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Weekly Current Affairs

English

National

India Launches First Hydrogen Fuel Cell Vessel

India commenced commercial operations of its inaugural indigenous hydrogen fuel cell passenger vessel at Varanasi's Namoh Ghat, flagged off by Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal. Built by Cochin Shipyard for Inland Waterways Authority of India, this 24-meter catamaran carries 50 passengers at 6.5 knots for 8 hours on one hydrogen fill, using PEM technology with solar-battery hybrid for zero-emission, noise-free travel. The pilot supports green waterways under Maritime India Vision 2030.

India-Liberia Ink Pharmacopoeia Cooperation MoU.

India and Liberia signed a Memorandum of Understanding on December 11, 2025, in Monrovia to advance pharmacopoeia collaboration, enabling Liberia to adopt the Indian Pharmacopoeia as a benchmark for medicine quality standards. Signed by Ambassador Manoj Bihari Verma and Health Minister Dr. Louise M. Kpoto, the pact promotes regulatory alignment, technical exchanges, and access to safe, affordable drugs via rigorous testing methods like HPLC and GC. This bolsters public health systems and India's global pharma influence.

Bhartiya Bhasha Utsav 2025 Highlights Linguistic, Tribal Pride.

Bhartiya Bhasha Utsav 2025 was held in New Delhi on Mahakavi Subramania Bharati's birth anniversary, with the Ministry of Education leading celebrations under the theme "Many Languages, One Emotion." The event showcased India's multilingual heritage and placed strong focus on tribal languages through exhibitions, cultural performances, and tech innovations like the Adi Vaani AI translator. It underlined that preserving language is central to safeguarding identity and strengthening national unity.

Union Cabinet Clears Atomic Energy Law Changes, Opening Doors for Private Nuclear Ventures

The Union Cabinet approved the Sustainable Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Energy for Transforming India (SHANTI) Bill, amending existing atomic energy laws to permit private sector participation in the civil nuclear power domain, ending a longstanding exclusivity by state entities. The reforms aim to attract investment, boost innovation, and help achieve a proposed national target of 100 gigawatts of nuclear power capacity by 2047. The legislative changes also include updated liability norms and a unified legal framework to support private involvement while maintaining safety oversight.

Chhattisgarh Registers Its First Ramsar Wetland as Kopra Reservoir Gains Global Recognition

Chhattisgarh's Kopra Reservoir in Bilaspur district has been officially recognised as the state's first Ramsar wetland, earning global importance under the Ramsar Convention. This designation highlights the reservoir's ecological value as a diverse wetland supporting rich biodiversity, including migratory birds, and serving vital functions for water supply and irrigation. The recognition is expected to strengthen conservation efforts, promote sustainable management, and bring international attention to the region's environmental significance while engaging local communities in protecting wetland ecosystems.

Union Government Proposes Renaming MGNREGA and Extends Employment Guarantee to 125 Days

The Union Cabinet approved a bill to rename the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) as the Pujya Bapu Gramin Rozgar Guarantee Yojana and extend guaranteed rural work from 100 days to 125 days annually, aiming to enhance livelihood support for rural households. The programme's revamp includes broader job assurances and policy updates to bolster employment security in villages. The move sparked debate, with some political voices questioning the renaming focus.

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Cabinet Clears Census of India 2027 Framework and Operational Plan

The Union Cabinet approved the framework, budget and operational plan for the Census of India 2027, allocating ₹11,718 crore for the nationwide exercise which will be conducted in two phases starting from 2026. This census will be the first fully digital enumeration, using mobile apps, central monitoring systems and web tools to collect data effectively. It will include electronic caste enumeration and involve millions of field personnel. The digital approach aims to improve data quality, accessibility and policy planning outcomes.



Cabinet Sanctions CoalSETU Mechanism to Ensure Equitable Coal Distribution and Better Utilisation

The Union Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs approved the CoalSETU policy, creating a new auction window within the existing Non-Regulated Sector coal linkage framework to promote seamless, efficient and transparent utilisation of coal resources. Under this mechanism, long-term coal linkages can be auctioned for any industrial use and export, with participants excluding traders and coking coal not covered. The move aims to expand access to domestic coal, support industrial growth, improve allocation fairness and reduce dependence on imported coal.

Cabinet Clears Insurance Amendment Bill Allowing Full Foreign Investment in Indian Insurers

The Union Cabinet approved the Insurance Laws Amendment Bill 2025, allowing foreign investors to own entire equity in Indian insurance companies. The reform aims to increase long term capital inflows, improve competition, and support deeper insurance penetration across regions. The bill also proposes amendments to existing insurance and regulatory laws to simplify licensing norms, strengthen governance, and improve consumer protection. The move is expected to modernise the sector and align India's insurance market with evolving global investment practices.



