixed deposits.
 - Cyber Insurance Coverage of ₹2 lakhs to protect against rising cyber threats.
 - Complimentary one-year MediBuddy health membership, offering unlimited doctor video consultations for up to four family members.

RBI reduces interest rates for first time in nearly 5 years

- Almost after 5 years, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has reduced the **policy repo rate by 25 basis points, from 6.50 per cent to 6.25 per cent.**
- To avoid banking fraud Mr Malhotra also announced that, the Reserve Bank shall implement the 'bank.in' exclusive Internet Domain for Indian banks. Registration of this domain name will commence from April this year. This will be followed by the 'fin.in' domain for the financial sector.
- RBI has also decided that this year's Financial Literacy Week will emphasise women's role in financial decision-making and household budgeting. It will start from 24th February and the Governor urged all banks to actively participate in the campaign on the theme "Financial Literacy: Women's Prosperity".

IDFC FIRST Bank, Ikonz launch Amitabh Bachchan's AI avatar

- **IDFC FIRST Bank, in partnership with Ikonz, has used the latest artificial intelligence (AI) avatar of Bollywood superstar Amitabh Bachchan** at 10 more branches in 5 new cities including Delhi, Gurugram, Ahmedabad, Bangalore and Hyderabad.
- The initiative allows Bachchan to connect with another 70 million people.
- Last year, Ikonz partnered with IDFC FIRST Bank to bring the legend's AI avatar as the face of all banking communication at their Juhu Branch in Mumbai. In a short span, the initiative has been widely accepted and has led to better efficiency and customer trust.
- Bachchan, during the launch, said the one of its kind initiatives using the latest technology will help him to connect with people in a unique way.

RBI approves two voluntary urban co-operative bank amalgamations

- **The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved two voluntary amalgamations in the urban co-operative bank (UCB) space -- The Citizen Co-operative Bank (Vasco-De-Gama, Goa) with TJSB Sahakari Bank (Thane, Maharashtra) and Pune Commercial Co-operative Bank (Satara, Maharashtra) with Pimpri Chinchwad Sahakari Bank (Pune, Maharashtra).**
- The Scheme of Amalgamation of The Citizen Cooperative Bank with TJSB Sahakari Bank has been sanctioned in exercise of the powers conferred on it under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- The Scheme will come into force with effect from February 10, 2025, whereby the branches of Goa-based UCB will function as branches of TJSB Sahakari Bank.

Easebuzz gets RBI authorisation to operate as online payment aggregator

- **Easebuzz**, a digital payment solutions provider, has **received final authorisation from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an Online Payment Aggregator (PA)**.
- The approval, which allows the firm to continue facilitating digital transactions for businesses, comes a week after it announced integration support for third-party payment orchestrators.
- The company currently claims to process an annualised Gross Transaction Value (GTV) of \$30 billion and serves over 2 lakh businesses, including SMEs and startups.

India's retail inflation eases to 4.3% in January 2025

- A sharp decline in vegetable-led food prices pushed **retail inflation based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI)**, down by 91 basis points to a **five-month low of 4.3 per cent in January**.
- A sharp decline of 237 basis points was observed in food inflation in January 2025 compared to December 2024. The food inflation in January 2025 is the lowest since August 2024.

Exim Bank to provide \$300 mn credit to Vietnam for boats, patrol vessels

- The **Export Import Bank of India** will **provide lines of credit totalling \$300 million to Vietnam for procuring high-speed guard boats and offshore patrol vessels**.
- The Exim Bank had entered into an agreement on July 31, 2024 with the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (GO-VNM), for making available to the latter, GoI supported Line of Credit (LoC) of \$180 million for procurement of four Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPV).
- The bank had also entered into an agreement with GO-VNM for making available to the latter, India supported LoC of \$120 million for procurement of high-speed guard boats, it said in another circular.

Decentro Unveils India's First Self-Hosted CKYC Solution to Align with CERSAI's New Compliance Mandate

- **Decentro**, a leading fintech infrastructure platform, has **launched India's first fully compliant, self-hosted CKYC (Central KYC) solution**, enabling financial institutions to seamlessly transition to the new CERSAI compliance framework.
- This innovation eliminates third-party dependencies, allowing banks, NBFCs, and insurers to onboard customers faster while ensuring regulatory adherence.
- Additionally, the Union Budget 2025 has emphasized AI-driven KYC reforms, reinforcing the need for a secure, transparent, and centralized CKYC system. The evolving CKYC landscape presents challenges such as compliance risks, operational disruptions, and significant time and cost implications for institutions lacking the necessary infrastructure.
- Co-Founder & CEO of Decentro - Rohit Taneja

Union Mutual Fund launches two new schemes for structured gold investments

- **Union Mutual Fund** has launched **two new funds that will invest in gold “at a time when investors are looking for diversified solutions”**.
- Union Gold ETF and Union Gold ETF Fund of Fund opened for subscriptions and will continue till February 24, with a minimum investment requirement of Rs 1,000.
- Gold plays a key role in portfolio diversification due to its low correlation with other asset classes and potential as a hedge against inflation. Central banks globally are major buyers of gold, further supporting its demand and price.
- The schemes offer key benefits, including cost-effective exposure to gold without concerns related to making charges or storage.

