

THE HINDU REVIEW

JANUARY 2024

Monthly
Capsule

Current
Affairs



Contents

The Most Important Current Affairs January 2024	3
Banking and Financial Current Affairs.....	23
Economy Current Affairs.....	25
Business Current Affairs	26
International Current Affairs.....	29
National Current Affairs	32
States Current Affairs.....	35
Schemes and Committees	38
Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)	39
New Appointments: International.....	41
Awards Current Affairs.....	43
Ranks and Reports Current Affairs	44
Sports Current Affairs	45
Summits And Conferences	47
Important Days	49
Defence Current Affairs.....	49
Science and Technology	51
Books & Authors.....	53
Miscellaneous Current Affairs	53
Obituaries Current Affairs	55
Static Current Affairs.....	55
List of 8 Wonders of the World.....	57
Comprehensive Book List on India's Budget and Economy.....	57

The Most Important Current Affairs January 2024

Union Budget 2024 Detailed Sector Wise

In the Budget for the fiscal year 2024-25, the Union Government demonstrates a robust commitment to bolstering economic growth through substantial investments in infrastructure development. The total expenditure in the Budget is estimated at **47,65,768 crore (47.65 Lakh Crore), with a significant focus on capital expenditure, reaching 11,11,111 crore(11.11 Lakh Crore)**. This reflects a commendable increase of 16.9% in capital expenditure over the Revised Estimates (RE) for 2023-24.

Capital Expenditure Highlights

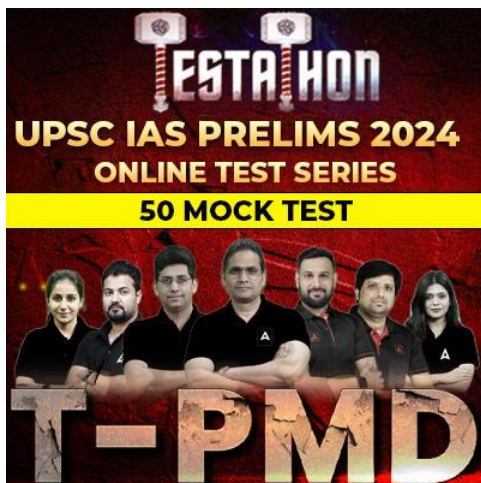
- Total Capital Expenditure:** The Budget allocates `11,11,111 crore for capital expenditure, marking a 16.9% surge over the RE for 2023-24.
- Effective Capital Expenditure:** The effective capital expenditure for 2024-25 is projected at `14,96,693 crore, showcasing a substantial increase of 17.7% over the RE for 2023-24.

State Finances

- Total Resources to States:** In the fiscal year 2024-25, resources transferred to states, including devolution, grants, loans, and centrally sponsored schemes, amount to **22,22,264 crore(22.22 Lakh Crore)**. This represents a noteworthy increase of **4,13,848 crore** over the Actuals of FY 2022-23.
- Comparison with Previous Years:** The total expenditure in the RE for 2023-24 stands at **44,90,486 crore, surpassing the Actuals of FY 2022-23 by 2,97,328 crore**. The capital expenditure in the RE for 2023-24 is estimated at `9,50,246 crore.

Revenue and Capital Receipts

- Tax and Non-Tax Revenue:** Tax revenue (Net to Centre) is projected at **26,01,574 crore(26.01 Lakh Crore)**, while non-tax revenue is estimated at **3,99,701 crore**.
- Capital Receipts Breakdown:** Capital receipts include recovery of loans (**29,000 crore**), other receipts (**50,000 crore**), and borrowings and other liabilities (`16,85,494 crore).



Expenditure Breakdown

- On Revenue Account:** The Budget allocates **36,54,657 crore(36.54 Lakh Crore) on revenue account, covering interest payments (11,90,440 crore) and grants in aid for capital account creation (`3,85,582 crore)**.
- On Capital Account:** Capital account expenditure is estimated at **11,11,111 crore, contributing to the effective capital expenditure of 14,96,693 crore**.

Deficit Metrics

- Fiscal Deficit:** The fiscal deficit for 2024-25 is projected at `16,85,494 crore, constituting **5.1% of the Nominal GDP**.
- Revenue Deficit and Effective Revenue Deficit:** The revenue deficit is anticipated to be **6,53,383 crore, while the effective revenue deficit is projected at 2,67,801 crore**.
- Primary Deficit:** The primary deficit for 2024-25 is estimated at `4,95,054 crore.

Government's Effective Capital Expenditure (in ₹ Crore) Overview

In the fiscal year 2024-25 Budget, the government's focus on effective capital expenditure is evident, with allocations specified for key sectors. The below information provides a breakdown of major items, showcasing the allocation and expenditure trends from the past fiscal years to the estimated figures for 2024-25.

Effective Capital Expenditure Breakdown

- Capital Expenditure:** The Budget allocates ₹11,11,111 crore for capital expenditure in 2024-25, reflecting a strategic commitment to investment in critical areas.
- Grants in Aid for Capital Assets:** Under this category, ₹3,85,582 crore is allocated for creating capital assets, emphasizing the government's investment in long-term infrastructure development.
- Total Expenditure of Major Items:** The effective capital expenditure for major items is detailed, covering key sectors critical for economic growth.

Expenditure of Major Items (in ₹ Crore)

- Pension:** ₹2,39,612 crore is allocated, recognizing the importance of honoring commitments to retired personnel.
- Defence:** A substantial allocation of ₹4,54,773 crore emphasizes the government's commitment to national security.
- Subsidies:** Noteworthy subsidies include **Fertiliser (₹1,64,000 crore), Food (₹2,05,250 crore), and Petroleum (₹11,925 crore)**, addressing key sectors crucial for public welfare.
- Agriculture and Allied Activities:** ₹1,46,819 crore is earmarked for the development of agriculture and allied sectors.
- Education:** A significant allocation of ₹1,24,638 crore underscores the importance of investing in education for national progress.

6. **Health:** ₹90,171 crore is allocated to the health sector, reflecting the government's commitment to public well-being.
7. **Interest Payments:** With ₹11,90,440 crore allocated, managing interest payments remains a critical component of fiscal planning.
8. **Others:** Various sectors such as IT and Telecom, Rural Development, and Social Welfare receive targeted allocations, emphasizing holistic development.

Allocations for specific ministries

- **Defence Ministry:** ₹6.1 lakh crore
- **Ministry of road transport and highways:** ₹2.78 lakh crore
- **Ministry of railways:** ₹2.55 lakh crore
- **Ministry of consumer affairs, food & public distribution:** ₹2.13 lakh crore
- **Ministry of home affairs:** ₹2.03 lakh crore
- **Ministry of rural development:** ₹1.77 lakh crore
- **Ministry of chemicals and fertilizers:** ₹1.68 lakh crore
- **Ministry of communications:** ₹1.37 lakh crore
- **Ministry of agriculture and farmer's welfare:** 1.27 lakh crore
- **Ministry of Education:** ₹1.24 Lakh Crore
- **Ministry of Health:** ₹90,171 Crore

Transfer of Resources to States and Union Territories with Legislature (in ₹ Crore) Overview

The allocation and transfer of resources to states and union territories play a crucial role in fostering balanced development across regions. The below information provides a breakdown of actuals for 2022-23, revised estimates for 2023-24, and budget estimates for 2024-25.

Devolution of States Share in Taxes

- I. **Actual Devolution (2022-23):** ₹9,48,406 crore was devolved to states, forming a critical component of their fiscal resources.
- II. **Revised Estimates (2023-24):** The revised estimate for 2023-24 is ₹11,04,494 crore, indicating an increase in the devolution share.
- III. **Budget Estimates (2024-25):** The budget proposes a further increase, with ₹12,19,783 crore earmarked for devolution, emphasizing the government's commitment to empowering states financially.

Some Important Items of Transfer

- I. **Actual Transfer (2022-23):** ₹1,20,366 crore was allocated for essential items, supporting various initiatives at the state level.
- II. **Revised Estimates (2023-24):** The revised estimate for 2023-24 stands at ₹1,60,986 crore, reflecting adjustments in response to evolving fiscal needs.
- III. **Budget Estimates (2024-25):** The budget earmarks ₹1,88,703 crore for important items of transfer, underscoring the government's focus on targeted financial support.

Finance Commission Grants

- I. **Actual Grants (2022-23):** Finance Commission Grants amounted to ₹1,72,760 crore, addressing specific developmental needs identified by the Finance Commission.
- II. **Revised Estimates (2023-24):** The revised estimate for 2023-24 is ₹1,40,429 crore, reflecting adjustments based on the Commission's recommendations and evolving fiscal priorities.
- III. **Budget Estimates (2024-25):** The budget allocates ₹1,32,378 crore for Finance Commission Grants, highlighting continued support for state-level development.

Government of India's Budget Allocation for Major Schemes (2024-2025)

In the proposed budget for the fiscal year 2024-2025, the Government of India has outlined a comprehensive allocation for various major schemes. These schemes are strategically categorized into three sections, emphasizing their significance and funding priorities.

1. Core of the Core Schemes (A):

- **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Program:** ₹86,000 crore
- National Social Assistance Program: ₹9,652 crore
- Umbrella Programme for Development of Minorities: ₹913 crore
- Umbrella Programme for Development of Other Vulnerable Groups: ₹2,150 crore
- Umbrella Programme for Development of Scheduled Tribes: ₹4,241 crore
- Umbrella Scheme for Development of Schedule Castes: ₹9,560 crore

2. Core Schemes (B):

- **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojna (PMAY):** ₹80,671 crore
- **Jal Jeevan Mission/National Rural Drinking Water Mission:** ₹70,163 crore
- National Health Mission: ₹38,183 crore
- Samagra Shiksha: ₹37,500 crore
- **Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojna:** ₹19,000 crore
- National Livelihood Mission – Aajeevika: ₹15,047 crore
- Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman: ₹12,467 crore
- Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojna: ₹11,391 crore
- **Urban Rejuvenation Mission (AMRUT and Smart Cities):** ₹10,400 crore
- Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojna: ₹7,553 crore
- Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana: ₹7,500 crore
- Krishionnati Yojana: ₹7,447 crore
- Swachh Bharat Mission (Gramin): ₹7,192 crore
- Assistance to States Agencies for Intra-State Movement of Foodgrains: ₹7,075 crore
- **PM Schools for Rising India:** ₹6,050 crore
- Swachh Bharat Mission: ₹5,000 crore
- Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission: ₹4,108 crore

- Modernisation of Police Forces: ₹3,720 crore
- Interlinking of Rivers: ₹3,500 crore
- Mission Shakti: ₹3,146 crore
- Blue Revolution: ₹2,352 crore
- Pradhan Mantri Uchchatar Shiksha Abhiyan: ₹1,815 crore
- **Mission VATSALYA**: ₹1,472 crore
- Strengthening Teaching-Learning and Results for States: ₹1,250 crore
- Rashtriya Gram Swaraj Abhiyan: ₹1,064 crore
- Vibrant Villages Programme: ₹1,050 crore
- Infrastructure Facilities for Judiciary: ₹1,000 crore
- Prime Minister Formalisation of Micro Food Processing Enterprises Scheme: ₹880 crore
- Environment, Forestry and Wildlife: ₹714 crore
- National River Conservation Plan – Other Basins: ₹592 crore