Top Court Extends Pandemic Insurance Cover to All Doctors Who Lost Lives on Covid Duty

The Supreme Court ruled that the families of all doctors who died while performing duties during the Covid-19 pandemic are eligible for the Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana insurance benefit of fifty lakh. The court set aside earlier judgments that excluded private doctors on grounds of formal requisitioning. The bench emphasised that medical professionals were on the frontline and integral to pandemic response, and families should receive support regardless of employment status or designation.

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Central Government Launches 476 Crore Scheme for Integrated Growth of Makhana Sector

The central government approved a 476.03 crore central sector scheme for the comprehensive development of the makhana sector covering 2025-26 to 2030-31. The plan was formally launched at the first board meeting of the newly constituted National Makhana Board in New Delhi focussing on research, innovation, quality seed production, farmer capacity building, and post-harvest improvements. The scheme also aims to strengthen processing, value addition, marketing, export promotion, and infrastructure development across the makhana value chain.



Supreme Court Broadens Scope of PoSH Law to Strengthen Workplace Protection for Women

The Supreme Court of India expanded the application of the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 by clarifying crucial jurisdictional provisions. The bench ruled that an Internal Complaints Committee at the workplace of an aggrieved woman can investigate complaints even if the accused belongs to a different department or organisation, streamlining complaint processes and reducing procedural barriers. This interpretation reinforces protections for women and strengthens workplace safety and access to justice.

Supreme Court Rules Forced Narco Analysis Tests Violate Constitutional Rights

The Supreme Court of India struck down a High Court order that permitted involuntary narco analysis tests on accused persons, holding them unconstitutional. The bench reaffirmed that forcing narco analysis without free and informed consent violates fundamental rights against self-incrimination under Article 20(3) and the right to personal liberty and privacy under Article 21 of the Constitution. The court clarified that results of such forced tests are inadmissible as evidence and reaffirmed existing protections for individuals during criminal investigations.

Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella unveils an AI-driven tool for the Maharashtra Police

Maharashtra has taken a major step in tech-enabled policing with the statewide rollout of MahaCrimeOS AI, announced by Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella on 12 December 2025. Developed under MARVEL, India's first state-level AI body for law enforcement, the platform will go live across 1,100 police stations. Building on a successful pilot in Nagpur Rural, MahaCrimeOS AI uses multimodal data to process FIRs, audio, images and handwritten notes in multiple languages, including Marathi. It automates investigation planning, analyses digital intelligence, maintains court-ready case diaries and accelerates cybercrime handling, positioning Maharashtra as a national leader in AI-driven policing.

The ADB has sanctioned a USD 240 million loan for the expansion of the Chennai Metro in Tamil Nadu

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a USD 240 million loan to support the expansion of the Chennai Metro Rail, reinforcing India's focus on clean and reliable urban transport. The funding will develop 20 km of metro corridors across Lines 3, 4 and 5, along with 18 new stations designed with universal access. The project emphasises inclusive mobility, disaster-resilient infrastructure, and operational sustainability,

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while advancing Chennai's low-carbon development goals. As part of a USD 780 million multitranche financing facility, the initiative is expected to reduce congestion and pollution, improve daily travel efficiency, and enhance access to jobs, education and essential services in the growing metropolitan region.

RBI releases revised guidelines on transaction accounts for regulated entities

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued final directions on the maintenance of Cash Credit, Current and Overdraft accounts, effective 1 April 2026, introducing key relaxations within a principle-based framework. The norms apply to seven categories of regulated entities, including commercial, cooperative and regional rural banks. A major change is the exclusion of Cash Credit accounts from restrictions, allowing banks to extend CC facilities freely based on working capital needs. For Current and Overdraft accounts, restrictions depend on borrower exposure, with tighter rules for exposures of Rs 10 crore or more. The guidelines aim to strengthen credit discipline, prevent fund diversion, and simplify banking operations, especially for smaller borrowers and MSMEs.

India is planning to establish a new Antarctic research station

India plans to strengthen its Antarctic research capacity through Maitri II, a modern all-weather research station in East Antarctica, expected to be completed by 2032. It will replace Maitri I, operational since 1989, and significantly upgrade the scientific and logistical infrastructure. With an estimated cost of Rs. 2,000 crore, the project has received Rs. 29.20 crore for pre-investment planning from the Ministry of Earth Sciences. Maitri II will support advanced research in climate science, glaciology, biology, atmospheric sciences, and long-term environmental monitoring, reinforcing India's role in global polar research.

NHAI has launched India's first wildlife-safe road on NH-45 in Madhya Pradesh

The National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) has launched India's first wildlife-safe road on the Hiran Sindoor stretch of NH-45 in Madhya Pradesh. Passing through a sensitive forest corridor near Nauradehi Wildlife Sanctuary and Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve, the project aims to reduce animal-vehicle collisions. Its key innovation is the use of table-top red road markings, which improve visibility and naturally slow traffic. The highway also includes 25 wildlife underpasses and fencing to guide animal movement. Developed under the Green Highways Policy, 2015, the Rs 122-crore project is expected to be completed in 2025.