RBI lifts restrictions on Kotak Mahindra Bank on onboarding new customers

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** lifted the restrictions imposed on **Kotak Mahindra Bank** regarding **onboarding new customers using online and mobile banking channels and issuing new credit cards**.
- In April last year (2024), the RBI placed restrictions on the bank as it failed to plug gaps in its information technology (IT) systems, which resulted in frequent outages in the bank's core banking system and online channels in the preceding two years, inconveniencing customers.

SEBI launches MITRA to help investors trace inactive mutual fund folios

- Capital markets regulator, **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)**, has introduced a **new digital platform, MITRA, to assist investors in tracking and reclaiming inactive or unclaimed mutual fund folios**.
- The objective of the platform, Mutual Fund Investment Tracing and Retrieval Assistant (MITRA), is to encourage investors to search for forgotten MF investments and update KYC as per the current norms.
- The platform addresses a growing concern wherein investors, over time, lose track of their mutual fund investments lack of updated contact information, or unawareness of investments made in their name.
- MITRA platform is developed by the RTAs to provide investors with a searchable database of inactive and unclaimed mutual fund folios at an industry-level which will empower the investors.

RBI to issue ₹50 denomination bank notes with signature of new Governor Malhotra

- The **Reserve Bank of India** will soon issue **Rs 50 denomination banknotes bearing the signature of Governor Sanjay Malhotra**.
- Malhotra assumed office in December 2024 replacing Shaktikanta Das who demitted office after completion of his extended term.
- The design of these notes is similar in all respects to Rs 50 banknotes in Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series. All banknotes in the denomination of Rs 50 issued by the Reserve Bank in the past will continue to be legal tender.

Small Finance Banks get RBI nod to provide credit lines on UPI

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has approved **small finance banks (SFBs) to offer credit lines on the Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**, in accordance with the regulator's announcement made during the December 2024 monetary policy committee meeting.
- This product empowers individuals and small businesses to obtain pre-sanctioned credit lines from banks, which can be utilised immediately for transactions through UPI. It facilitates availability and frictionless usage of credit lines, overdrafts and retail loans.

Bank of Baroda gets board approval to raise up to Rs 8,500 crore equity

- The board of public sector lender **Bank of Baroda** has approved **the bank's plan to raise up to Rs 8,500 crore** through common equity shares to support business growth and meet regulatory norms.
- The Mumbai-based lender would use various modes, including Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP), in suitable tranches up to March 2028 and beyond, as required.
- The bank's capital adequacy stood at 15.96 per cent, with Common Equity Tier-I (CET-I) at 12.38 per cent at the end of December 2024. BoB had raised capital via QIP of Rs 4,500 crore during FY21.

Indian Overseas Bank launches Aadhaar-based account opening, API banking services

- **Public sector Indian Overseas Bank** has launched **Aadhaar-OTP based account opening and API banking facilities** coinciding with its 89th Foundation Day Celebrations.
- The initiatives were designed to offer simplified banking services to both individual and corporate customers.

IRDAI permits one-time UPI mandate for buying life, health cover

- The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has permitted a **one-time mandate for blocking the amount towards premium through Unified Payments Interface (UPI) mandate** for issue of life and health insurance policies.
- Under the facility called the Bima Applications Supported by Blocked Amount (Bima-ASBA), the transfer of money from the prospect to the

insurer happens only when an insurance policy is issued. In this facility, insurers can offer a one-time mandate for blocking a certain amount through UPI in the bank account for the concerned prospect.

- The amount towards the insurance premium will be debited only after the insurer decides to accept the proposal. In case the insurer does not accept the proposal, the amount shall be unblocked and shall be available at the disposal of the prospect.

SEBI cancels registration of 19 foreign venture capital investors

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has cancelled the registrations of 19 foreign venture capital institutions (FVCI) after investigations found that they had been violating capital market regulations.

Some of the entities whose FVCI registration has been cancelled-

- Blackstone Capital Partners (Singapore) VI FVCI
- Axis Capital Mauritius
- IFCI Sycamore India Infrastructure Fund
- Blackstone Family Investment Partnership (Singapore) VI-ESC FVCI
- Summit Partners India Venture Capital Investments

Mirae Asset Sharekhan Expands into Life Insurance Distribution with ICICI Prudential, HDFC Life Partnerships

- **Mirae Asset Sharekhan**, a leading financial services platform, has entered the life insurance distribution sector through strategic partnerships with ICICI Prudential Life Insurance and HDFC Life.
- This move aligns with the company's vision of offering a one-stop financial platform that integrates wealth creation with long-term financial security.

RBI imposes penalty on Citibank, Asirvad Micro Finance, JM Fin Home Loans

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed monetary penalties on Citibank, Asirvad Micro Finance, and JM Financial Home Loans for violating regulatory norms.
- The central bank fined Citibank Rs 39 lakh for reporting breaches in 'Large Exposures' limits with delay and not uploading rectified data in certain segments within seven days of receiving rejection reports from Credit Information Companies (CICs).
- Meanwhile, Asirvad Micro Finance failed to report the household income of certain borrowers to CICs. It also failed to provide factsheets to certain gold loan customers and did not establish a system of auto-escalation for all complaints that were partly or wholly rejected by its internal grievance redress mechanism to the internal ombudsman for a final decision. These

deficiencies led to the RBI imposing a penalty of Rs 6.20 lakh on the company.