3. Major Central Sector Schemes (C):

- Crop Insurance Scheme: ₹14,600 crore
- **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi**: ₹60,000 crore
- Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations: ₹582 crore
- Modified Interest Subvention Scheme: ₹22,600 crore
- Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Yojna: ₹1,738 crore
- Agriculture Infrastructure Fund: ₹600 crore
- Crop Science for Food and Nutritional Security: ₹930 crore
- Research and Development Projects: ₹1,200 crore
- Nuclear Power Projects: ₹2,228 crore
- Feedstock: ₹1,253 crore
- R&D projects of Bhabha Atomic Research Centre: ₹1,100 crore
- Fuel Recycle Projects: ₹805 crore
- Nuclear Fuel Fabrication Projects: ₹764 crore
- **Urea Subsidy**: ₹1,19,000 crore
- Nutrient Based Subsidy: ₹45,000 crore
- Development of Industry (Pharmaceutical): ₹1,300 crore
- **Production Linked Incentive Scheme (Pharmaceutical)**: ₹2,143 crore
- Regional Connectivity Scheme: ₹502 crore
- Interest Equalisation Scheme: ₹1,700 crore
- Industrial Development Scheme for Himachal Pradesh & Uttarakhand: ₹567 crore
- Fund of Funds: ₹1,200 crore
- Refund of Central and Integrated GST to Industrial Units in North Eastern Region and Himalayan States: ₹1,382 crore
- Compensation to Service Providers for creation and augmentation of telecom infrastructure: ₹2,000 crore
- Domestic Industry Incentivisation Scheme: ₹1,911 crore
- **Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Anna Yojana**: ₹2,05,250 crore
- **Works under Border Roads Development Board**: ₹6,500 crore

- Other works: ₹1,500 crore
- Border Area Development Programme: ₹2,000 crore
- Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana: ₹300 crore
- Solar Rooftop Scheme: ₹2,000 crore
- Interest Subsidy Scheme for Housing the Urban Poor: ₹10,000 crore
- **Pradhan Mantri Awaas Yojana (Urban)**: ₹9,500 crore
- Subsidy for Interest on Loans under Atal Bimit Vyakti Kalyan Yojana: ₹408 crore

International Assistance Schemes Allocation

1. Scheme for Bhutan:

- Actual 2022-2023: ₹2467 crore
- Budget Estimates 2023-2024: ₹2401 crore
- Revised Estimates 2023-2024: ₹2399 crore
- **Budget Estimates 2024-2025: ₹2069 crore**

2. Scheme for Nepal:

- Actual 2022-2023: ₹434 crore
- Budget Estimates 2023-2024: ₹550 crore
- Revised Estimates 2023-2024: ₹650 crore
- **Budget Estimates 2024-2025: ₹700 crore**

3. Maldives Assistance:

- Actual 2022-2023: ₹183 crore
- Budget Estimates 2023-2024: ₹400 crore
- Revised Estimates 2023-2024: ₹771 crore
- **Budget Estimates 2024-2025: ₹600 crore**

4. Support to International Training/Programmes:

- Actual 2022-2023: ₹480 crore
- Budget Estimates 2023-2024: ₹435 crore
- Revised Estimates 2023-2024: ₹1105 crore
- **Budget Estimates 2024-2025: ₹769 crore**

Abu Dhabi's First Temple to be Inaugurated by PM Modi on 14 Feb

Weeks after the consecration of the **Ram Mandir in Ayodhya**, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** is set to inaugurate another significant temple on February 14 in **Abu Dhabi**. The **BAPS Hindu Mandir**, located in the capital's Abu Mureikha area, marks the first Hindu temple in the UAE and is anticipated to be one of the largest and most exquisite Hindu temples outside of India, as well as the largest in West Asia.

Background and Diplomatic Significance

During PM Modi's first visit to the **UAE in 2015**, the country allocated land in **Abu Dhabi for the construction of a Hindu temple**. This visit held diplomatic importance, making Modi the first Indian Prime Minister in 34 years to visit the strategic Gulf nation. The temple project was inaugurated by the PM in February 2018, and construction commenced in December 2019.

BAPS Hindu Mandir Details

- Location: Abu Dhabi's Abu Mureikha area.
- Size and Cost: Built on over 5.4 hectares at a cost of Rs 700 crore.
- Architecture: Incorporates intricately designed pink sandstone and marble façade with seven spires representing each of the Emirates of the UAE.
- Materials Used: 40,000 cubic meters of marble, 1,80,000 cubic meters of sandstone, and over 1.8 million bricks.
- Facilities: The complex includes a large amphitheatre, a gallery, a library, a food court, a majlis, two community halls accommodating 5,000 people, gardens, and children's play areas.

BAPS Hindu Mandir Design and Inspiration

- The temple's design draws inspiration from Vedic architecture and sculptures.
- Artisans in India crafted many statues and carvings, shipped to Abu Dhabi.

BAPS Organization:

- Full Form: **Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS).**
- Roots: A socio-spiritual Hindu faith rooted in the Vedas, pioneered by Bhagwan Swaminarayan in the late 1700s.
- Establishment: Formally established in **1907 by Shastriji Maharaj (1865-1951).**
- Global Presence: BAPS claims to operate over 3,850 centers worldwide, including 1,100 temples.
- Notable Project: BAPS was behind the construction of Akshardham in Robbinsville, New Jersey, the world's largest Hindu temple outside of India.

Akshardham Mahamandir (Robbinsville, New Jersey)

- Size: Spans 185 acres and stands at 191 feet high.
- Construction: Used 1.9 million cubic feet of stone from 29 different sites worldwide, including Bulgaria, Italy, Greece, Turkey, and India.
- Affiliation: Akshardham temples in Delhi and Gujarat are also run by BAPS.

PM Modi Inaugurates ₹1,156 Crore Projects in Lakshadweep

In a significant development, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated projects worth ₹1,156 crore during his visit to the Lakshadweep islands. Among these projects is the **Kochi-Lakshadweep Islands Submarine Optical Fibre Cable**, a ₹1,072-crore initiative providing 100 Gbps internet connectivity to the islands.

Enhancing Connectivity and Internet Speeds

The undersea cable link, executed by Japanese firm NEC and laid by BSNL, promises 100 times faster internet for the residents of Lakshadweep. Covering 1,868 kilometers, it connects **Kavaratti, Agatti, Amini, Kadmat, Chetlet, Kalpeni, Minicoy, Androth, Kiltan, Bangaram, and Bitra**. This initiative allows telecom companies to offer 4G, 5G, and high-speed broadband for the first time in the archipelago.

Multi-Faceted Development Initiatives

Apart from the internet cable, other projects include a thermal desalination plant, tap connections under Jan Jeevan Mission, a solar power plant, and the headquarters of Indian Reserve Battalion. The PM also laid the foundation for healthcare facility renovation and Nand Ghar model Anganwadis on different islands.

Empowering Youth through Education and Infrastructure

Highlighting the absence of higher education institutions in the past, PM Modi emphasized recent steps to address this issue. Initiatives include launching educational institutions for arts and science on Andrott and Kadmat islands and a Polytechnic College in Minicoy. The PM also distributed laptops to college students, bicycles to girl school students, Kisan Credit Cards, and PMJAY Cards, showcasing a holistic approach towards the socio-economic development of Lakshadweep.

PM Modi Launched PRITHVI VIGYAN Scheme worth nearly 4,800 crore rupees

The Indian government, under the leadership of Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi**, has launched an ambitious initiative named **PRITHVI (PRITHvi Vlgyan)**, a comprehensive scheme by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences**. With a significant budget of **Rs. 4,797 crore**, the program spans from 2021-26, marking a new era in the study and understanding of Earth sciences in India.

Objectives of PRITHVI Scheme

The PRITHVI scheme aims to revolutionize our understanding and interaction with various Earth systems. Its objectives include:

- **Long-Term Observations:** Strengthening the continuous monitoring of the Earth's atmosphere, oceans, geosphere, cryosphere, and solid earth to track and record essential changes.
- **Model Development:** Creating advanced models for better forecasting of weather, oceanic, and climatic hazards, and deepening the understanding of climate change.
- **Polar and Oceanic Exploration:** Venturing into the unexplored polar regions and high seas to discover new phenomena and resources.
- **Technology Advancement:** Innovating technologies for the sustainable exploitation of oceanic resources, benefiting society.
- **Knowledge Translation:** Converting scientific insights into practical services for societal, environmental, and economic advantages.

The Role of the Ministry of Earth Sciences

The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) plays a pivotal role in this initiative, translating scientific knowledge into valuable services for society. These services encompass:

- Weather forecasts and warnings.
- Alerts for natural disasters like cyclones, floods, and tsunamis.
- Earthquake monitoring and more.

The MoES's work in this regard has been instrumental in saving lives and reducing property damage during natural disasters.

Prithiv Scheme: Operational and Research Framework

The MoES conducts its research and operational activities through ten esteemed institutes, including:

- India Meteorological Department (IMD)
- National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (NCMRWF)
- Centre for Marine Living Resources and Ecology (CMLRE)

And others

These institutes work in tandem, supported by a fleet of research vessels, to conduct ground-breaking research and provide essential services.

Earth System Sciences: A Multidisciplinary Approach

Earth System Sciences encompass the comprehensive study of the Earth’s atmosphere, hydrosphere, geosphere, cryosphere, and biosphere. MoES’s PRITHVI scheme takes a holistic approach to these disciplines, integrating their complex interactions for a deeper understanding of Earth sciences.

The Impact of PRITHVI

PRITHVI promises to unify various disciplines under Earth sciences, fostering integrated, multidisciplinary research. This collaborative effort aims to address significant challenges in weather, climate, oceanography, cryospheric studies, seismology, and sustainable resource utilization.

In conclusion, the PRITHVI scheme represents a significant leap forward in the realm of Earth sciences in India. It not only enhances our understanding of Earth’s complex systems but also ensures that this knowledge is transformed into practical applications for societal benefit. With its comprehensive approach and robust framework, PRITHVI is set to make a lasting impact on how we interact with and understand our planet.

Golden Globes Awards 2024: Here is the full list of winners

The **81st Golden Globe Awards** are set to be presented in a lavish event at **The Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California, USA**. This year’s ceremony is anticipated to be highlighted by **Greta Gerwig’s widely popular film Barbie** and **Christopher Nolan’s hit movie Oppenheimer**. Barbie is at the forefront with nine nominations, including Best Picture Musical or Comedy, and acting nods for Margot Robbie and Ryan Gosling, along with three nominations for its original songs.

Meanwhile, Oppenheimer has received eight nominations, featuring Best Picture Drama and nominations for actors Cillian Murphy, Robert Downey Jr., and Emily Blunt. In terms of television, Succession leads with nine nominations, including nods for its cast members Brian Cox, Jeremy Strong, Sarah Snook, and Kieran Culkin.

Here’s the complete list of Golden Globes Awards 2024

‘Oppenheimer’ and ‘Poor Things’ win big at the 81st Golden Globe Awards, while shows ‘Succession’ and ‘The Bear’ also made headlines. Check the complete list in tabular form:

Category	Winner
Best Film – Drama	Oppenheimer
Best Actress – Drama	Lily Gladstone, Killers of the Flower Moon
Best Film – Musical or Comedy	Poor Things
Best Actor – Musical or Comedy	Paul Giamatti, The Holdovers
Best TV Series – Drama	Succession
Best Actress in a TV Series – Drama	Sarah Snook, Succession
Best TV Series – Musical or Comedy	The Bear
Best Limited Series, Anthology Series or TV Movie	Beef
Cinematic and Box Office Achievement	Barbie
Best Original Song	What Was I Made For? by Billie Eilish and Finneas (Barbie)
Best Original Score	Ludwig Göransson, Oppenheimer
Best Actor – Drama	Cillian Murphy, Oppenheimer
Best Actress – Musical or Comedy	Emma Stone, Poor Things
Best Director	Christopher Nolan, Oppenheimer
Best Animated Film	The Boy and the Heron
Best Actor in a TV Series – Drama	Kieran Culkin, Succession
Best Actress in a TV Series – Musical or Comedy	Ayo Edebiri, The Bear
Best Non-English Language Film	Anatomy of a Fall
Best Performance in Stand-Up Comedy on TV	Ricky Gervais, Ricky Gervais Armageddon
Best Actor in a TV Series – Musical or Comedy	Jeremy Allen White, The Bear
Best Screenplay	Justine Triet and Arthur Harari, Anatomy of a Fall
Best Supporting Actor in a TV Series	Matthew Macfadyen, Succession
Best Supporting Actress in a TV Series	Elizabeth Debicki, The Crown
Best Actor in a Limited Series, Anthology Series or TV Movie	Steven Yeun, Beef
Best Actress in a Limited Series, Anthology Series or TV Movie	Ali Wong, Beef
Best Supporting Actor	Robert Downey Jr, Oppenheimer
Best Supporting Actress	Da’Vine Joy Randolph, The Holdovers

RBI's Financial Stability Report (FSR) – December 2023: Key Highlights

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently released the 28th issue of the **Financial Stability Report (FSR)**, offering a comprehensive evaluation of the Indian financial system's resilience and potential risks. The report, based on the findings of the Sub-Committee of the **Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)**, sheds light on both global and domestic economic conditions.