The Param Vir Chakra and Vir Chakra Gallery was inaugurated at Rashtrapati Bhavan by the President of India

On Vijay Diwas (16 December 2025), President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the Param Vir Dirgha at Rashtrapati Bhavan, honouring India's highest military heroes. The gallery displays portraits of all 21 Param Vir Chakra awardees, celebrating extraordinary courage and supreme sacrifice. Replacing colonial-era British ADC portraits, the initiative symbolises India's conscious shift away from colonial legacy towards national pride. Serving as both a memorial and an educational space, the Dirgha preserves the legacy of India's bravest soldiers and reinforces respect for indigenous values and military valour.



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Non-government NPS subscribers are now permitted to withdraw up to 80% of their pension corpus

The Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) has revised National Pension System (NPS) norms to enhance flexibility for non-government subscribers. Under the new rules, eligible private subscribers can now withdraw up to 80% of their pension corpus, compared to the earlier 60%, with only 20% required for annuity purchase if the corpus exceeds Rs. 12 lakh. The changes introduce tiered withdrawal slabs, extend the investment age up to 85 years, and clarify exit, death, and special-case provisions. Government employees remain under the existing 60:40 structure, while private subscribers gain greater control over retirement planning.

Army Inducts Tanks into Kashmir Valley, Strengthening High Altitude Logistics

On December 16, the Indian Army used a special military train to move tanks, artillery guns, dozers and other heavy military equipment from the Jammu region into the Kashmir Valley as part of a logistics validation exercise. This operation showcased enhanced mobility and logistical capability in challenging high altitude terrain, improving readiness along northern borders. The movement was carried out in close coordination with national rail authorities and benefited from improved connectivity provided by the Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla rail link.

Bharat Taxi Service Scheduled for Nationwide Launch in January 2026

The government-backed Bharat Taxi ride-hailing platform is set for a nationwide launch starting January 1, 2026, beginning in Delhi and expanding to other cities. Built on a cooperative model, it aims to offer transparent pricing with no surge price hikes and allow drivers to retain up to eighty percent of their earnings under a zero-commission system. The platform will provide auto, bike and car taxi services and is seen as a competitive alternative to existing private cab aggregators.

International

India's Proposal on Enhancing Global Wildfire Governance Approved at UNEA 7 in Nairobi

India's resolution on strengthening global wildfire governance was adopted by the United Nations Environment Assembly at its seventh session in Nairobi with broad support from member states. The initiative responds to increasing wildfire frequency and severity driven by climate change and human activities. It calls for enhanced international cooperation, early warning systems, integrated prevention actions, and improved access to finance for effective wildfire management. The resolution aims to shift emphasis from reactive firefighting to proactive risk reduction and coordinated global action.



India Urges Safeguarding of Preah Vihear Temple Amid Thailand Cambodia Border Tensions

India's Ministry of External Affairs expressed concern over reported damage to conservation facilities at the UNESCO World Heritage Site of the Preah Vihear Hindu temple amid ongoing clashes between Thailand and Cambodia. The MEA called on both sides to exercise restraint, cease hostilities, protect the ancient cultural site, and mitigate further escalation while emphasising the shared cultural significance of the temple. India also reiterated support for peace and dialogue to resolve tensions and safeguard heritage.

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Global Agreement Targets Elimination of Discrimination in Education Worldwide

A major international effort emphasising the elimination of discrimination in education has been spotlighted through agreements linked to the Convention against Discrimination in Education, a UNESCO-sponsored treaty obligating States to ban discriminatory practices in education and guarantee equality of educational opportunity. The treaty underscores free and compulsory primary education, equal access to all levels of schooling, and nondiscriminatory policies for persons with disabilities and vulnerable groups. Renewed emphasis on these global commitments aims to accelerate progress toward inclusive quality education for all.

Italy has become the first country to receive UNESCO recognition for its national cuisine

In December 2025, UNESCO granted Italy a unique cultural honour by inscribing its entire national cuisine on the Intangible Cultural Heritage List, making it the first country to receive such recognition. Announced at UNESCO's cultural assembly in Delhi, the decision acknowledges Italian cooking as a living tradition shaped by community practices, regional diversity, and shared social rituals. Rather than focusing on individual dishes, the recognition highlights food as an expression of identity, heritage, and intergenerational knowledge. The initiative was actively supported by the government led by Prime Minister Giorgia Meloni, reinforcing the global cultural value of Italian cuisine.