NSDL, CDSL launch Unified Investor App

- **National Securities Depository (NSDL) and Central Depository Services (CDSL), in collaboration with capital market regulator Sebi, have launched the Unified Investor App (UIP), integrating MyEasi by CDSL and SPEED-e by NSDL.**
- This platform provides investors with a consolidated view of their financial statements, shareholdings, and investments, and financial statements.
- A key benefit of this initiative is the ability to access a consolidated view of demat securities across both NSDL and CDSL accounts. Investors no longer need to juggle between different platforms to monitor their holdings. This not only simplifies portfolio management but also ensures greater transparency by providing a unified dashboard for all securities.

IRDAI Launches Bima-ASBA

- **The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has launched a new payment mechanism called Bima-ASBA (Applications Supported by Blocked Amount).**
- The initiative, which aims to streamline the payment process for life and health insurance policies, allows policyholders to block funds in their bank accounts for premium payments, ensuring smooth transactions without immediate debits.

SEBI slaps Rs 10 lakh penalty on Axis Securities for violating stock rules

- **Capital markets regulator SEBI has slapped penalties totalling Rs 50 lakh on three foreign portfolio investors for exceeding the prescribed limits on short-term investments in debt securities.**
- In three separate orders, the regulator slapped a fine of Rs 20 lakh each on **Nexpect Ltd and AIRD Investment Commercial LLC, while it imposed a penalty of Rs 10 lakh on Aviator Global Investment Fund.**
- The orders came after Sebi had carried out inspections of the custodian, Orbis Financial Corporation, for FY22.

SEBI imposes Rs 5.05 crore penalty on Indian Clearing Corporation

- **The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) imposed a total penalty of Rs 5.05 crore on Indian Clearing Corporation (ICCL), a wholly owned subsidiary of BSE, for alleged violations of cyber security and system audit-related norms.**
- The market regulator conducted an inspection between December 2022 and July 2023, following which it sent the show-cause notice in October.
- Sebi's findings showed that ICCL had submitted the network auditor report to the regulator without any management or board comments.

RBI allows withdrawal of up to ₹25,000 per depositor of New India Co-operative Bank

- Days after imposing several restrictions on **New India Co-operative Bank**, the RBI relaxed the conditions and permitted customers to withdraw up to **₹25,000 from their deposit accounts with effect from February 27**.
- On February 13, the Reserve Bank had imposed All Inclusive Directions (AID) on the Mumbai-based cooperative bank, which included a ban on deposit withdrawals, amid supervisory concerns.

South Indian Bank launches 'SIB QUICKPL', a fully digital personal loan platform

- Kochi-based Private lender, **South Indian Bank** has launched the 'SIB QUICKPL', a fully digital personal loan platform for new customers.
- This in-house solution enables salaried and self-employed individuals with strong credit profiles to secure unsecured personal loans in 10 minutes.

Muthoot Finance gets RBI approval to open 115 new branches

- **Finance and insurance corporation Muthoot Finance** has received **RBI approval to open 115 new branches**.
- The company is also advised to ensure suitable arrangements for security and for storage of gold jewellery, including a safe deposit vault, as envisaged in the extant directions, to the extent applicable.
- Muthoot Finance recently posted a 21 per cent increase in consolidated PAT in Q3 FY25 at ₹1,392 crore as against ₹1,145 crore in Q3 FY24.

RBI 2025

Repo Rate	6.25%
Reverse Repo Rate	3.35%
Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate	6.50%
Bank Rate	6.50%
Cash reserve Ratio (CRR)	4%
Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR)	18%

Chapter 15: Committee

Committee	Headed by	Purpose
A three-member judicial committee	Retired judge of the Allahabad High Court Justice Harsh Kumar	To inquire into the stampede incident in Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj
The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has established a 9-member Working Group	Radha Shyam Ratho	To conduct a comprehensive review of the trading and settlement timings for financial markets
The 12th All India Pension Adalat	Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh chaired	The Minister interacted with pensioners from different states and provided on-the-spot redressal of their pension-related grievances . Speaking on the occasion, the Minister dedicated the Pension Adalat to all the pensioners
A 31-member Select Committee	BJP MP Baijayant Panda	To examine the new Income Tax Bill
The 77th Session of the Executive Committee (EC-77) of the African-Asian Rural Development Organization (AARDO)	Shivraj Singh Chouhan	The session proposed new leadership for AARDO (President and Vice Presidents) , review budget estimates, approve new memberships and MOUs, and assess development projects, HRD programs, and regional office activities from May 2023 to October 2024.
The Insurance Regulatory and Development	Former chairman of State Bank of India (SBI) Dinesh Khara	To look into the proposed amendments to the Insurance Act,

Authority of India (IRDAI) has set up a seven-member committee		1938 and suggest a framework for implementation of the same.
Light Combat Aircraft (LCA), the Ministry of Defence has formed a high-level committee	Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh	To examine the cause of delay and suggest measures for faster induction of the fighter jets into the Indian Air Force (IAF)