Key Highlights of FSR Dec 2023

Global Economic Challenges:

- The global economy faces multifaceted challenges, including the prospects of slowing growth, elevated public debt, economic fragmentation, and geopolitical conflicts.

Resilience of the Indian Economy:

- Despite global challenges, the Indian economy and financial system exhibit resilience, supported by robust macroeconomic fundamentals, healthy financial institution balance sheets, moderate inflation, improved external sector position, and ongoing fiscal consolidation.

Commercial Banks' Health:

- Scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) showcase strength with a Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) of 16.8% and a Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) ratio of 13.7% in September 2023.
- SCBs' Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) ratio hits a multi-year low at 3.2%, with Net Non-Performing Assets (NNPA) at 0.8% in September 2023.

Macro Stress Tests:

- Stress tests project SCBs' compliance with minimum capital requirements, projecting a system-level CRAR of 14.8%, 13.5%, and 12.2% in September 2024 under baseline, medium, and severe stress scenarios.

Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs):

- NBFC sector resilience improves with a CRAR of 27.6%, GNPA ratio at 4.6%, and Return on Assets (RoA) at 2.9% in September 2023.
- High-risk stress scenario in the NBFC sector warrants monitoring due to increased inter-bank exposure, although system failure is not anticipated.

Credit and Deposit Growth:

- Credit growth remains robust, and deposit growth gains momentum in the Indian financial system.
- NBFCs contribute significantly to credit growth, particularly in personal loans and loans to the industry, with improved asset quality.

Concerns and Contagion Risks:

- Risks in the NBFC sector are assessed to be higher, and contagion risks may increase due to heightened inter-bank exposure.

- Recent risk weight adjustments in retail loan categories may impact NBFC credit growth at sectoral and sub-sectoral levels.

Overall System Stability:

- The Indian financial system, while stable, faces heightened global uncertainty, requiring continuous monitoring to detect any undue risk build-up.
- Prudent management of exposures and building financial buffers is emphasized to address potential challenges.

Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs): Key Characteristics and Role

Characteristics of NBFCs:

- **Legal Framework:** NBFCs are entities registered under the Companies Act, 1956.
- **Financial Activities:** They engage in diverse financial activities, including loans, advances, and the acquisition of securities.

Exclusions from Principal Business:

- **Scope:** NBFCs exclude institutions primarily involved in agriculture, industrial activity, trading, or the purchase/sale of immovable properties.

Regulatory Oversight:

- **Primary Regulator:** NBFCs are primarily regulated and governed by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- **Additional Oversight:** Some NBFCs may fall under the regulatory purview of other authorities like the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), etc.

Operational Limitations:

- **Demand Deposits:** NBFCs cannot accept demand deposits.
- **Payment and Settlement System:** They are not part of the payment and settlement system and cannot issue cheques drawn on themselves.
- **Deposit Insurance:** Deposit insurance facility is not available to depositors of NBFCs.

Contribution to Financial Inclusion:

- **Bridge Gap:** NBFCs play a crucial role in bridging the gap between traditional banks and customers.
- **Access to Credit:** Their presence is significant in areas where traditional banks have limited reach, contributing significantly to financial inclusion and access to credit.

Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC)

- **Establishment:** The FSDC was established in 2010 with the objective of strengthening and institutionalizing mechanisms for maintaining financial stability.
- **Leadership:** The ex-officio chairman of FSDC is the Finance Minister.
- **Mandate:** The council aims to enhance inter-regulatory coordination and promote the overall stability and growth of the financial sector in India.

Financial Stability Report 2023: Key Highlights (June)

The 27th Financial Stability Report for June 2023, released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), outlines the global economic scenario and underscores India’s resilience despite prevailing challenges.

Global Economic Landscape:

- **Challenges:** Heightened uncertainty globally due to banking fragility, geopolitical tensions, and persistent but moderating inflation.

Indian Economic Resilience:

- **Strengths:** India’s economy and financial system display resilience, buoyed by robust macroeconomic fundamentals and sustained growth momentum.
- **Positive Indicators:** Current account deficit closure, increased forex reserves, ongoing fiscal consolidation, and a robust financial system contribute to India’s sustained growth path.

Banking System Strength:

- **Historical Highs:** Scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) achieve historic highs in Capital-to-Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) at 17.1% and Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) ratio at 13.9% in March 2023.
- **Improved Asset Quality:** SCBs witness a 10-year low in Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) ratio at 3.9%, and Net Non-Performing Assets (NNPA) ratio declines to 1.0% in March 2023.

Macro Stress Tests:

- **Capital Adequacy:** SCBs are projected to comply with minimum capital requirements even under severe stress scenarios.
- **System-level CRAR:** March 2024 projections stand at 16.1%, 14.7%, and 13.3% under baseline, medium, and severe stress scenarios, demonstrating resilience.

EAM S. Jaishankar Boosts India-Nepal Relations in Two-Day Visit

In a diplomatic triumph, India’s External Affairs Minister (EAM) S. Jaishankar concluded his two-day visit to Nepal, solidifying ties through various initiatives and agreements. The pivotal event of the visit was the **7th India-Nepal Joint Commission meeting**, culminating in a landmark accord for India to import **10,000 MW of hydroelectricity** from Nepal over the next decade.

1. Key Agreements

- The 7th India-Nepal Joint Commission meeting resulted in a significant pact: India will import 10,000 MW of hydroelectricity from Nepal over the next decade.

2. Reconstruction Aid

- India announced a financial package of **Nepali Rs 1,000 crore (USD 75 million)** for rebuilding infrastructure in areas affected by the 2015 earthquake.

- Inaugurated jointly by Jaishankar and Nepal’s N P Saud, post-quake reconstruction projects include schools, health facilities, and cultural heritage sites.

3. Transformative Ties

- Jaishankar highlighted the transformation in India-Nepal relations, emphasizing connectivity in physical, digital, and energy realms as a foundation for collaboration.
- Tribhuvan University Central Library in Kathmandu was inaugurated, symbolizing strengthened people-to-people linkages.

4. Shared Responsibilities

- EAM Jaishankar emphasized the shared responsibilities in building ties and commended India’s post-2015 earthquake efforts, including funding for 50,000 houses.

5. Treaty Review

- Both sides reviewed various aspects of bilateral relations, including the **1950 Treaty of Peace and Friendship**, security matters, and boundary-related issues.

6. The ‘HIT’ Formula

- Referring to PM Modi’s 2014 visit, Jaishankar recalled the ‘HIT’ formula for India-Nepal relations: **Highways, Iways (Information ways), and Transways (Connectivity)**.

7. Power Trade Agreement

- A long-term power trade agreement was signed, aiming to increase Nepal’s power export to India to 10,000 MW within the next 10 years. Currently, Nepal’s electricity capacity is around 2,600 MW.

Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports Announced the National Sports Awards 2023

The **Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports** announced the **National Sports Awards 2023**, honouring individuals and institutions that have excelled in their respective fields. The awards ceremony, held at Rashtrapati Bhavan, witnessed the presentation of various awards to sportspersons, coaches, and entities for their outstanding contributions to sports in the country.

National Sports Award 2023

President Droupadi Murmu has conferred the **Arjuna Awards** to various sports personalities at the **Rashtrapati Bhawan**. The second-highest athletic honour in India, the Arjuna Award, is given for demonstrating leadership, sportsmanship, and discipline along with good performance over the preceding four years.

Several athletes across various sports were selected for the National Sports and Adventure Awards 2023, including World Cup star Mohammed Shami, Asian Games heroes Ojas Pravin Deotale, shooter Aishwarya Pratap Singh Tomar and Parul Chaudhary. The Sports Ministry in December had declared nominees for the annual sports awards, confirming the prestigious Khel Ratna honour for badminton players Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty and the Arjuna award for 26 sports persons.

Full list of National Sports Awards 2023

Here is the complete list of winners who got National Sports Awards, for his/her remarkable contribution to their respective sports:

Name	Sport
Mohammed Shami	Cricket
Pawan Sehrawat	Kabaddi
Ritu Negi	Kabaddi
Vaishali Rameshbabu	Chess
Murali Sreeshankar	Athletics
Parul Chaudhary	Athletics
Krishan Bahadur Pathak	Hockey
Sushila Chanu	Hockey
Sunil Kumar	Wrestling
Antim Panghal	Wrestling
Aditi Gopichand Swami	Archery
Ojas Pravin Deotale	Archery
Ayhika Mukherjee	Table Tennis
Mohammad Hussamuddin	Boxing
Esha Singh	Shooting
Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar	Shooting
Naorem Roshibina Devi	Wushu
Diksha Dagar	Golf
Harinder Pal Sandhu	Squash
Sheetal Devi	Para-Archery
Anush Agarwalla	Equestrian
Divyakriti Singh	Equestrian Dressage
Nasreen Shaikh	Kho-Kho
Pinki Singh	Lawn bowls
Illuri Ajay Kumar Reddy	Blind cricket
Prachi Yadav	Para Canoeing

Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award:

- Satwik Sairaj Rankireddy and Chirag Shetty (badminton)

Dronacharya Award for Outstanding Coaches in Sports and Games 2023:

- Ganesh Prabhakaran (mallakhamb), Mahavir Saini (para athletics), Lalit Kumar (wrestling), RB Ramesh (chess), Shivendra Singh (hockey).

Dhyan Chand Lifetime Award

- Kavita (kabaddi), Manjusha Kanwar (badminton), Vineet Kumar Sharma (hockey).

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad (MAKA) Trophy 2023:

- Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar (winner),
- Lovely Professional University, Punjab (1st runners-up),
- Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra (2nd runners-up).

Six Nations Top Global Passport Ranking, With Access To 194 Destinations

In a significant development, **France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Singapore, and Spain** share the **top spot** in the quarterly ranking of the world’s most powerful passports. Enjoying visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to an impressive **194 destinations**, this marks a **historic high since the inception of the Henley Passport Index 19 years ago**.

Triumphant Rise of Europe: Second and Third Positions

Japan and Singapore, holding the top position **for the past five years**, now see a triumphant rise for Europe. **Finland and Sweden, tied with South Korea**, secure the **second spot** with easy access to 193 destinations. Following closely, Austria, Denmark, Ireland, and the Netherlands claim the third position, providing access to 192 destinations.

Global Passport Rankings: Fourth and Fifth Positions

The **fourth position** is collectively held by **Belgium, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom**, with access to 193 destinations. **Greece, Malta, and Switzerland** secure the **fifth spot**.

Noteworthy Improvements: Australia, New Zealand, Czechia, and Poland

Australia and New Zealand have advanced their standings, now sharing the **sixth position** with **Czechia and Poland**. **The United States and Canada, along with Hungary**, are tied in **seventh place**, boasting visa-free access to 188 destinations.

India’s Passport Ranking in 2024: Position 80 with Access to 62 Countries

India secures the 80th position, with visa-free access to 62 countries. The global passport landscape showcases varying degrees of accessibility, highlighting the significance of diplomatic relations and international cooperation.

World’s Most Powerful Passports for 2024: A Snapshot

The ranking underscores the evolving dynamics of global travel and the importance of diplomatic ties in facilitating international mobility.

Rank	Countries	Destinations
1	France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Singapore, Spain	194
2	Finland, South Korea, Sweden	193
3	Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Netherlands	192
4	Belgium, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom	193
5	Greece, Malta, Switzerland	190
6	Czech Republic, New Zealand, Poland	189
7	Canada, Hungary, United States	188
8	Estonia, Lithuania	187
9	Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia	186
10	Iceland	185

The ranking underscores the evolving dynamics of global travel and the importance of diplomatic ties in facilitating international mobility.