JPMorgan Chase announced plans to establish Asia's largest Global Capability Centre (GCC) in India

India's appeal as a hub for high-value global operations has received a major boost with JP Morgan's decision to set up Asia's largest Global Capability Centre in Mumbai. Located in Powai, the 2-million-sq-ft facility will accommodate around 30,000 professionals by 2029, reinforcing India's role in global banking and technology services. The move reflects confidence in India's skilled workforce, cost efficiency,

and robust digital ecosystem. It is expected to create large-scale high-skilled employment, attract further multinational investment, and strengthen India's position as a leading global GCC destination.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has become the first global leader to be conferred Ethiopia's highest civilian honour

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred Ethiopia's highest civilian honour, the Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia, during his official visit to Addis Ababa. Presented by Prime Minister Abiy Ahmed Ali, the award recognises exceptional contributions to strengthening bilateral ties. PM Modi became the first global Head of State or Government to receive this honour, marking his 28th international State award. He dedicated the recognition to the people of India, highlighting centuries-old India-Ethiopia ties rooted in culture and education. The honour reflects India's growing diplomatic influence, particularly in Africa and the Global South.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Conferred Oman's Highest Civilian Honour

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred the First Class of the Order of Oman, the Sultanate's highest civilian honour, by Sultan Haitham bin Tarik during his state visit to Muscat. The award recognises his contributions to strengthening bilateral ties and comes during celebrations of 70 years of diplomatic relations between India and Oman. This accolade adds to his list of international honours and highlights expanding cooperation in trade, energy, defence, maritime security and cultural exchanges between the two nations.

Ranks/Reports/Indices

Parliamentary Standing Committee Releases Report Highlighting Severe Air Pollution Challenges in Delhi

A Parliamentary Standing Committee report on air pollution in Delhi-NCR highlights deep-rooted challenges in monitoring, assessment, and mitigation of toxic air quality. It notes uneven distribution of air quality monitors skewing data, inadequate pollution controls, and urgent need to update air quality standards. The panel called for redistributing monitoring stations more representatively, expediting revision of standards, targeted protection for vulnerable populations, and stronger regulatory compliance by surrounding industries. The report stresses immediate action to improve public health and environmental outcomes.



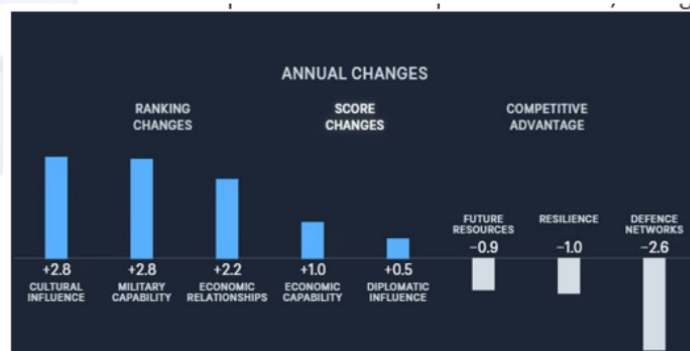
NITI Aayog Publishes Report on Strengthening India's Corporate Bond Market

NITI Aayog released a report titled Deepening the Corporate Bond Market in India highlighting the need to strengthen the nation's corporate bond market as part of building a resilient financial ecosystem capable of supporting long-term capital requirements. The report outlines strategies to broaden market access, enhance liquidity, and attract diverse investors while reducing reliance on bank credit. It underscores the role of a vibrant corporate bond market in financing

infrastructure, industry growth, and emerging sectors, and addresses structural challenges to deepen participation.

Asia Power Index 2025

The Asia Power Index (API) 2025, released by the Lowy Institute, ranks India third overall with a power score of 40.0, behind only the United States and China. By crossing the 40-point mark for the first time, India has officially entered the category of a "major power" in Asia. The rise reflects gains in economic capability, military strength, and future resources, supported by strong growth, improved defence readiness, and favourable demographics. The index, which assesses 27 Indo-Pacific countries across eight dimensions of power, highlights a clear regional hierarchy, with India now positioned above traditional middle powers such as Japan and Russia, though challenges remain in defence networks and influence conversion.



Singapore Changi Airport Crowned World's Best Airport for 2025

Singapore Changi Airport has been named the world's best airport for 2025 in the Skytrax World Airport Awards, reclaiming the top position and extending its record as a leading global aviation hub. The recognition reflects exceptional performance in areas such as travel experience, passenger comfort, facilities and customer service. Changi's offerings include lush indoor gardens, the tallest indoor waterfall, varied dining and retail options, and efficient terminal design, helping it stand out among international competitors.

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Bank of America Report Places India at the Top in Global AI Application Active Users

A Bank of America analysis has found that India now ranks first globally in active users of popular artificial intelligence applications, including leading large language models such as ChatGPT, Gemini and Perplexity. The country leads in both monthly and daily engagement, driven by a large online population, affordable data access and a young, tech-savvy demographic. This rise in AI application adoption positions India as the most active global market for AI usage and reflects rapid digital integration across society.

Summits/MoUs/Conferences/Agreement

MSME Ministry Partners with Amazon to Support Vishwakarma Artisans Through Skill and Market Access

The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Amazon Seller Services Private Ltd to help artisans registered under the PM Vishwakarma Scheme access online marketplaces and expand their customer reach. The partnership focuses on onboarding traditional craftsmen onto digital commerce platforms, enhancing product visibility, and supporting skill development. Amazon will also promote artisans' handmade products through dedicated initiatives while the ministry assists with regulatory and operational support, fostering sustainable livelihoods for traditional craft communities.