Chapter 16: Defence News

HAL renames HJT-36 Jet Trainer as 'Yashas' following major upgrades

- **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** has **officially renamed its flagship jet training aircraft**, the Hindustan Jet Trainer **HJT-36**, as 'Yashas' following extensive modifications aimed at enhancing its performance and operational efficiency.
- As part of its preparation for **induction into service**, 'Yashas' has been upgraded with state-of-the-art avionics and a modernized cockpit, improving training effectiveness and operational efficiency.
- Designed for Stage II pilot training, the aircraft is also capable of counter-insurgency and counter-surface force operations, armament training, and aerobatic maneuvers. It is powered by a Full Authority Digital Engine Control (FADEC)-equipped AL55I jet engine, delivering an optimal thrust-to-weight ratio, improved thrust management, and enhanced reliability.

Global defence firm Saab signs MoU with HAL for laser warning system

- **Swedish defence and security company Saab** has signed an **agreement with Indian defence manufacturer Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** to collaborate on the **Electronic Warfare Laser Warning System-310 (LWS-310)**.
- The agreement strengthens the long-standing partnership between Saab South Africa and HAL, which began in 2005 during the development of the Advanced Light Helicopter Programme.

Defence Exercise	Between	About
-------------------------	----------------	--------------

<p>The 13th edition of joint military exercise 'Ekuverin' between the has commenced in the archipelago nation.</p>	<p>Indian Army and the Maldives National Defence Force</p>	<p>In 2023, it was conducted at Chaubatia in Uttarakhand from June 11 to 24.</p>
<p>A joint military exercise "Cyclone 2025",</p>	<p>India and Egypt</p>	<p>The 14-day exercise aims to enhance defence cooperation between India and Egypt by sharing professional skills improving interoperability of special forces in desert environments and.</p>
<p>A joint military exercise 'Winged Raider'</p>	<p>The Indian Army and the Indian Air Force</p>	<p>The joint military exercise is part of the government of India's effort to push for interoperability leading to the setting up of an integrated theatre command in the country.</p>
<p>The sixth edition of Exercise Dharma Guardian with the Japan Ground Self-Defence Force (JGSDF)</p>	<p>The Indian Army and Japan</p>	<p>The exercise's primary objective is to improve interoperability between the two forces through joint urban warfare and counter-terrorism drills conducted under a United Nations mandate.</p>
<p>NAVDEX 2025</p>	<p>India and Abu Dhabi</p>	<p>Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL), one of India's</p>

		<p>premier defense shipbuilding yards, is showcased its indigenously designed Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs) and Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) at NAVDEX 2025 in Abu Dhabi.</p>
--	--	---

Chapter 17: Sports News

Thomas Cook India appointed as exclusive partner for National Games 2025

- **Omnichannel travel firm Thomas Cook (India)** has partnered with the central government for providing accommodation, catering and transport services for the National Games of India 2025 being held in Uttarakhand.
- National Games of India 2025 is a multi-sport extravaganza bringing together top athletes from across the country to participate in 32 sporting disciplines and 4 demonstration events during January 28-February 14, 2025.

Govt clears participation of 88-member Indian contingent at Asian Winter Games 2025

- The government has approved the participation of the **Indian contingent at the 9th Asian Winter Games 2025**, to be held from 7th to 14th February in Harbin, China.
- The participation of an **88-member Indian contingent, which includes 59 athletes and 29 team officials.**
- For the first time, full financial support is being extended under the Assistance to National Sports Federations Scheme to athletes competing in Alpine Skiing, Cross-Country Skiing, Figure Skating, Short Track Speed Skating, and Speed Skating (Long Track).

Sachin Tendulkar received BCCI's Lifetime Achievement Award

- Legendary former cricketer **Sachin Tendulkar honoured with the BCCI's Lifetime Achievement Award** at the Board's annual gala in Mumbai.
- Tendulkar become the 31st recipient of the prestigious award, which was instituted in 1994 in honour of India's first cricket captain, Col. C.K. Nayudu.

- The 51-year-old Tendulkar, who played an incredible 664 international matches for India, holds the record for the highest number of Test and ODI runs in cricket history. He amassed 15,921 runs in Tests and a staggering 18,426 runs in ODIs.

R Praggnanandhaa wins Tata Steel Chess Masters 2025

- **In Chess, Indian Grandmaster R. Praggnanandhaa** clinched the **prestigious Tata Steel Masters 2025 title** in a thrilling showdown, **defeating reigning World Champion D. Gukesh** in a nail-biting tiebreaker last night at Wijk aan Zee, Netherlands.
- This victory makes R. Praggnanandhaa the first Indian since Viswanathan Anand in 2006 to claim the prestigious title.

India Beat South Africa By 9 Wickets to Defend U-19 Women's T20 World Cup Title

- **India has defended their ICC Under-19 Women's T20 World Cup title, beating South Africa** by 9 wickets in the final match at the **Bayuemas Oval in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.**
- Gongadi Trisha's unbeaten innings of 44 runs helped Niki Prasad led Women in Blue to chase the target of 83 runs in the 12th over. She also got Player of the Match award. Earlier, South Africa got bundled out for just 82 runs.

Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers win men's Hockey India League 2024-25 Title

- **Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers** won the **6th Men's Hockey India League 2024-25 title**, beating Hyderabad Toofans 4-3 in a tense final at a packed Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, Odisha.
- This was the first title win for the Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers, winning them a prize of Rs 3 crore. The runners-up Hyderabad Toofan won Rs 2 crore as prize money.

Two time Grand Slams winner Simona Halep announced Retirement

- Two-time grand slam champion and former world No. 1 **Simona Halep** has retired **from tennis.**
- The Romanian announced her decision at the Transylvania Open in Cluj, Romania after losing her first-round match against Lucia Bronzetti 6-1, 6-1.
- Halep has struggled with injuries since returning to the court last year after serving a doping ban.

FIFA suspends Pakistan Football Federation after failure to amend constitution

- **The International Football Federation (FIFA)** has **suspended the Pakistan Football Federation (PFF)** after it failed to amend its constitution as required for the smooth and fair governance of the sport in the country.

- FIFA stated that Pakistan will remain suspended until the PFF Congress makes the necessary amendments. This is the Pakistan Football Federation's third suspension since 2017.

Tarundeep Rai Wins Bronze in Men's Recurve Archery at 38th National Games

- At the ongoing **38th National Games** in Uttarakhand, four-time Olympian archer **Tarundeep Rai from Sikkim won the Bronze Medal** in the Men's Recurve event.
- **Juel Sarkar from West Bengal clinched the Gold** while **Indira Chand from Services Sports Control Board clinched the Silver medal.**

Maguire suspended from bowling in international cricket

- **Ireland's Aimee Maguire** has been **suspended from bowling in international cricket** immediately after an Independent Assessment confirmed that the left-arm spinner uses an illegal bowling action.
- The 18-year-old was reported by match officials for a suspect bowling action during the first ODI of the ICC Women's Championship series against India in Rajkot on 10 January.

Real Madrid legend Marcelo announces retirement from football

- **Real Madrid and Brazil defender Marcelo** has announced his **retirement at the age of 36.**
- The left-back won five Champions League crowns and six La Liga titles with the Los Blancos and also represented his country in two World Cups during an illustrious career that spanned 19 years.

9th Asian Winter Games kick off in Harbin

- **The 9th edition of the Asian Winter Games (AWG) 2025** has **commenced in Harbin**, the capital of Heilongjiang Province in northeast China.
- Chinese President Xi Jinping officially declared the games open in the presence of International Olympic Committee (IOC) President Thomas Bach and other distinguished guests. The games will continue until the 14th February.

Varun Chakravarthy becomes 2nd oldest cricketer to make ODI debut for India

- **The Indian team** handed mystery spinner **Varun Chakravarthy** his **maiden ODI cap in the 2nd game of the three-match series.**
- Varun received his cap from Ravindra Jadeja, after having a sensational T20I series against England, where he picked up 14 wickets from 5 matches.
- Varun, 33 years and 164 days old, became India's second-oldest debutant in ODIs behind legendary wicketkeeper Farokh Engineer, who had made his debut in 1974 at the age of 36 years and 138 days.

- Varun has steadily risen in the 50-over format and was the best spinner in the recently concluded Vijay Hazare Trophy, India's premier 50-over competition.

Former Sri Lankan captain Dimuth Karunaratne Retires from International Cricket

- **Former Sri Lankan captain and opener Dimuth Karunaratne bid farewell to international cricket** after playing his 100th Test against Australia in Galle.
- The 36-year-old scored 36 and 14 in his final match, which Australia won by nine wickets to secure a 2-0 sweep of the series.
- He became only the seventh Sri Lankan cricketer to achieve the milestone of 100 Tests.
- During his career, Karunaratne amassed 7,222 Test runs at an impressive average of nearly 40, with a career-best score of 244. In addition to his Test achievements, he played 50 ODIs, scoring 1,316 runs.

Jil Teichmann wins the Mumbai Open 2025 Tennis tournament

- **Jil Teichmann of Switzerland** defeated Mananchaya Sawangkaew of Thailand to **win the singles title of the 2025 Mumbai Open tennis tournament.**
- The final of the 2025 Mumbai Open tennis tournament was played in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- In the semi-final, Jil Teichman defeated Maaya Rajeshwaran Revathi, of India while Mananchaya Sawangkaew defeated Rebecca Marino of Canada to reach the final.

Pankaj Advani wins 36th National Gold at Indian Snooker Championship

- India's most accomplished player **Pankaj Advani** secured his **36th overall national title and 10th men's snooker crown at the Yashwant Club in Madhya Pradesh.**
- The ONGC employee overcame an early setback to defeat Brijesh Damani in a final where Damani managed to take the opening frame, the only one he would claim throughout the match.

Meghalaya to host next edition of National Games in February/March 2027

- **Meghalaya** will host the **39th edition of the National Games in February/March 2027.**
- As host state of the next edition, Meghalaya will be handed the IOA flag during the closing ceremony of the ongoing 38th Games in Uttarakhand.