Swachh Survekshan Awards 2023: Indore and Surat Share Cleanest City Title

In a prestigious ceremony hosted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), the **Swachh Survekshan Awards 2023** witnessed President Droupadi Murmu conferring accolades to 13 distinguished awardees across various cleanliness categories.

Cleanest City Title: Indore and Surat Joint Winners

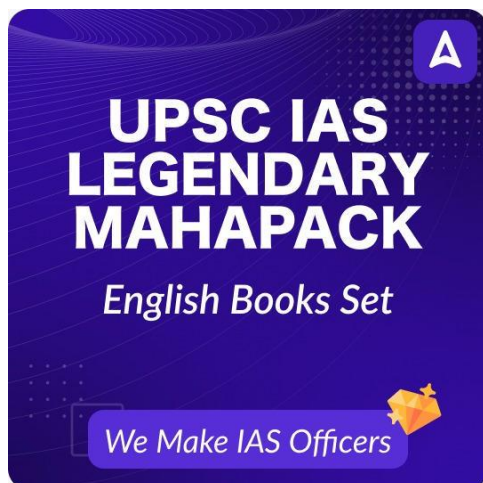
Indore, for the remarkable **seventh consecutive time**, secured the cleanest city title. However, this year, it shared the honors with Surat, marking a unique joint victory. The President, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, presented the awards at the Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

Top Performers in Other Categories

- **Cities with Population under 1 Lakh:** Sasvad, Patan, and Lonavala claimed the top three spots.
- **Cleanest Cantonment Board:** Mhow Cantonment Board in Madhya Pradesh emerged as the top performer.
- **Cleanest Ganga Towns:** Varanasi and Prayagraj received recognition as the best and cleanest Ganga towns.
- **Best Performing States:** Maharashtra, Madhya Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh secured the top three awards for their outstanding performance.
- **Safaimitra Surakshit Sheher:** Chandigarh received the award for the Best Safaimitra Surakshit Sheher.

Swachh Survekshan 2023 Highlights

- The President launched the **Swachh Survekshan 2023 dashboard** during the ceremony.
- A total of 110 awards were bestowed, celebrating excellence in cleanliness initiatives.
- The theme for the Cleanliness Survey 2024 is **“Reduce, Reuse, and Recycle.”**
- The ceremony was attended by Union Housing and Urban Affairs Minister Hardeep Singh Puri and other dignitaries.



Key Statistics and Achievements

- Data revealed that 4,447 urban local bodies participated in Swachh Survekshan 2023, making it the world’s largest cleanliness survey.
- The survey received an impressive 12 core citizen responses, reflecting widespread public engagement.

Emmys Awards 2024, Complete List Of Winners

The **Emmy Awards 2024** marked another spectacular event in television history, celebrating outstanding achievements in the TV industry. The **Emmy Awards 2024** ceremony showcased the best and brightest in television. With many shows vying for the top honours, the event was a testament to contemporary television’s diverse and dynamic nature. HBO’s “Succession” led the nominations, indicating the show’s significant impact on audiences and critics alike. **This is the**

75th Primetime Emmy Awards.

Anthony Anderson, the veteran actor who spent several years as the star of ABC’s “black-ish,” scored several laughs and appreciative applause as he started his hosting gig at the 75th Emmy Awards.

Here’s the complete List of Emmys Awards 2024

The **Emmy Awards 2024** was a night of celebration for television excellence. This year’s ceremony saw a wide array of talent and shows recognized for their remarkable contributions to the industry. Below is a comprehensive overview of the winners across various categories.

Category	Winner(s)
Drama Series	Succession
Comedy Series	The Bear
Lead Actress in a Drama Series	Sarah Snook (Succession)
Lead Actor in a Drama Series	Kieran Culkin (Succession)
Limited or Anthology Series	Beef
Lead Actress in a Limited or Anthology Series or Movie	Ali Wong (Beef)
Lead Actor in a Limited or Anthology Series or Movie	Steven Yeun (Beef)
Variety Special (Live)	Elton John Live: Farewell from Dodger Stadium
Directing for a Drama Series	Mark Mylod (Succession)
Writing for a Limited or Anthology Series or Movie	Lee Sung Jin (Beef)
Writing for a Drama Series	Jesse Armstrong (Succession)
Supporting Actor in a Limited or Anthology Series or Movie	Paul Walter Hauser (Black Bird)
Directing for a Limited or Anthology Series or Movie	Lee Sung Jin (Beef)
Talk Series	The Daily Show With Trevor Noah
Writing for a Variety Series	Last Week Tonight With

Category	Winner(s)
	John Oliver
Outstanding Competition Program	RuPaul's Drag Race
Writing for a Comedy Series	Christopher Storer (The Bear)
Directing for a Comedy Series	Christopher Storer (The Bear)
Supporting Actress in a Limited or Anthology Series or Movie	Niecy Nash-Betts (Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story)
Scripted Variety Series	Last Week Tonight With John Oliver
Lead Actor in a Comedy Series	Jeremy Allen White (The Bear)
Supporting Actor in a Comedy Series	Ebon Moss-Bachrach (The Bear)
Supporting Actor in a Drama Series	Matthew Macfadyen (Succession)
Supporting Actress in a Drama Series	Jennifer Coolidge (The White Lotus)
Lead Actress in a Comedy Series	Quinta Brunson (Abbott Elementary)
Supporting Actress in a Comedy Series	Ayo Edebiri (The Bear)

ICC Players of the Month for December 2023, Pat Cummins and Deepti Sharma Shine

The cricketing world witnessed outstanding performances in December 2023, and the **International Cricket Council (ICC)** duly recognized the brilliance of **Australia's Pat Cummins** and **India's Deepti Sharma**. In a month that showcased cricketing prowess across formats, Cummins and Sharma stood out, earning the prestigious **ICC Men's and Women's Player of the Month** awards.

1. Pat Cummins: A Bowling Maestro

Australia's skipper, Pat Cummins, capped off a stellar year with the ICC Men's Player of the Month award for December. Cummins played a pivotal role in Australia's Test series triumph against Pakistan, displaying exceptional leadership and bowling prowess.

- **Dominant Test Series Performance:** Cummins led from the front in Australia's Test series victory over Pakistan, contributing significantly to their successful campaign in 2023.
- **Inspiring Melbourne Spell:** The highlight of Cummins' month came in the second Test against Pakistan in Melbourne, where he showcased his bowling mastery by taking ten wickets. His crucial five-for in the second innings, including the prized wicket of Mohammed Rizwan, secured a dramatic victory for Australia.

- **Accolades and Nominations:** Cummins, who played a key role in Australia winning the World Test Championship and the Men's Cricket World Cup in 2023, is now nominated for the prestigious Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy in the ICC Awards 2023.

2. Deepti Sharma: Multi-Format Brilliance

India's Deepti Sharma made history by winning her maiden ICC Women's Player of the Month award for December. Sharma's exceptional performances across all three formats, especially against England and Australia, earned her this well-deserved recognition.

- **T20I and Test Brilliance:** Sharma began the month with solid contributions in T20Is against England, setting the stage for a remarkable Test performance. In the Test against England, she scored 67 runs and showcased her bowling prowess with a stunning nine-wicket haul.
- **Test Triumph Against Australia:** Deepti continued her exceptional run in the Test against Australia, top-scoring with a crucial 78 runs, contributing significantly to India's eight-wicket victory.
- **Consistent ODI Performances:** The subsequent ODI matches against Australia witnessed more brilliance from Sharma, including a remarkable five-for in one encounter.

US Leads 2024 Military Rankings, India Fourth, Bhutan Ranks Lowest

The **Global Firepower's Military Strength Rankings for 2024** offer a comprehensive assessment of military capabilities worldwide. The rankings, encompassing 145 countries, take into account more than 60 factors, including troop numbers, military equipment, financial stability, geographic location, and available resources. The culmination of these factors results in a PowerIndex score, providing a nuanced perspective on global military strength.

Top 10 Most Powerful Militaries

The top 10 countries with the most powerful militaries in the world, according to Global Firepower's rankings for 2024, are as follows:

Sno.	Country	Power Index
1	United States	0.0699
2	Russia	0.0702
3	China	0.0706
4	India	0.1023
5	South Korea	0.1416
6	United Kingdom	0.1443
7	Japan	0.1601
8	Turkey	0.1697
9	Pakistan	0.1711
10	Italy	0.1863

These rankings reflect the culmination of various factors, showcasing the strengths and capabilities of each nation's military.

10 Countries with the Least Powerful Militaries

In contrast, the report also highlights the countries with the least powerful militaries, emphasizing the diversity of global military capabilities. The bottom 10 countries in the rankings for 2024 are:

Sno.	Country
145	Bhutan
144	Moldova
143	Suriname
142	Somalia
141	Benin
140	Liberia
139	Belize
138	Sierra Leone
137	Central African Republic
136	Iceland

Understanding the challenges these nations face and the factors contributing to their lower military rankings provides insight into the complex dynamics of global security.

The Best FIFA Football Awards 2024

The Best FIFA Football Awards 2024 recognized the most exceptional talents in football. Lionel Messi and Aitana Bonmati emerged as the best players, with several others receiving prestigious honours. The ceremony, held in London, celebrated players, coaches, and teams for their achievements in the 2023 season.

The Best FIFA Football Awards 2024: Key Winners and Highlights

1. Men's Player of the Year: Lionel Messi

- Lionel Messi, playing for Argentina and Inter Miami, won the Best FIFA Men's Player award, edging out Erling Haaland in a tiebreaker.
- Messi and Haaland both scored 48 points, but Messi received more points from national captains.
- Messi is the first footballer to win this award three times.

2. Women's Player of the Year: Aitana Bonmati

- Aitana Bonmati, from Barcelona and the Spanish national team, claimed the Best FIFA Women's Player award.
- Bonmati had an extraordinary year, winning the World Cup, Spanish League, Spanish Super Cup, and the Champions League with Barcelona.
- She made history by winning all the titles she contested in a season and being voted the best player in all of them.

3. Men's Coach of the Year: Pep Guardiola

- Pep Guardiola, the coach of Manchester City, was named the Best Men's Coach.
- Under his leadership, Manchester City achieved a historic treble, including their first Champions League.

4. Women's Coach of the Year: Sarina Wiegman

- England coach Sarina Wiegman received the women's best coach award, tying the record for most wins in this category.

5. Men's and Women's Goalkeeper of the Year: Ederson and Mary Earps

- Ederson, from Manchester City and Brazil, was awarded the Best Men's Goalkeeper.
- Mary Earps, representing Manchester United and England, won the Best Women's Goalkeeper award.

6. FIFA Puskas Award: Guilherme Madruga

- Guilherme Madruga, from Botafogo-SP, won the FIFA Puskas Award 2023 for his spectacular overhead kick.

7. FIFA Special and Fair Play Awards

- Brazilian football legend Marta received The FIFA Special Award.
- The Brazil men's national team earned the FIFA Fair Play award for their stand against racism.

8. FIFA Fan Award

- The FIFA Fan Award 2023 went to Argentinian fan Hugo Daniel "Toto" Iniguez.

FIFA FIFPro World 11s

Men's World XI:

- Goalkeeper: Thibaut Courtois (Real Madrid/Belgium)
- Defenders: Kyle Walker, Ruben Dias, John Stones (all Manchester City)
- Midfielders and Forwards: Bernardo Silva, Kevin De Bruyne (Manchester City), Jude Bellingham (Real Madrid), Lionel Messi (Inter Miami), Erling Haaland (Manchester City), Kylian Mbappe (Paris Saint-Germain), Vinicius Jr (Real Madrid).

Women's World XI:

- Goalkeeper: Mary Earps (Manchester United/England)
- Defenders: Olga Carmona (Real Madrid), Lucy Bronze (Barcelona), Alex Greenwood (Manchester City)
- Midfielders: Kiera Walsh (Barcelona), Alessia Russo (Arsenal), Lauren James (Chelsea).