Department of Posts Collaborates with BSE to Broaden Mutual Fund Outreach Nationwide

The Department of Posts has partnered with BSE to expand mutual fund awareness and access across India by leveraging the extensive postal network. The collaboration aims to promote financial inclusion by enabling post offices to act as points for investor education and mutual fund distribution. It focuses on reaching rural and underserved populations, simplifying onboarding processes, and improving trust in formal investment channels. The initiative supports wider participation in capital markets through familiar and accessible public infrastructure.

Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan Bill, 2025

The Viksit Bharat Shiksha Adhishthan (VBSA) Bill, 2025, introduced in Parliament, seeks to overhaul India's higher education governance in line with NEP 2020. It proposes a single integrated regulatory framework to replace multiple bodies such as the UGC, AICTE and NCTE, addressing duplication, inconsistent standards and compliance burdens. At its core is a 12-member apex VBSA, supported by three specialised councils for regulation, accreditation and academic standards. The Bill separates funding from regulation, strengthens outcome-based accreditation, enables globalisation of higher education, and introduces graded penalties for violations. If implemented effectively, it could streamline governance, enhance quality and boost India's global competitiveness in higher education.

B. Sairam has been appointed as the Chairman-cum-Managing Director of Coal India

The Ministry of Coal has appointed B. Sairam as the Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD) of Coal India Limited (CIL), effective 15 December 2025. The decision was communicated through a stock exchange filing, marking the end of Sanoj Kumar Jha's additional charge as CMD. A mining engineer from NIT Raipur, Sairam, brings over three decades of experience in the coal sector. He previously served as CMD of Northern Coalfields Limited, gaining extensive leadership

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experience. His appointment is significant for India's energy security, PSU governance, and coal sector management.

Ravi Ranjan has assumed charge as the new Managing Director of the State Bank of India (SBI)

The Government of India has appointed Ravi Ranjan as the new Managing Director (MD) of State Bank of India (SBI), with effect from 15 December 2025. His tenure is approved until 30 September 2028, or until further notice. A seasoned SBI professional, Ranjan was previously serving as Deputy Managing Director, contributing to key operational and strategic functions. His elevation ensures leadership continuity at India's largest public sector bank as it focuses on digital expansion, credit growth, and asset quality management. SBI's governance structure includes a Chairman supported by four Managing Directors overseeing major banking verticals.

Right-wing politician José Antonio Kast has assumed office as the President of Chile

Chile has undergone a significant political shift with the election of ultra-conservative leader José Antonio Kast as president. Kast defeated leftist candidate Jeannette Jara, securing 58.16% of the vote, and will assume office on 11 March 2026. His victory reflects public concerns over rising crime, migration, and security, marking a move away from the current left-leaning administration led by Gabriel Boric. The outcome signals a broader rightward tilt in Chilean politics and may influence the country's future economic, security, and foreign policy direction.

India and Brazil have entered into a tripartite MoU for the maintenance of Scorpene-class submarines

India and Brazil have strengthened their maritime and defence partnership by signing a tripartite MoU on Scorpene-class submarine maintenance. The agreement, involving the Indian Navy, Brazilian Navy, and Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited, was signed during CNS Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi's visit to Brazil in December 2025. It

life-cycle support, logistics, training, and technical cooperation for submarines operated by both navies. The MoU marks a key step in Navy-to-Navy and industry collaboration, enhancing indigenous capabilities, operational readiness, and defence ties between two major maritime nations of the Global South.

India and Saudi Arabia Sign Visa Waiver Pact to Ease Official Travel

India and Saudi Arabia have signed a bilateral visa waiver agreement that allows mutual exemption from short-stay visa requirements for holders of diplomatic, special and official passports, simplifying official travel between the two countries. The pact was signed in Riyadh by India's ambassador and the Saudi deputy minister for protocol affairs and is expected to strengthen cooperation under the Strategic Partnership Council. The agreement aims to facilitate smoother movement for government officials and representatives and enhance bilateral exchanges in multiple sectors.

Second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine Begins in New Delhi

The Second WHO Global Summit on Traditional Medicine has begun in New Delhi, bringing together policymakers, scientists, practitioners and Indigenous knowledge holders from around the world to promote balanced and inclusive health systems. Co-hosted by the World Health Organization and India's Ministry of Ayush, the three-day event focuses on advancing science, evidence and integration of traditional medicine into modern health care. Leaders emphasised collaboration to strengthen research, regulation, safety, quality and global engagement in traditional healing practices.

Science and tech/Space/Defence

Maharashtra Launches Microsoft-Powered MahaCrimeOS AI Platform.

Maharashtra Government partnered with Microsoft to introduce MahaCrimeOS AI, an Azure-based policing tool unveiled by CEO Satya Nadella in Mumbai. Developed by CyberEye with MARVEL and Microsoft IDC, it streamlines cybercrime probes in Nagpur's 23 stations, slashing turnaround by 80% via digital registration and standardized workflows. Plans target statewide rollout to 1,100 stations, boosting speed, accuracy, and legal support amid rising digital threats.