India won 6 Golds in Para Archery Asia Cup 2025

- **India topped the medal tally at the 2025 Para Archery Asia Cup in Thailand, winning a total of 12 medals — six gold, three silver, and three bronze.**
- Sarita and Shyam Sundar Swami won gold medals in the women's compound open and men's compound open categories, respectively.
- Sarita defeated Singapore's Nur Syahidah Alim 143-142 in a closely contested women's compound open final. Shyam Sundar Swami beat Indonesia's Ken Swagumilang 143-141 to secure India's sixth gold medal in the men's compound open final.

ICC bans Bangladesh's Shohely Akhter for five years on corruption charges

- **Bangladesh offspinner Shohely Akhter has become the first female cricketer to be banned for corruption.**
- Akhter, who has played two ODIs and 13 T20Is, was found guilty of attempting to fix, offering a bribe and failing to disclose full details of an approach to the ICC's Anti-Corruption Code (ACU), as well as obstructing the investigation.
- She has been banned for five years from all cricket after she admitted breaching five provisions of the anti-corruption code.

ICC announces prize money for 2025 Champions Trophy

- The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** has announced **prize money for the 2025 Champions Trophy, starting on February 19 in Pakistan.**
- The total prize pool of this edition has been increased by an impressive 53 per cent from the 2017 edition to a total prize money of US 4.5 million Dollar.
- The **winners will earn US 2.24 million dollar, while the runners-up will get US 1.12 million dollar.** Losing semi-finalists will receive 560,000 dollar each.
- Every group match win is worth over US 34,000 dollars, while teams finishing fifth or sixth will earn 350,000 dollars. The seventh and eighth-placed teams will take home 140,000 US dollars. All eight teams are guaranteed 125,000 US dollar for participating.
- This is the first ICC event in Pakistan since 1996. The tournament will run for 19 days, with 15 matches being played in Pakistan and the UAE.
- The eight teams are divided into two groups where Group A contains Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and New Zealand while Group B features Afghanistan, England, Australia and South Africa.
- The top eight-team competition will see 15 matches to be played over 19 days in Pakistan and the UAE. India will play all their matches in Dubai including the semi-final and the final.

Third season of Women's Premier League 2025 begins

- **The third season of the Women's Premier League (WPL) 2025 kicked off**, featuring five teams competing across four Indian cities: **Vadodara, Bengaluru, Lucknow, and Mumbai**.
- In the opening match, defending champions Royal Challengers Bangalore, RCB will face Gujarat Giants at the Kotambi Stadium in Vadodara
- India's star opener Smriti Mandhana will captain RCB, while Australia's Ashleigh Gardner will lead the Gujarat Giants.
- The tournament, featuring five teams, RCB, Gujarat Giants, Delhi Capitals, UP Warriorz, and Mumbai Indians, will run until March 15, with the final scheduled at Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai.
- Now this time, for its third season, apart from Mumbai and Bengaluru, the WPL will extend its wings to two new cities – Vadodara and Lucknow – with Gujarat Giants and UP Warriorz set to experience home comforts for the first time.

38th National Games 2025 Concludes with Grand Ceremony in Uttarakhand

- **The closing ceremony of the 38th National Games** was held at the **International Sports Stadium, Golapar, Haldwani**, in the presence of Union Home Minister Amit Shah and Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami.
- Over 16,000 athletes participated in 35 sports disciplines, winning a total of 448 gold, 448 silver, and 594 bronze medals.
- For the first time, traditional sports like yoga and Mallakhamb were included in the National Games. Additionally, a world record was set by organising a nighttime river rafting competition.
- The competitions were held across both urban and remote areas, including Dehradun, Haridwar, Rudrapur, Haldwani, Rishikesh, Almora, Pithoragarh, and Tehri. Even a small town like Chakarpur hosted a major event. Water sports were conducted in high-altitude lakes and rivers of Uttarakhand.

Rank	State	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Services Sports Control Board (SSCB)	68	26	27	121
2	Maharashtra	54	71	76	201
3	Haryana	48	47	58	153
4	Madhya Pradesh	34	26	22	82

5	Karnataka	34	18	28	80
6	Tamil Nadu	27	30	35	92
7	Uttarakhand	24	35	44	103
8	West Bengal	16	13	18	47
9	Punjab	15	20	31	66
10	Delhi	15	18	29	62
11	Manipur	14	16	25	55
12	Odisha	14	15	17	46
13	Uttar Pradesh	13	20	23	56
14	Kerala	13	17	24	54
15	Rajasthan	9	11	23	43
16	Gujarat	8	10	20	38
17	Jharkhand	7	6	12	25
18	Andhra Pradesh	7	1	6	14
19	Jammu and Kashmir	5	6	13	24
20	Andaman and Nicobar Islands	5	3	2	10
21	Chandigarh	4	6	9	19
22	Himachal Pradesh	4	3	8	15
23	Arunachal Pradesh	4	3	6	13

24	Assam	3	15	16	34
25	Chhattisgarh	3	4	9	16
26	Telangana	3	3	12	18
27	Goa	2	4	4	10
28	Mizoram	2	0	1	3
29	Bihar	1	6	5	12
30	Meghalaya	1	2	2	5
31	Puducherry	0	1	1	2
32	Nagaland	0	0	2	2
33	Sikkim	0	0	2	2

34th ITTF-ATTU Asian Cup table tennis tournament begins in China

- The 34th edition of the ITTF-ATTU Asian Cup table tennis tournament begins in Shenzhen, China.
- India's men's team is led by world No. 42 Sharath Kamal, a five-time Olympian and reigning Commonwealth Games singles champion.
- The squad also includes world No. 60 Manav Thakkar and world No. 70 Harmeet Desai. The Indian women's team features Paris 2024 Olympian Sreeja Akula, Ayhika Mukherjee, and Yashaswini Ghoshale.