PM Modi Unveils Ram Mandir Stamps: A Historic Moment in Indian Culture

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** recently launched a series of **commemorative postage stamps** dedicated to **Ayodhya's Ram Temple**, marking a significant cultural event in India. This gesture not only honours the Ram Temple but also emphasizes the international appeal of Lord Ram across various societies.

Overview of the Commemorative Stamps

Design and Elements

- The collection comprises six distinct stamps, each featuring key figures and symbols associated with Lord Ram's narrative, including the **Ram Temple, Lord Ganesh, Lord Hanuman, Jatayu, Kevatraj, and Ma Shabri**.
- The designs incorporate essential elements related to Shri Ram Janmbhoomi Mandir, showcasing the temple, the revered **Choupai 'Mangal Bhavan Amangal Hari,' the sun, the Saryu River**, and the sculptures in and around the temple.
- Each stamp is adorned with gold leaf detailing for the sun rays and the Choupai, adding a majestic touch.

Global Appeal

- The launch includes a 48-page book featuring stamps issued by over 20 countries, such as the **US, New Zealand, Singapore, Canada, Cambodia, and organizations like the United Nations**.
- This collection is intended to showcase Lord Ram's global popularity and influence across different societies.

Cultural Significance

- The stamps reflect the five physical elements of nature — **sky, air, fire, earth, and water, known as 'Panchabhutas.'**
- These designs establish harmony and are symbolic of the universal principles that Lord Ram represents.

Ram Mandir: A Symbol of Faith and Unity

- The Ram Mandir, located in Ayodhya, holds immense religious and cultural significance in India. The temple is dedicated to Lord Ram, a major deity in Hinduism and a central figure in the Indian epic Ramayana. The construction and consecration of the Ram Mandir have been long-awaited events, celebrated by millions across the nation and the world.

Pran Pratishtha Ceremony

- The Pran Pratishtha (consecration) ceremony of the Ram Mandir is a monumental event, with **Prime Minister Narendra Modi as the chief guest**.
- Over 7,000 attendees, including politicians, celebrities, industrialists, and saints, are expected to participate in this historic ceremony.

Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2024, Full List Of Winners

Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2024

The **Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2024** was declared, with the awards set to be presented by President Droupadi Murmu at a formal event at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi on January 22.

This year, 19 children from various parts of the country have been recognized for their outstanding accomplishments. The Ministry of Women and Child Development revealed that Prime Minister Narendra Modi will engage with the recipients on January 23. Additionally, these children will be featured in the Republic Day parade on January 26, 2024.

Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar 2024, Full List Of Winners

The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar awardees include one child each in the fields of Bravery, Science & Technology, and Innovation; four in Social Service; five in Sports; and seven in Art and Culture. The group, as per the Ministry's press release, consists of 9 boys and 10 girls from 18 different States and Union Territories.

Sr. No.	Name	State	Category
1	Aaditya Vijay Bramhane (posthumous)	Maharashtra	Bravery
2	Anushka Pathak	Uttar Pradesh	Art & Culture
3	Arijeet Banerjee	West Bengal	Art & Culture
4	Armaan Ubhrani	Chattisgarh	Art & Culture
5	Hetvi Kantibhai Khimsuriya	Gujarat	Art & Culture
6	Ishfaq Hamid	Jammu & Kashmir	Art & Culture
7	Md Hussain	Bihar	Art & Culture
8	Pendyala Laxmi Priya	Telangana	Art & Culture
9	Suhani Chauhan	Delhi	Innovation
10	Aryan Singh	Rajasthan	Science & Technology
11	Avnish Tiwari	Madhya Pradesh	Social Service
12	Garima	Haryana	Social Service
13	Jyotsna Aktar	Tripura	Social Service
14	Saiyam Mazumder	Assam	Social Service
15	Aaditya Yadav	Uttar Pradesh	Sports
16	Charvi A	Karnataka	Sports
17	Jesicca Neyi Saring	Arunachal Pradesh	Sports
18	Linthoi Chanambam	Manipur	Sports
19	R Surya Prasad	Andhra Pradesh	Sports

Ayodhya Ram Mandir Inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi

On January 22, 2024, Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **Ram Mandir in Ayodhya**, marking a momentous occasion in India's history. The inauguration involved the 'Pran Pratishtha' (consecration) ceremony of the Ram Lalla idol, a pivotal event that symbolizes the infusion of life into the idol. The event, attended by over 7,000 dignitaries, was not just a religious ceremony but also a cultural milestone for India.

Prime Minister's Participation

Prime Minister Modi's involvement was central to the ceremony. He participated in the 'Pran Pratishtha' of the Ram Lalla idol from 12:29:03 pm to 12:30:35 pm, a brief but highly auspicious 84-second window during the '**Abhijit muhurta**'. His visit to Ayodhya spanned nearly four hours, filled with various activities and rituals associated with the inauguration.

The Ram Lalla Idol and Temple Complex

The Ram Lalla idol, crafted by renowned sculptor Arun Yogiraj from Karnataka, is a 51-inch black-coloured depiction of Lord Ram as a five-year-old child. It was installed inside the temple's sanctum sanctorum on January 18 as part of the preparatory rituals. The temple itself, an architectural marvel, stands at a length of **380 feet, a width of 250 feet, and a height of 161 feet, embodying the traditional Nagara style of architecture.**

Comprehensive Security and Celebrations

Ayodhya was transformed into a secure and festive zone. An extensive security network, including AI-powered drones and 13,000 security personnel, was deployed. The city was adorned with flowers and lights, echoing with slogans and verses from the Ramayana. The celebrations extended beyond Ayodhya, with people from different states contributing various gifts and offerings.

ICC Awards 2023, Check the Awardee's Name

The **ICC Awards 2023**, organized by the **International Cricket Council**, represents the pinnacle of recognition for international cricket players. These prestigious awards celebrate the extraordinary talents and achievements of cricketers from around the world. This year's ceremony saw a range of players being honoured for their exceptional performances across various formats of the game.

The ICC Awards 2023 witnessed a diverse group of cricketers being acknowledged for their outstanding contributions to the sport.

[Here are all the winners of ICC Awards 2023:](#)

ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year

- Australia skipper **Pat Cummins** was announced as the winner of the **Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for the ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year 2023**. The inspirational captain had a stellar run with the bat and ball, and garnered remarkable team accolades, including a victory in the ICC World Test Championship Final, retention of the Ashes, and a record sixth triumph in the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023.

ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2023

- Veteran Indian batter **Virat Kohli** was crowned the **ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2023** for his exceptional year in the 50-over format. Player of the tournament at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023, Virat Kohli was announced as the ICC Men's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2023. The Indian batter had a superb year with the bat, culminating in a record tally of runs at the home World Cup, where his contributions played a major part in India's run to the final.

ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year 2023

- Usman Khawaja** was named as the ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year 2023. Khawaja edged out tough competition from teammate Travis Head, India spinner Ravichandran Ashwin, and England's Joe Root for the award following a successful year that culminated in Australia claiming their first ICC World Test Championship title. He scored 1210 runs in 13 Tests in the year.

Rachael Heyhoe Flint Award for ICC Women's Cricketer of the Year 2023

- England's all-rounder **Nat Sciver-Brunt** took home the Award for the second year in a row. 2023 was yet another remarkable year for Sciver-Brunt, with some of her exceptional knocks coming during the home Ashes against Australia.

ICC Women's ODI Cricket of the Year 2023

- Chamari Athapaththu**, already leading the Women's T20I and ODI sides of the year, added another feather to her cap by winning this feat. Athapaththu was rewarded for her exceptional year with the bat in ODIs. The Sri Lanka top-order batter made significant contributions with the bat and as captain, notably leading the side to a first bilateral series win over New Zealand.

ICC Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year 2023

- Bas de Leede** was named as the **ICC Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year 2023** for his remarkable all-round run in the year. He was the standout player for the Netherlands at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 Qualifier and the World Cup in India.

ICC Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year 2023

- Queentor Abel** made **Kenya** proud by winning the ICC Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year for 2023. She picked 30 T20I wickets at an unreal average of 7.36, and scored 476 T20I runs at 34.

ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year 2023

- For the second successive year, **India's T20I beast Suryakumar Yadav** has been awarded the ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year award. With his eclectic mix of shots, Suryakumar dominated 2023 with an average that closed in on 50 and a strike rate exceeding 150. The backbone of India's middle order got starts throughout the year, delivering several match-winning contributions.

ICC Women’s T20I Cricketer of the Year 2023

- **Hayley Matthews** became just the second player from the West Indies to win the honour. Former skipper Stafanie Taylor was the previous cricketer to have won this award in 2015. Matthews added to her reputation with some sensational knocks with the bat and her sharp work with the ball. Her very best came against Australia in Australia.

ICC Men’s Emerging Cricketer of the Year 2023

- **Rachin Ravindra** beat South Africa quick Gerald Coetzee, Sri Lanka pacer Dilshan Madushanka, and India batter Yashasvi Jaiswal for the prized award. He had an amazing ICC Men’s Cricket World Cup in India where he amassed a whopping 578 runs.

ICC Women’s Emerging Cricketer of the Year 2023

- Litchfield edged out Bangladesh teenager **Marufa Akter**, England quick Lauren Bell and Scotland all-rounder Darcey Carter for the coveted award on the back of a remarkable 12 months at the top of Australia’s strong batting order.

Republic Day 2024, Date, Theme, History and Significance

Republic Day in India is celebrated every year on **January 26th** to commemorate the day when the Constitution of India came into effect in **1950**, replacing the **Government of India Act (1935)**. This day marks India’s emergence as a sovereign, democratic republic. The **75th Republic Day** in 2024 holds a special place in the hearts of Indians as it symbolizes the journey of the nation from colonial rule to an independent, vibrant democracy.

Republic Day 2024 Theme

The themes for Republic Day 2024, **“Viksit Bharat” (Developed India)** and **“Bharat – Loktantra ki Matraka” (India – Mother of Democracy)**, encapsulate the aspirations and democratic ethos of the nation.

Republic Day 2024 Chief Guest

For the Republic Day 2024 celebrations, the guest of honour is **Emmanuel Macron**, the President of France. This significant day will be marked with various patriotic events, including an impressive parade and a vivid showcase of India’s cultural richness. The occasion is set to honour India’s unity, diversity, and development remarkably and memorably.

History of Republic Day

The origins of Republic Day go back to India’s fight for independence from British colonialism. After gaining independence on **August 15, 1947**, India was governed by the **Government of India Act, of 1935**, and did not have its constitution. Under the leadership of **Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, a committed committee was formed to draft the constitution. This effort culminated in the adoption of the Constitution of India on **January 26, 1950, marking a pivotal shift as India emerged as a sovereign, socialist, secular, and democratic republic.**

Significance of Republic Day

Republic Day is significant as it represents the true spirit of independent India. It is a day to remember the sacrifices of freedom fighters and the struggles of the Indian independence movement. It also serves as a reminder of the commitment to uphold the values enshrined in the Constitution, including unity, integrity, and diversity.

Republic Day stands as a source of pride for Indians worldwide, symbolizing the end of the struggle for independence and the establishment of a self-governing nation. It serves as a tribute to the democratic principles enshrined in the Constitution, guiding the nation forward. Moreover, Republic Day showcases India’s cultural richness and unity in diversity through grand celebrations in New Delhi.

Republic Day Celebrations

The main event of Republic Day is the grand parade held in the capital, **New Delhi, at Rajpath**, showcasing India’s military might and cultural diversity. The parade includes a display of advanced military equipment, vibrant cultural tableaux from various states, and performances by school children. The celebration also features prestigious bravery and civilian awards like the **Ashok Chakra and Padma Awards.**

Padma Awards 2024 Winners List, Padma Awardees

Padma Awards 2024: The Padma Awards, among India’s highest civilian honours, are given in three categories: **Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Shri.** These awards recognize outstanding service in various areas like arts, social work, public affairs, science, trade, medicine, education, sports, and civil service. The Padma Vibhushan is for exceptional service, the Padma Bhushan is for high-order service, and the Padma Shri is for distinguished service in any area. These awards are announced on Republic Day each year.