NASA MAVEN Mars Orbiter Loses Earth Contact.

NASA lost communication with its MAVEN spacecraft, orbiting Mars since 2014, on December 6, 2025, after it passed behind the planet during routine operations. All subsystems functioned normally beforehand, but no signal emerged upon reappearance, prompting engineering probes into possible safe mode, antenna issues, power glitches, or software faults. MAVEN studied atmospheric loss from solar wind and relayed data for rovers like Curiosity and Perseverance, straining NASA's aging Mars fleet now reliant on Odyssey and Reconnaissance Orbiter.

Indian Navy Commissions First Indigenous Diving Craft.

The Indian Navy will induct DSC A20, the lead vessel in a class of five home-built Diving Support Crafts, on December 16, 2025, at Kochi's Southern Naval Command. Constructed by Titagarh Rail Systems with catamaran hull for superior stability, the 390-ton ship supports underwater inspections, salvage, coastal security, and diver training via advanced systems. Vice Admiral Sameer Saxena presides, advancing Aatmanirbhar Bharat in specialized naval platforms.

Google Initiates Project Suncatcher to Explore Solar Powered Data Centres in Outer Space

Google launched Project Suncatcher to study the feasibility of deploying solar powered data centres in space to support advanced computing needs. The initiative explores orbit based infrastructure that can harness uninterrupted solar energy and reduce dependence on terrestrial power systems. Research will focus on satellite architecture, radiation resistant hardware, and high speed optical communication networks. Google plans early stage prototype missions to test performance, energy efficiency, and scalability of space based computing platforms for future technology applications.

Project Suncatcher

The Indian Navy is set to commission INAS 335 (Ospreys) in Goa

The Indian Navy will commission INAS 335 (Ospreys), its second squadron of MH-60R Seahawk helicopters, on 17 December 2025 at INS Hansa, Goa, marking a key step in strengthening naval aviation. The ceremony will take place in the presence of Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, Chief of the Naval Staff. Designed for multi-role maritime operations, the MH-60R enhances capabilities in anti-submarine warfare, anti-surface warfare, surveillance, and search and rescue. Equipped with advanced sensors, weapons, and avionics, the squadron will improve fleet integration, maritime domain awareness in the Indian Ocean Region, and overall operational readiness under India's naval modernisation programme.

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Google introduces Project Suncatcher to build solar-powered data centres in space

Google has announced Project Suncatcher, an ambitious initiative to explore solar-powered data centres in space, reflecting the growing energy demands of artificial intelligence. Revealed by CEO Sundar Pichai, the project proposes a distributed satellite-based cloud powered entirely by solar energy. It will use Tensor Processing Units (TPUs) for efficient AI computing and laser-based optical links to enable high-speed communication between satellites. Two prototype satellites are planned for early 2027. Operating under the Outer Space Treaty, 1967, the initiative highlights both opportunities and regulatory challenges. Project Suncatcher signals a broader global trend of tech companies experimenting with space-based computing to reduce the environmental footprint of Earth-bound data centres.

India has launched its first indigenous 1.0 GHz, 64-bit dual-core microprocessor, 'DHRUV64'

India has achieved a major technological milestone with the launch of DHRUV64, its first fully indigenous 1.0 GHz, 64-bit dual-core microprocessor, developed by C-DAC under the Microprocessor Development Programme. Announced on 15 December 2025, the processor strengthens India's domestic semiconductor design capability and supports both strategic and commercial applications. Featuring a modern, scalable architecture, DHRUV64 can handle complex computing tasks and integrate with diverse hardware platforms. It is suited for 5G infrastructure, automotive systems, industrial automation, consumer electronics, and IoT, aligning closely with India's broader semiconductor and digital self-reliance initiatives.



Amazon Pay Introduces Biometric Authentication for UPI Payments Using Fingerprint and Facial Recognition

Amazon Pay has launched biometric authentication for UPI payments in India, enabling users to approve transactions of up to five thousand rupees using their fingerprint or facial recognition instead of entering a UPI PIN. This feature is currently available on Android devices and works across standard UPI flows like sending money, scanning codes and merchant payments. Biometric data stays on the device, improving security and convenience, and early indicators show strong user preference for the biometric mode over PIN entry.

Sports

Germany Wins FIH Junior Hockey World Cup 2025.

Germany clinched its eighth FIH Men's Junior Hockey World Cup title in Chennai and Madurai from November 28 to December 10, 2025, defeating Spain 3-2 in shoot-out after a 1-1 draw. India earned bronze via a stunning 4-2 comeback against Argentina, with goals from Ankit Pal, Manmeet Singh, Sharda Nand Tiwari, and Anmol Ekka in the final quarter. Belgium took fifth beating Netherlands 4-3 on penalties.