Shami joins elite list of bowlers with 200 ODI wickets

- India's ace pacer, **Md Shami**, added a historic milestone to his name as he took three wickets in **India's first match against Bangladesh in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 in Dubai on, completing 200 wickets in ODI cricket.**
- Shami is the eighth Indian player to reach this milestone. Ravindra Jadeja, with 224 wickets under his belt, is the only active Indian cricketer ahead of him on the list.

Rohit Sharma becomes second fastest to complete 11,000 runs in ODI cricket

- **India captain Rohit Sharma** has become the **second fastest batter after compatriot Virat Kohli** to complete 11,000 runs in One-day Internationals during their Champions Trophy clash against Bangladesh

here. Rohit is only the fourth Indian and 10th batter overall to reach the mark in the 50-over format.

- The seasoned opener reached the mark in his 270th game, and is the second fastest behind Kohli to cross 11,000 runs in terms of innings.

Virat Kohli Becomes Fastest to 14,000 ODI Runs

- **Indian cricketer Virat Kohli** has created **history as he became the quickest batter to score 14,000 runs** in One-Day Internationals during the ICC Champions Trophy clash against Pakistan in Dubai.
- Kohli is the quickest ever to the milestone, having completed his 14,000 ODI runs in 287 innings.

Gulveer Singh makes history by becoming first Indian to break 13-minute barrier in Men's 5000 m Indoor Race

- In athletics, the **Hangzhou Asian Games bronze medallist Gulveer Singh** has made history by **becoming the first Indian to break the 13-minute barrier in the men's 5000 metre indoor race**.
- Competing at the BU Terrier DMR Challenge in Boston, Gulveer clocked an astonishing 12 minutes 59.77 seconds, a performance that not only sets a new National Record for India but also establishes a new Asian 5000m short track record.

Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan & Vijay Sundar Prasanth Win Pune ATP Challenger 100 Doubles Title

- The top-seeded Indian duo, **Jeevan Nedunchezhiyan and Vijay Sundar Prasanth** have clinched the **men's doubles title of the Pune ATP Challenger 100**. They defeated the second-seeded Australian pair, Blake Bayldon and Matthew Romios, 3-6, 6-3, 10-0 to be crowned champions in front of the home crowd.

Indian Women Football Team finishes 3rd in 2nd Pink Ladies Cup 2025

- **The Indian senior women football team**, popularly known as **Blue Tigress**, ended their **campaign in the 2nd Pink Ladies Cup with a 3-0 defeat to the South Korean side**. The Indian team finished third in the Pink Ladies Cup.
- The 2nd edition of the Pink Ladies Cup was held at the Al Hamriya Sports Club Stadium in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates.
- The Pink Ladies Cup is a friendly international football tournament. A team's win or loss in friendly matches does not affect its standing or ranking in FIFA's points table.

Chapter 18: Book and Author

Book	Author
"Indian Renaissance: The Modi Decade" book	Released by Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah
The New Icon: Savarkar and the Facts	Written by Arun Shourie

Chapter 19: Important Day

Date	Day	Theme/Importance
30 January	World Neglected Tropical Diseases (NTD) Day	Theme 2025 - Unite. Act. Eliminate.
1 February	Indian Coast Guard Day	It is a day to celebrate the institution that protects India's coastlines and enforces laws in the nation's maritime areas.
2 February	World Wetlands Day	Theme 2025 - Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future
4 February	World Cancer Day	Theme 2024 - United by Unique
4 February	International Day of Human Fraternity	Theme 2025 - Human fraternity for world peace and living together
1-7 February	World Interfaith Harmony Week	Theme 2025 - Uniting for Peace
6 February	International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation	Theme 2025- Step up the Pace
10 February	World Pulses Day	Pulses , commonly known as legumes , are the edible seeds of leguminous plants grown for consumption. Among the various types, dry beans, lentils and peas are the most popular. It is a

		common element in various cuisines, ranging from Mediterranean hummus to Indian dal.
10 February	International Day of the Arabian Leopard	To raise awareness about the Arabian leopard, the United Nations General Assembly has proclaimed February 10 as the International Day of the Arabian Leopard in resolution 77/295.
11 February	World Unani Day	Theme 2025 - Innovations in Unani Medicine for Integrative Health Solutions – A Way Forward
11 February	International Day of Women and Girls in Science	The United Nations observes this day to promote full and equal access to and participation of women in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields.
12 February	International Day for the Prevention of Violent Extremism as and when Conducive to Terrorism	The day aims to raise awareness and strengthen global efforts to prevent violent extremism that can lead to terrorism.
12 February	National Productivity Day	Theme 2025 - From Ideas to Impact: Protecting Intellectual Property for Competitive Startups
13 February	World Radio Day	Theme 2025 - Radio and Climate Change
13 February	National Women's Day	National Women's Day is observed annually in India on February 13th to commemorate the birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu , a renowned political leader, poet, and champion of women's rights.