The President of India presents these awards in special ceremonies at Rashtrapati Bhawan, typically in March or April. For 2024, the President has approved 132 Padma Awards, including 2 joint awards (counted as one). The list includes 5 Padma Vibhushan, 17 Padma Bhushan, and 110 Padma Shri Awards. Among the awardees, 30 are women, and there are also 8 people from the Foreigners/NRI/PIO/OCI category and 9 posthumous awardees. Full list of winners of this year’s Padma Awards 2024 –

Padma Awards 2024: Padma Vibhushan Awards 2024 Winners List

The Padma Vibhushan is one of India’s highest civilian honors, awarded for exceptional and distinguished service in various fields. The list of Padma Vibhushan awardees for 2024 includes notable personalities from the fields of art, public affairs, and social work.

S.No.	Awardee Name	Field	State
1.	Ms. Vyjayantimala Bali	Art	Tamil Nadu
2.	Shri Konidela Chiranjeevi	Art	Andhra Pradesh
3.	Shri M Venkaiah Naidu	Public Affairs	Andhra Pradesh
4.	Shri Bindeshwar Pathak	Social Work	Bihar
5.	Ms. Padma Subrahmanyam	Art	Tamil Nadu

personalities from fields like public affairs, literature, art, trade, medicine, and spirituality.



Padma Awards 2024- Detailed List of Padma Bhushan Awardees 2024

The Padma Bhushan, India’s third-highest civilian award, recognizes distinguished service of high order in various fields. The 2024 Padma Bhushan awardees include eminent

S.No.	Awardee Name	Field	State/Country
1.	Ms. M Fathima Beevi	Public Affairs	Kerala
2.	Shri Hormusji N Cama	Literature & Education	Maharashtra
3.	Shri Mithun Chakraborty	Art	West Bengal
4.	Shri Sitaram Jindal	Trade & Industry	Karnataka
5.	Shri Young Liu	Trade & Industry	Taiwan
6.	Shri Ashwin Balachand Mehta	Medicine	Maharashtra
7.	Shri Satyabrata Mookherjee	Public Affairs	West Bengal
8.	Shri Ram Naik	Public Affairs	Maharashtra
9.	Shri Tejas Madhusudan Patel	Medicine	Gujarat
10.	Shri Olanchery Rajagopal	Public Affairs	Kerala
11.	Shri Dattatray Ambadas Mayaloo alias Rajdutt	Art	Maharashtra
12.	Shri Togdan Rinpoche	Others – Spiritualism	Ladakh
13.	Shri Pyarelal Sharma	Art	Maharashtra
14.	Shri Chandreshwar Prasad Thakur	Medicine	Bihar
15.	Ms. Usha Uthup	Art	West Bengal
16.	Shri Vijaykanth	Art	Tamil Nadu
17.	Shri Kundan Vyas	Literature & Education – Journalism	Maharashtra

Padma Awards 2024- Padma Shri Awardees 2024 Name List

The Padma Shri Awards 2024 have been announced, honouring 110 distinguished individuals across various fields for their exceptional service. The award recognizes contributions in areas including art, social work, sports, medicine, literature, education, science, and more.

SN	Name	Field	State/Region/Country
1	Shri Khalil Ahamad	Art	Uttar Pradesh
2	Shri Badrappan M	Art	Tamil Nadu
3	Shri Kaluram Bamaniya	Art	Madhya Pradesh
4	Ms. Rezwana Choudhury Bannya	Art	Bangladesh
5	Ms. Naseem Bano	Art	Uttar Pradesh
6	Shri Ramlal Bareth	Art	Chhattisgarh

SN	Name	Field	State/Region/Country
7	Ms. Gita Roy Barman	Art	West Bengal
8	Ms. Parbati Baruah	Social Work	Assam
9	Shri Sarbeswar Basumatary	Others – Agriculture	Assam
10	Shri Som Datt Battu	Art	Himachal Pradesh
11	Ms. Takdira Begum	Art	West Bengal
12	Shri Sathyanarayana Beleri	Others – Agriculture	Kerala
13	Shri Drona Bhuyan	Art	Assam
14	Shri Ashok Kumar Biswas	Art	Bihar
15	Shri Rohan Machanda Bopanna	Sports	Karnataka
16	Ms. Smriti Rekha Chakma	Art	Tripura
17	Shri Narayan Chakraborty	Science & Engineering	West Bengal
18	Shri A Velu Ananda Chari	Art	Telangana
19	Shri Ram Chet Chaudhary	Science & Engineering	Uttar Pradesh
20	Ms. K Chellammal	Others – Agriculture	Andaman & Nicobar Islands
21	Ms. Joshna Chinappa	Sports	Tamil Nadu
22	Ms. Charlotte Chopin	Others – Yoga	France
23	Shri Raghuveer Choudhary	Literature & Education	Gujarat
24	Shri Joe D Cruz	Literature & Education	Tamil Nadu
25	Shri Ghulam Nabi Dar	Art	Jammu & Kashmir
26	Shri Chitta Ranjan Debbarma	Others – Spiritualism	Tripura
27	Shri Uday Vishwanath Deshpande	Sports	Maharashtra
28	Ms. Prema Dhanraj	Medicine	Karnataka
29	Shri Radha Krishan Dhiman	Medicine	Uttar Pradesh
30	Shri Manohar Krishana Dole	Medicine	Maharashtra
31	Shri Pierre Sylvain Filliozat	Literature & Education	France
32	Shri Mahabir Singh Guddu	Art	Haryana
33	Ms. Anupama Hoskere	Art	Karnataka
34	Shri Yazdi Maneksha Italia	Medicine	Gujarat
35	Shri Rajaram Jain	Literature & Education	Uttar Pradesh
36	Shri Jankilal	Art	Rajasthan
37	Shri Ratan Kahar	Art	West Bengal
38	Shri Yashwant Singh Kathoch	Literature & Education	Uttarakhand
39	Shri Zahir I Kazi	Literature & Education	Maharashtra
40	Shri Gaurav Khanna	Sports	Uttar Pradesh
41	Shri Surendra Kishore	Literature & Education – Journalism	Bihar
42	Shri Dasari Kondappa	Art	Telangana
43	Shri Sridhar Makam Krishnamurthy	Literature & Education	Karnataka
44	Ms. Yanung Jamoh Lego	Others – Agriculture	Arunachal Pradesh
45	Shri Jordan Lepcha	Art	Sikkim
46	Shri Satendra Singh Lohia	Sports	Madhya Pradesh
47	Shri Binod Maharana	Art	Odisha

SN	Name	Field	State/Region/Country
48	Ms. Purnima Mahato	Sports	Jharkhand
49	Ms. Uma Maheshwari D	Art	Andhra Pradesh
50	Shri Dukhu Majhi	Social Work	West Bengal
51	Shri Ram Kumar Mallick	Art	Bihar
52	Shri Hemchand Manjhi	Medicine	Chhattisgarh
53	Shri Chandrashekhar Mahadeorao Meshram	Medicine	Maharashtra
54	Shri Surendra Mohan Mishra (Posthumous)	Art	Uttar Pradesh
55	Shri Ali Mohammed & Shri Ghani Mohammed* (Duo)	Art	Rajasthan
56	Ms. Kalpana Morparia	Trade & Industry	Maharashtra
57	Ms. Chami Murmu	Social Work	Jharkhand
58	Shri Sasindran Muthuvel	Public Affairs	Papua New Guinea
59	Ms. G Nachiyar	Medicine	Tamil Nadu
60	Ms. Kiran Nadar	Art	Delhi
61	Shri Pakaravur Chithran Namboodiripad (Posthumous)	Literature & Education	Kerala
62	Shri Narayanan E P	Art	Kerala
63	Shri Shailesh Nayak	Science & Engineering	Delhi
64	Shri Harish Nayak (Posthumous)	Literature & Education	Gujarat
65	Shri Fred Negrit	Literature & Education	France
66	Shri Hari Om	Science & Engineering	Haryana
67	Shri Bhagabat Padhan	Art	Odisha
68	Shri Sanatan Rudra Pal	Art	West Bengal
69	Shri Shankar Baba Pundlikrao Papalkar	Social Work	Maharashtra
70	Shri Radhe Shyam Pareek	Medicine	Uttar Pradesh
71	Shri Dayal Mavjibhai Parmar	Medicine	Gujarat
72	Shri Binod Kumar Pasayat	Art	Odisha
73	Ms. Silbi Passah	Art	Meghalaya
74	Ms. Shanti Devi Paswan & Shri Shivan Paswan* (Duo)	Art	Bihar
75	Shri Sanjay Anant Patil	Others – Agriculture	Goa
76	Shri Muni Narayana Prasad	Literature & Education	Kerala
77	Shri K S Rajanna	Social Work	Karnataka
78	Shri Chandrashekar Channapatna Rajannachar	Medicine	Karnataka
79	Shri Bhagwatilal Rajpurohit	Literature & Education	Madhya Pradesh
80	Shri Romalo Ram	Art	Jammu & Kashmir
81	Shri Navjivan Rastogi	Literature & Education	Uttar Pradesh
82	Ms. Nirmal Rishi	Art	Punjab
83	Shri Pran Sabharwal	Art	Punjab
84	Shri Gaddam Sammaiah	Art	Telangana
85	Shri Sangthankima	Social Work	Mizoram
86	Shri Machihan Sasa	Art	Manipur
87	Shri Omprakash Sharma	Art	Madhya Pradesh
88	Shri Eklabya Sharma	Science & Engineering	West Bengal

SN	Name	Field	State/Region/Country
89	Shri Ram Chander Sihag	Science & Engineering	Haryana
90	Shri Harbinder Singh	Sports	Delhi
91	Shri Gurvinder Singh	Social Work	Haryana
92	Shri Godawari Singh	Art	Uttar Pradesh
93	Shri Ravi Prakash Singh	Science & Engineering	Mexico
94	Shri Seshampatti T Sivalingam	Art	Tamil Nadu
95	Shri Somanna	Social Work	Karnataka
96	Shri Kethavath Somlal	Literature & Education	Telangana
97	Ms. Shashi Soni	Trade & Industry	Karnataka
98	Ms. Urmila Srivastava	Art	Uttar Pradesh
99	Shri Nepal Chandra Sutradhar (Posthumous)	Art	West Bengal
100	Shri Gopinath Swain	Art	Odisha
101	Shri Laxman Bhatt Tailang	Art	Rajasthan
102	Ms. Maya Tandon	Social Work	Rajasthan
103	Ms. Aswathi Thirunal Gouri Lakshmi Bayi Thampuratty	Literature & Education	Kerala
104	Shri Jagdish Labhshanker Trivedi	Art	Gujarat
105	Ms. Sano Vamuzo	Social Work	Nagaland
106	Shri Balakrishnan Sadanam Puthiya Veetil	Art	Kerala
107	Shri Kurella Vittalacharya	Literature & Education	Telangana
108	Shri Kiran Vyas	Others – Yoga	France
109	Shri Jageshwar Yadav	Social Work	Chhattisgarh
110	Shri Babu Ram Yadav	Art	Uttar Pradesh

Republic Day 2024: Tableaux List

The **Republic Day Parade at Kartavya Path in 2024** promises to be a vibrant and eclectic celebration of India’s unity in diversity. With **25 captivating tableaux from 16 states and Union Territories**, the parade showcases a kaleidoscope of themes ranging from education and empowerment to traditional arts and sports achievements. Each tableau represents the unique cultural, social, and technological facets of the participating regions, contributing to the rich tapestry of India’s national identity.

Here is the **list of tableaux or Jhakiyaan displayed on 75th Republic Day of India**:

25 States’ Tableaux or ‘Jhakiyaan’ on Republic Day 2024		
State/Ministry	Theme	Highlights
Andhra Pradesh	Revolutionizing School Education	Focus on global competitiveness in education.
Rajasthan	Women’s Handicraft Industries	Showcasing Ghoomar dance, Meera Bai’s statue, and traditional handicrafts.