Shafali Verma has been named the ICC Women's Player of the Month for November

Indian opener Shafali Verma has won the ICC Women's Player of the Month for November, marking the first such honour of her career. Entering the World Cup squad as a late replacement, she delivered a match-winning performance in the Women's Cricket World Cup Final against South Africa. Shafali scored a superb 87 off 78 balls, the highest by an Indian opener in a World Cup final, and also claimed key wickets of Suné Luus and Marizanne Kapp. Her all-round brilliance earned her the Player of the Match award and played a decisive role in India's historic title triumph.

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FIFA Best Football Awards 2025

The FIFA Best Football Awards 2025, held in Doha, Qatar, honoured outstanding achievements in global football. Ousmane Dembélé was named FIFA Men's Player of the Year after a treble-winning season with PSG, while Aitana Bonmatí won the Women's Player of the Year for the third consecutive time, highlighting Spain and Barcelona's dominance. Luis Enrique and Gianluigi Donnarumma also received top men's awards, while Sarina Wiegman led the women's honours. The ceremony celebrated players, coaches, fans, and sportsmanship across men's and women's football.

Jammu and Kashmir to Host International Indian Style Wrestling Championship for Rustam e Jammu Kashmir Title

Jammu and Kashmir is hosting an International Indian style wrestling championship on December 20, 2025, featuring competition for the Rustam e Jammu and Kashmir title at Maulana Azad Stadium in Jammu. Organised by the J&K Sports Council with the Indian Style Wrestling Association, the event aims to promote fitness, cultural heritage and community engagement. Over fifty national and international athletes from countries including Russia and Iran are expected to compete in traditional dangal wrestling categories, drawing significant participation and spectator interest.

Health /Agriculture

AIIMS Delhi carries out India's first exclusive clinical trial of an advanced brain stent

India achieved a major milestone in medical research with the GRASSROOT trial, the country's first dedicated multi-centre clinical trial of an advanced brain stent for severe stroke treatment, led by AIIMS Delhi. Conducted across eight centres, the trial evaluated the Supernova stent, an indigenously developed device by Gravity Medical Technology, and

reported strong safety and clinical outcomes. The results, published in a BMJ Group journal, led to regulatory approval based solely on Indian trial data. This breakthrough reduces reliance on foreign studies, strengthens India's medical device ecosystem, and supports national initiatives such as Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat, while improving access to advanced stroke care.

Miscellaneous

TIME Names AI Architects Person of Year 2025.

TIME Magazine selected the "Architects of AI" as 2025 Person of the Year, spotlighting innovators who propelled artificial intelligence into mainstream dominance across industries, politics, and daily life. Unveiled amid AI's tipping point, the honor recognizes leaders driving thinking machines that reshape work, creativity, governance, and global power. Cover art evokes historic imagery, featuring eight key figures from Meta, NVIDIA, OpenAI, and beyond, amid a USD870 billion collective wealth surge.

Kolkata Unveils World's Largest Messi Statue.

Sree Bhumi Sporting Club in Kolkata erected a 70-foot iron statue of Lionel Messi lifting the 2022 FIFA World Cup trophy, claimed as the global largest, completed in 40 days at Lake Town, South Dum Dum. West Bengal Minister Sujit Bose highlighted the city's football passion, following visits by icons like Maradona and Ronaldinho. Messi will virtually inaugurate it on December 13 amid his India tour, boosting anticipation ahead of the 2026 World Cup.

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CRPF Officer Khatak Honoured for Exceptional Service.

CRPF officer Dinesh Khatak from Jind, Haryana, has been awarded the Union Home Minister's Efficiency Medal for outstanding leadership, disciplined service, and high-risk operational contributions to national security. Rising as a Gazetted Officer after clearing UPSC in 2005, he has led key deployments in Jammu & Kashmir, strengthened commando training at CIAT Shivpuri, and now operates in Naxal-affected Bijapur. His work spans Amarnath Yatra security, Article 370 operations, and anti-Naxal forward base establishment.

Brookfield Announces 1 Billion Dollar Investment to Develop Asia's Largest GCC in Maharashtra

Global asset manager Brookfield announced plans to invest 1 billion dollars to build Asia's largest Global Capability Centre in Maharashtra. The proposed project will focus on technology driven services, innovation, and high value corporate functions for global enterprises. It is expected to generate large scale employment and strengthen the state's position as a hub for advanced business services. The development aligns with India's growing role in global enterprise operations and digital infrastructure expansion.

Majuli in Assam Hosts Charaichung Festival to Restore Historic Royal Bird Sanctuary

Majuli in Assam hosted the four-day Charaichung Festival to rejuvenate and draw attention to the Royal Bird Sanctuary, one of Asia's oldest protected bird habitats. Organised by local community groups and stakeholders, the festival celebrates the sanctuary's 1633 legacy and aims to mobilise efforts for biodiversity conservation and ecological restoration. Events highlighted habitat protection, forest conservation, and bird diversity, encouraging public participation and efforts to safeguard the river island's natural heritage and ecological balance.