20 February	World Day of Social Justice	Theme 2025 - Empowering Inclusion: Bridging Gaps Of Social Justice
February 24 to 28	The 2025 Financial Literacy Week	Theme "Financial Literacy—Women's Prosperity."
23 February	World Peace and Understanding Day	The day highlights the importance of fostering dialogue, cultural exchange , and collaboration among nations to resolve conflicts and build sustainable peace .
24 February	Central Excise Day	The day acknowledges the dedication and contributions of excise officers in preventing tax evasion and ensuring compliance with indirect tax laws .
28 February	National Science Day	The theme for National Science Day 2025 is 'Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science and Innovation for Viksit Bharat' .

Chapter 20: Science & Technology

IAF's Shubhanshu Shukla to Become First Indian Astronaut on Private Space Mission to ISS

- **Indian Air Force Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla** will be the **first Indian astronaut to travel to the International Space Station (ISS) on a private mission**.
- Shukla will **fly aboard a SpaceX Dragon spacecraft from the Kennedy Space Center, Florida**, as part of the Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4), a joint venture between NASA and ISRO.
- Born on October 10, 1985, in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh, Shukla was commissioned into the Indian Air Force (IAF) Fighter Wing in 2006 and underwent astronaut training in Moscow in 2019.

OpenAI launches 'deep research' tool after China's DeepSeek shakes AI world

- **OpenAI** has launched a **new "deep research" tool in ChatGPT** to provide detailed, customized reports, raising the bar in the AI competition.

- The move comes in response to China's DeepSeek chatbot, which has disrupted the AI landscape with advanced research capabilities.
- Users can access "deep research" by selecting the feature in the ChatGPT message composer and entering their query for comprehensive insights.
- The tool supports file and spreadsheet attachments, offering context for better responses, with a sidebar that tracks steps and sources used in generating the report.

IIT Madras, ISRO develop semiconductor for space research, other sectors

- **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras and ISRO have developed an indigenous microprocessor for space applications** which can be used in command-and-control systems and other critical functions in outer space.
- The SHAKTI microprocessor project is led by IIT Madras Director V Kamakoti at Prathap Subrahmanyam Centre for Digital Intelligence and Secure Hardware Architecture (PSCDISHA) in Department of Computer Science and Engineering.
- The SHAKTI class of systems are based on RISC-V, an open-source Instruction Set Architecture (ISA), for designing custom processors.
- "SHAKTI" is backed by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology under its 'Digital India RISC-V' initiative (DIRV). It aims to promote indigenous development of microprocessor-based products that offer best-in-class security and visibility for users adopting RISC-V technology.

Microsoft introduces new gen AI model 'Muse'

- **Microsoft** has introduced **Muse**, its **first generative AI model for game ideation**. Muse is a gen AI model of a video game "that can generate game visuals, controller actions, or both".
- Before renaming it as Muse, Microsoft originally referred to the gen AI model as the World and Human Action Model (WHAM).
- Muse is developed by the Microsoft Research Game Intelligence and Teachable AI Experiences (Tai X) teams in collaboration with Xbox Games Studios' Ninja Theory.

Microsoft unveils Magma: A new AI model for controlling software and robots

- **Microsoft Research** has introduced a **new AI model called Magma**, which could mark a big advancement in artificial intelligence for controlling both software interfaces and robotic systems.
- Magma combines visual and language processing, allowing it to operate in both the digital and physical world, making it a potentially versatile AI model.

DRDO and Indian Navy Successfully Test NASM-SR Missile in Chandipur

- The **Indian Navy** in collaboration with the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** has successfully conducted the flight

test of the indigenously developed Naval Anti-Ship Missile -Short Range (NASM-SR).

- The missile was launched from the Indian Navy's Sea King MK 42B helicopter from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur in Odisha.
- NASM-SR is the country's first indigenously developed air-launched anti-ship missile system with a sea-skimming ability. The first test of the missile was conducted in May 2022.

Chapter 21: Obituary

Person	About
Latika Katt, one of India's most prolific and celebrated sculptors	Over her five-decade-long career , she worked with a variety of mediums, including terracotta, papier-mâché, stone, and bronze , earning numerous national and international awards for her contributions to art.
Former Chief Election Commissioner Navin Chawla	A former bureaucrat, Chawla was the election commissioner (EC) between 2005 and 2009 , and then chief election commissioner from April 2009 to July 2010 . Chawla had a controversial tenure in the poll body, with the then opposition BJP accusing him of being partisan.
Namibia's first President Sam Nujoma	Born in Etunda village, Nujoma was a key figure in Namibia's fight for independence, the revolutionary leader who guided Namibia to independence from apartheid South Africa in 1990 .
Odissi dancer Mayadhar Raut	Mayadhar Raut was honoured with many awards, such as the Padma Shri (2010), Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1985), Sahitya Kala Parishad Award (1984) and the

	Odissi Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1977)
--	--

[Download Online Mock Test Mobile APP](#)

[Join Official Telegram Channel](#)