25 States’ Tableaux or ‘Jhakiyaan’ on Republic Day 2024

State/Ministry	Theme	Highlights
Odisha	Women in Handicrafts and Handlooms	Emphasizing women’s role in preserving and promoting traditional arts.
Haryana	Empowerment of Women	Illustrating empowerment through the ‘Mera Parivar – Meri Pehchan’ program.
Madhya Pradesh	Women’s Integration in Development	Featuring Avani Chaturvedi, the first woman fighter pilot, and women in various sectors.
Chhattisgarh	Muria Darbar Tradition in Bastar	Highlighting tribal community decision-making and equal involvement of men and women.
Ladakh	Indian Women’s Ice Hockey Team	Showcasing achievements and contributions of Ladakhi women in sports.
Manipur	Women in Socio-Economic Activities	Featuring women working with lotus stems, Ima Keithel market, and lotus silk making.

25 States' Tableaux or 'Jhakiyaan' on Republic Day 2024		
State/Ministry	Theme	Highlights
Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology	AI in various sectors	Illustrating the role of artificial intelligence in diverse industries.
CRPF	Women Empowerment	Central Armed Police Forces' tableaux focusing on empowering women.
IAF	Power Beyond Boundaries	Showcasing major assets of the Indian Air Force, including recent inductions

Filmfare Awards 2024 Winners List

Filmfare Awards 2024 Winners

The 69th edition of the Filmfare Awards 2024 took place in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. The event featured hosting by Karan Johar, and performances by Kareena Kapoor, Karisma Kapoor, Varun Dhawan, and Kartik Aaryan among others. This year, the two-day celebration in Gujarat opened with a Curtain Raiser, leading up to the Filmfare Awards ceremony. The 69th Hyundai Filmfare Awards 2024 with Gujarat Tourism was held in GIFT City, Gujarat.

Filmfare Awards 2024 Winners

The Filmfare Awards 2024 celebrated the finest achievements in Indian cinema. Here's a glimpse of the notable winners honored for their outstanding contributions in various categories, showcasing excellence and talent in the film industry. Follow the below table to know the Filmfare Awards 2024 Winners name list.

Category	Winner
Best Film	12th Fail
Best Director	Vidhu Vinod Chopra (12th Fail)
Best Actor in a Leading Role (Male)	Ranbir Kapoor (Animal)
Best Actor in a Leading Role (Female)	Alia Bhatt (Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani)
Best Film (Critics')	Joram (Devashish Makhija)
Best Actor (Critics')	Vikrant Massey (12th Fail)
Best Actress (Critics')	Rani Mukerji (Mrs Chatterjee vs. Norway), Shefali Shah (Three of Us)
Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Male)	Vicky Kaushal (Dunki)

Category	Winner
Best Actor in a Supporting Role (Female)	Shabana Azmi (Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani)
Best Lyrics	Amitabh Bhattacharya ("Tere Vaaste" – Zara Hatke Zara Bachke)
Best Music Album	Animal (Pritam, Vishal Mishra, Manan Bhardwaj, Shreyas Puranik, Jaani, Bhupinder Babbal, et al.)
Best Playback Singer (Male)	Bhupinder Babbal (Arjan Vailly – Animal)
Best Playback Singer (Female)	Shilpa Rao (Besharam Rang – Pathaan)
Best Story	Amit Rai (OMG 2), Devashish Makhija (Joram)
Best Screenplay	Vidhu Vinod Chopra (12th Fail)
Best Dialogue	Ishita Moitra (Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani)
Best Background Score	Harshavardhan Rameshwar (Animal)
Best Cinematography	Avinash Arun Dhaware (Three of Us)
Best Production Design	Subrata Chakraborty, Amit Ray (Sam Bahadur)
Best Costume Design	Sachin Lovelekar, Divvyra Gambhir, Nidhhi Gambhir (Sam Bahadur)
Best Sound Design	Kunal Sharma (Mpse) (Sam Bahadur) Sync Cinema (Animal)
Best Editing	Jaskunwar Singh Kohli- Vidhu Vinod Chopra (12th Fail)
Best Action	Spiro Razatos, Anl Arasu, Craig Macrae, Yannick Ben, Kecha Khamphakdee, Sunil Rodrigues (Jawan)
Best VFX	Red Chillies VFX (Jawan)
Best Choreography	Ganesh Acharya ("What Jhumka?" – Rocky Aur Rani Kii Prem Kahaani)
Best Debut Director	Tarun Dudeja (Dhak Dhak)
Best Debut Male	Aditya Rawal (Faraaz)
Best Debut Female	Alizeh Agnihotri (Farrey)
Lifetime Achievement Award	David Dhawan

Australian Open 2024 Winners

Jannik Sinner secured his first Grand Slam in men's singles, while Aryna Sabalenka claimed her second in women's singles. Rohan Bopanna, at 43, became the oldest man to win men's doubles. Hsieh Su-Wei and Elise Mertens won women's doubles, and Hsieh, with Jan Zielinski, clinched mixed doubles.

Category	Winner	Runner-Up
Men's Singles	Jannik Sinner (Italy)	Daniil Medvedev (Russia)
Women's Singles	Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus)	Zheng Qinwen (China)
Men's Doubles	Rohan Bopanna (India) & Matthew Ebden (Australia)	Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori (Italy)
Women's Doubles	Hsieh Su-Wei (Taiwan) & Elise Mertens (Belgium)	Jelena Ostapenko and Lyudmyla Kichenok (Latvia-Ukraine)
Mixed Doubles	Hsieh Su-wei (Taiwan) & Jan Zielinski (Poland)	Desirae Krawczyk (USA) & Neal Skupski (Britain)

Finance Ministry Issues 'Indian Economy – A Review' Report Instead of Economic Survey

In 2024, India will not have the usual **Economic Survey** traditionally presented before the **Union Budget**. Instead, Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** will present an interim budget, known as a vote-on-account, on February 1. The reason for not presenting the Economic Survey this year is the election context. 2024 is an election year in India, and presenting the Economic Survey could lead to politicization due to the potential change in government after the elections. This could disrupt the regular Budget process.

However, the **Ministry of Finance** has released an alternative report titled "**Indian Economy – A Review**," prepared by the office of **Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) V Anantha Nageswaran**. This report does not replace the official Economic Survey but provides valuable insights into the Indian economy's trajectory and prospects over the past decade and its future outlook. It's important to note that the official Economic Survey is expected to be presented after the general elections and the formation of the new government. The Review consists of two chapters and takes stock of the state of the Indian economy and its journey in the **last 10 years and offers a brief sketch of the outlook for the economy in the coming years**.

Key points from "Indian Economy – A Review" include

1. India's projected growth to a \$5 trillion economy in the next 3 years and a potential to reach \$7 trillion by 2030.
2. The review focuses on structural reforms undertaken in the past decade and their positive impact.
3. It offers a cautious outlook on future growth and inflation, acknowledging global uncertainties and challenges.
4. India is expected to surpass a GDP growth rate of 7.2% in FY24, outpacing the global economy.
5. For the third consecutive year, the Indian economy is set to achieve a growth rate exceeding 7%.
6. There has been a rise in public sector investment, a robust financial sector, and substantial non-food credit growth over the past decade.
7. India is now the third-largest fintech economy globally, after the USA and the UK.

8. India has become the fourth-largest stock market worldwide, surpassing Hong Kong.
9. The PM Jan Dhan Yojana has significantly increased the percentage of women holding bank accounts.
10. There has been a surge in the female labour force participation rate and initiatives like the Skill India Mission, Start-Up India, and Stand-Up India are contributing to this increase.
11. A significant increase in the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for females in higher education.
12. The report highlights the dynamism in the MSME sector due to government support.
13. The implementation of GST and the integration of domestic markets have improved economic efficiency and lowered logistics costs.

Government Appoints Four key Members of the Sixteenth Finance Commission

The government has taken a significant step in shaping the **Sixteenth Finance Commission (SFC)** by appointing **4-key members**, three of whom are designated as full-time members. The Commission, headed by Shri Arvind Panagariya, former Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog, was constituted on December 31, 2023.

Appointed Members

1.	Shri. Ajay Narayan Jha , former member, 15th Finance Commission and former Secretary, Expenditure	Full time Member
2.	Smt. Annie George Mathew , former Special Secretary, Expenditure	Full time Member
3.	Dr. Niranjana Rajadhyaksha , Executive Director, Artha Global	Full time Member
4.	Dr. Soumya Kanti Ghosh , Group Chief Economic Advisor, State Bank of India	Part time Member

Sixteenth Finance Commission: Dr. Arvind Panagariya Appointed Chairman

Context

In adherence to **Article 280(1)** of the Constitution, the Government of India, with the President's approval, has established the Sixteenth Finance Commission. **Dr. Arvind Panagariya**, former Vice-Chairman of NITI Aayog and Professor at Columbia University, assumes the role of Chairman. Shri Ritvik Ranjanam Pandey has been appointed as the Commission's Secretary, and detailed terms of reference have been outlined in the official notification.

Key Appointments

- **Chairman:** Dr. Arvind Panagariya
- **Secretary:** Shri Ritvik Ranjanam Pandey

Terms of Reference

The Sixteenth Finance Commission is tasked with making recommendations on three crucial matters:

1. Distribution of Net Proceeds:

- Allocation of taxes between the Union and the States under Chapter I, Part XII of the Constitution.
- Division of respective shares among the States.

2. Grants-in-Aid:

- Principles governing grants-in-aid to States' revenues from the Consolidated Fund of India.
- Sums to be granted under Article 275 for purposes other than specified in the provisos to clause (1) of that article.

3. Resource Augmentation:

- Measures to enhance a State's Consolidated Fund for supporting Panchayats and Municipalities, based on State Finance Commission recommendations.

Additional Mandate

The Commission will also review financing arrangements for Disaster Management initiatives, aligning with the Disaster Management Act, 2005, and provide relevant recommendations.

Timeline

The Sixteenth Finance Commission is expected to submit its comprehensive report by **October 31, 2025**, covering a five-year period starting from April 1, 2026.