MRF Tyres clinches the 2025 FIA European Rally Championship title

MRF Tyres has strengthened India's footprint in global motorsport by winning the 2025 FIA European Rally Championship (ERC) Teams Title, marking its third ERC triumph after victories in 2022 and 2023. The award was presented at the FIA Awards Gala, the sport's premier annual ceremony, to Arun Mammen, Vice Chairman and Managing Director of MRF Ltd. Securing the ERC title demands consistent performance across Europe's demanding rally terrains, where tyre grip, durability and adaptability are crucial. This achievement underscores MRF's research-led innovation, manufacturing excellence and long-standing commitment to motorsport, while enhancing India's global visibility in high-performance automotive technology.



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Scientists from NTPC, NETRA and CSIR have been honoured for their technological innovations

India's clean energy ambitions gained momentum with the launch of the DV Kapur Foundation Energy Innovation Awards 2025, held on 12 December 2025 at the SCOPE Complex, New Delhi. Organised by the D V Kapur Foundation, the awards honoured indigenous technological solutions addressing energy efficiency and sustainability. Prof Ajay Kumar Sood, Principal Scientific Advisor to the Government of India, presented the awards. In the Young Innovators category, Dr Achu Chandran (CSIR-NIIST) was recognised for developing a Nano Electricity Generator, while NTPC's R&D wing, NETRA, won the organisational award for Green Use of Coal Technologies. The initiative highlights the role of innovation in supporting India's clean energy transition and long-term energy security.

Miyana Railway Station has been honoured with the National Energy Conservation Award 2025

Miyana Railway Station in Guna district, Madhya Pradesh, has received the National Energy Conservation Award 2025 for outstanding energy-efficient practices. Presented by President Droupadi Murmu on National Energy Conservation Day, the award, given by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency, recognises the station as the Best Performing Unit in the Transport (Railway Station) category. The station achieved measurable electricity savings of 9,687 units through LED lighting, energy-efficient BLDC fans, and smart lighting control systems. This achievement demonstrates how smaller railway stations can contribute meaningfully to energy conservation, cost reduction, and environmental sustainability.

HDFC Bank has received RBI approval to acquire a stake of up to 9.5% in IndusInd Bank

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved HDFC Bank, along with its group companies, to acquire up to 9.5 per cent stake in IndusInd Bank. The permission, communicated through a letter dated December 15, 2025, remains valid until

The approved limit applies to the aggregate holding of HDFC Bank and its key entities, including its mutual fund, insurance, pension, and securities arms. The approval ensures regulatory oversight while allowing strategic investment within India's banking ownership norms.



Shikhar Dhawan releases his autobiography titled *The One: Cricket, My Life and More*

Former Indian cricketer Shikhar Dhawan unveiled his autobiography, *The One: Cricket, My Life and More*, on 14 December 2025 in New Delhi. Published by HarperCollins India, the book presents an honest account of Dhawan's journey from Delhi's competitive cricket circuit to the international stage. It traces his transformation from a wicketkeeper to a successful opening batsman and reflects on career milestones, including his stellar performance in the ICC Champions Trophy 2013. Beyond cricket, Dhawan candidly discusses personal struggles, setbacks, and resilience, offering readers a deeply personal narrative.

India's film *Homebound* has been shortlisted for the Best International Feature category at the Oscars 2026

Indian cinema reached a significant milestone as Neeraj Ghaywan's film *Homebound* was shortlisted in the Best International Feature Film category at the 98th Academy Awards (Oscars 2026). Selected among

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the final 15 films from 86 countries, it has advanced to the last voting stage, with only five films to receive final nominations. Starring Ishaan Khatter and Vishal Jethwa, the film explores youth, ambition, and friendship. Its strong international reception at Cannes 2025 and TIFF helped build momentum, marking a major achievement for Indian cinema on the global stage.

Google has introduced its first-ever credit card in India, issued on the RuPay network

Google has launched its first-ever credit card globally in India, partnering with Axis Bank and using the RuPay network, marking a major boost for India's digital payments ecosystem. Integrated with Google Pay and UPI, the card allows users to make merchant payments on credit—an option not available with Visa or Mastercard cards. A standout feature is instant rewards, credited immediately after each transaction. Issued by Axis Bank, the card combines fintech innovation with banking expertise, reinforcing India's leadership in RuPay–UPI-based credit solutions and validating the growing bank–fintech collaboration model.

Air India Named Best Domestic Airline at Travel and Leisure Awards 2025

Air India has been named the Best Domestic Airline at the Travel + Leisure Best Awards 2025 for the second year in a row, reflecting strong passenger satisfaction and service quality based on reader votes. The recognition highlights the airline's ongoing transformation, including fleet upgrades, enhanced in-flight experiences and improved customer service. With expanded domestic connectivity and focus on comfort, Air India continues to elevate travel standards across India, reinforcing its prominence in the country's aviation sector.