Banking and Financial Current Affairs

- The Indian government has granted approval for the release of the **30th tranche of electoral bonds**, set to go on sale from **January 2 to January 11, 2024**. This development precedes the upcoming general elections later this year and coincides with the anticipated **Supreme Court** verdict on the validity of the electoral bonds scheme. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to substantially increase the bulk deposit limit for **large urban co-operative banks (UCBs)**. The new limit now stands at **₹1 crore** and above, a notable surge from the previous threshold of ₹15 lakh and above. The enhanced bulk deposit limit is specifically applicable to UCBs falling within the Tier 3 category, characterized by deposits ranging from ₹1,000 crore to ₹10,000 crore, and Tier 4 category, encompassing UCBs with deposits exceeding ₹10,000 crore. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India's corporate sector investment in the first nine months (9M) of FY24, totaling **₹10.80 lakh crore**, has raised concerns as it lags behind expectations, according to **Bank of Baroda's Economic Research Department (ERD)**. The analysis, relying on CMIE data, indicates a cautious approach among industries, with a particular focus on aviation, chemicals, machinery, and power sectors. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Tata Pay**, the digital payments app under Tata Digital, has been granted a **payment aggregator (PA) license** by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). This license positions Tata Pay among industry leaders such as Razorpay, Cashfree, and Google Pay, enabling it to efficiently handle ecommerce transactions within its subsidiary entities. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its latest **Financial Stability Report (FSR)**, revealing insights into the state of household financial savings and liabilities in the fiscal year 2022-23 (FY23). Despite a decline in gross household **financial savings to 10.9% of GDP**, the report emphasizes a limited risk of defaults by households, attributing it to the manageable exposure to higher mortgage payments and floating interest rates. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **State Bank of India (SBI)** has successfully secured **\$1 billion (approximately Rs 8,300 crore)** to address the growing demand in the domestic **Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) financing market**. This syndicated social loan issuance comprises \$750 million, with an additional \$250 million as a green shoe option, as disclosed in the regulatory filing made by SBI. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)**, IndusInd Bank has launched the UPI-enabled '**Samman RuPay Credit Card**,' exclusively tailored for government sector employees. This initiative aligns with the recent RBI permission allowing RuPay credit cards to integrate with UPI payment applications. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a recent regulatory filing, **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** announced its board's approval to acquire up to 10% stake in a new company promoted by the **National Housing Bank (NHB)**. The investment is targeted towards residential mortgage-backed securities and will be made through equity contribution in one or more tranches. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move towards fostering rural development and financial inclusion, the **Rural Development Ministry** and the **State Bank of India (SBI)** have joined hands through a memorandum of understanding (MoU). The primary objective of this collaboration is to **streamline and facilitate enterprise financing for rural self-help groups (SHGs)**, as announced in an official statement. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move, the **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** has introduced the UPI-PayNow linkage, facilitating direct remittances between India and Singapore. This collaboration, a result of close coordination between the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** and the **Monetary Authority of Singapore (MAS)**, aims to enhance financial inclusion and convenience in cross-border transactions. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- The Indian government has recently announced the **extension of the tenure of Michael Debabrata Patra as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for an additional year**. This marks the second time the government has decided to prolong his tenure, showcasing confidence in his leadership and expertise in steering critical departments within the RBI. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a recent announcement on January 12, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) disclosed monetary penalties imposed on **Dhanlaxmi Bank, Punjab and Sind Bank, and ESAF Small Finance Bank**. The move is part of the central bank's enforcement actions against rule violations in the banking sector. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- State Bank of India (SBI), the largest bank in the country, has introduced a special fixed deposit scheme known as the **SBI Green Rupee Term Deposit (SGRTD)**. This initiative aims to gather funds dedicated to supporting environmentally-friendly projects, contributing to the development of a green finance ecosystem in India. The launch aligns with the government's ambitious goal of achieving net carbon neutrality by 2070. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **FCI marks its 60th anniversary**, with Union Minister **Piyush Goyal** praising India's food self-sufficiency as a remarkable achievement in human history. On January 14, 2024, Goyal emphasized the FCI's crucial role in preventing hunger for every citizen in the world's most populous country. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a strategic move to bolster support for **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)**, Yes Bank has introduced SmartFin, an advanced **digital Supply Chain Finance (SCF) platform** developed in collaboration with Veefin Solutions. The initiative reflects Yes Bank's commitment to fostering innovation and enhancing its digital offerings, particularly in the realm of working capital efficiencies. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has unveiled a draft framework for the establishment and recognition of **self-regulatory organizations (SROs) in the fintech sector**. The draft rules aim to strike a balance between fostering innovation within the industry and ensuring regulatory priorities are met for consumer protection and risk containment. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking move, the World Economic Forum (WEF) and the Telangana government are jointly establishing the **19th Centre of the WEF's Fourth Industrial Revolution Network (4IR)** in Hyderabad. The WEF-Telangana Centre, slated for launch in February 2024, will be the world's inaugural thematic center dedicated to health tech and life sciences. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a strategic move aligned with Reserve Bank of India guidelines, **Karnataka Bank (KBL)**, a prominent private sector bank, and **Clix Capital**, a rapidly growing NBFC, have joined forces through the **Yubi Co.lend Platform**. This digital co-lending partnership targets the Indian MSME sector, a key driver of the country's GDP and employment growth. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant turn of events, the **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** has not only staged an impressive comeback but has also surpassed the market capitalization of the **State Bank of India (SBI)**. This article explores the recent surge in LIC's share price, its journey since listing, and the factors contributing to its remarkable revival. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a strategic move, **HDFC Bank Ltd**, India's largest private sector lender, is actively pursuing its **first branch in Singapore**. Following its significant merger with Housing Development Finance Corp. last year, HDFC Bank is looking to expand its global footprint. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **ICICI Bank Canada**, a wholly-owned subsidiary of ICICI Bank Limited, has introduced its latest mobile banking app, **'Money2India (Canada)'**, providing Canadian customers with a seamless platform for 24/7 fund transfers to any Indian bank without the necessity of opening an account with ICICI Bank Canada. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In celebration of its silver jubilee year, **Central Depository Services (India) Limited (CDSL)**, Asia's first listed depository, took a significant step towards inclusivity and accessibility in the capital market landscape. SEBI Chairperson **Madhabi Puri Buch** launched two groundbreaking multi-lingual initiatives at the silver jubilee function held on January 17. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Unveiled by LIC Chairman **Siddhartha Mohanty**, the new **Jeevan Dhara II plan** offers a non-participating, individual savings, deferred annuity option. The plan provides life cover during the deferment period and boasts a higher annuity rate at advanced ages. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB)** has infused INR 4.86 billion (about USD 58.4 million) into Sustainable Energy Infra Trust (SEIT), India's largest **Renewable Energy Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT)**. SEIT, supported by Mahindra Susten Private Limited and Ontario Teachers' Pension Plan, boasts eight operational solar power assets with a combined capacity of 1.54 gigawatts-peak spread across India. This marks AIIB's second foray into InvITs in India, emphasizing its commitment to innovative infrastructure financing solutions. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- In a groundbreaking move, YES BANK has become the inaugural Indian bank to execute an export finance transaction on **RXIL Global IFSC Limited's International Trade Financing Services Platform (ITFS)**. The collaboration marks a significant stride in digitization and cross-border business for YES BANK. The platform, registered under the **International Financial Services Centres Authority (IFSCA)**, offers a digital avenue for arranging credit through Factoring, Forfaiting, and other trade financing services at competitive rates with swift processing. This historic transaction is the first of its kind on the ITFS platform in conjunction with any bank in India. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- On October 30, **AU Small Finance Bank (AU SFB)** announced its merger with **Fincare Small Finance Bank**, effective from February 1, 2024. The merger awaited approvals from critical stakeholders, including shareholders, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), and the Competition Commission of India (CCI). ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant milestone, **HDFC Bank**, India's largest private sector bank, has emerged as the nation's first lender to reach **20 million active credit cards**. The bank, dominating a quarter of the overall card market, commenced its credit card operations in 2001 and previously attained the 10-million mark in 2017. The subsequent 10 million issuances transpired in just over six years, culminating in this achievement on January 16, as announced by the bank. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a recent press release, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** disclosed the revision of eligibility norms for the inclusion of urban co-operative banks in the second schedule of the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934. The objective is to bring these banks under an updated regulatory framework. After the release of the **Revised Regulatory Framework for Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)** on July 19, 2022, with revised categorization norms for UCBs, the criteria for classifying a UCB as Financially Sound and Well Managed (FSWM) were notified. The RBI has now decided to align the eligibility norms for UCBs with the Revised Regulatory Framework. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas** has granted approval for the formation of a subsidiary company by the **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited (ONGC)**, dedicated to the green energy and gas sector. This significant move was announced during ONGC's board meeting on January 23, 2024, reflecting the company's commitment to diversify its portfolio and contribute to sustainable energy solutions. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted approval to Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) for acquiring **up to 9.99% aggregate holding in HDFC Bank**, the nation's largest private sector bank. The approval, based on LIC's application to RBI, is subject to various conditions. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Bank of Baroda's wholly-owned subsidiary for cards, 'BOB Financial Solutions Limited', has undergone a rebranding, emerging as **'BOBCARD Limited'** with the tagline **"Credit Reimagined."** The transformation includes a distinctive logo named **'Baroda Sun,'** featuring dual 'B' letterforms enveloping the rays of a rising sun. This initiative signifies a revitalized commitment to reshaping India's credit landscape by offering innovative and customer-centric credit solutions. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Economy Current Affairs

- The **HSBC India Purchasing Managers' Index (PMI)** for manufacturing dropped to an 18-month low of 54.9 in December, down from 56 in November, signaling a slowdown. Despite this, the sector remains in expansion mode, marking 30 consecutive months with the index above 50, indicative of growth. The decline was attributed to a weaker rise in new orders and output. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra)** has revised its GDP growth estimate for the current fiscal year upward to **6.7% from the earlier 6.2%**, citing a resilient economy, sustained government capital expenditure, and the potential for a new private corporate capital expenditure cycle. The agency acknowledges risks such as weak global growth, trade uncertainties, and volatile geopolitical situations that may limit India's GDP growth. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) has upgraded **PNB Housing Finance Limited's non-convertible debentures (NCDs)** to 'IND AA+' from 'IND AA' with a stable outlook. The NCD limit has been split into bank loans and NCDs, with a corresponding 'IND AA+' rating assigned to the bank loans. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Fitch Ratings released its report **'APAC Cross-Sector Outlook 2024'**, affirming robust economic growth in the Asia Pacific region. The forecast highlights a 5% GDP growth in India and various emerging markets, indicating positive trends in the banking sectors of India and Indonesia. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPI)** made historic monthly acquisitions of Indian equities, reaching 661.35 billion rupees (\$8 billion) in December, according to National Securities Depository data. This surge catapulted **India's Nifty 50 and Sensex** benchmarks to fresh record highs. The first half of December alone witnessed a record fortnightly purchase of shares worth 427.33 billion rupees, attributed to lower U.S. bond yields and expectations of Federal Reserve interest rate cuts. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- The National Statistical Office (NSO) has released its first advance estimates projecting a robust **7.3% growth for India's GDP** in the fiscal year 2023-24. This surpasses the 7.2% growth recorded in the previous financial year. Notably, the construction sector is expected to lead with double-digit growth at 10.7%. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In the eagerly awaited **United Nations' World Economic Situation and Prospects 2024 report**, India emerges as a key player, projecting a GDP growth of 6.2% in the coming year. This slightly trails behind the 6.3% estimate for 2023, a testament to the country's robust domestic demand and the flourishing manufacturing and services sectors. South Asia, driven by India's prowess, is anticipated to witness a GDP surge of 5.2% in 2024 after a commendable 5.3% growth in 2023. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In the week concluding on December 29, India's foreign exchange reserves witnessed a substantial uptick, surging by \$2.759 billion, reaching a **total of \$623.2 billion**, as reported by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday. This follows a previous week's increase of \$4.471 billion, bringing the overall reserves to \$620.441 billion. Notably, in October 2021, India's forex kitty had achieved an unprecedented peak at \$645 billion. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India witnessed a sharp decline in its outward **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** commitments, dropping to \$2.25 billion in December 2023, as revealed by data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). This marks a significant downturn from the over \$4.12 billion recorded in December 2022 and a sequential decrease from \$4.0 billion in November 2023. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In December 2023, the **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)-based inflation** surged to a **nine-month high of 0.73%**, marking a significant rebound from the negative zone observed from April to October. This positive trajectory, a continuation from November's 0.26%, was primarily driven by notable increases in food prices, according to a statement by the Ministry of Commerce and Industry. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In response to the evolving dynamics of the global oil market, the Indian government has decided to slash the **windfall tax on domestically-produced crude oil**, effective January 16. The tax, levied as the Special Additional Excise Duty (SAED), has been reduced from Rs 2,300 per tonne to Rs 1,700 per tonne. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India's equity market has outpaced **Hong Kong's Hang Seng**, securing the fourth position globally with a market capitalization of \$4.33 trillion. This milestone, marking India's ascendancy, underscores the nation's robust economic standing. The **US remains the largest stock market** with a staggering \$50.86 trillion market cap, followed by China at \$8.44 trillion and Japan at \$6.36 trillion. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) released data, revealing that the **direct tax-to-GDP ratio** for the fiscal year 2022-23 (FY23) reached a remarkable 23-year high, standing at 6.11%. This surge was attributed to a substantial increase in direct tax collections by the government. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a positive turn, ICRA has revised its **bank credit growth estimates** for FY24 upwards to 14.9-15.3%, surpassing the previous projection of 12.8-13.0%. The surge is attributed to robust performance in the retail segment and non-banking finance companies (NBFCs), according to Anil Gupta, Senior Vice President at ICRA. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a notable development, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has revised its GDP growth estimate for India to **6.7% for the current financial year**, marking a 40 basis points increase from its earlier forecast of 6.3%. This optimistic adjustment is attributed to robust public investment and favorable labor market outcomes, as highlighted in the latest World Economic Outlook report. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a strategic move to bolster the **mobile phone manufacturing industry in India**, the Centre has announced a significant reduction in import duties on mobile phone components. The import duty on parts used for mobile phone manufacturing has been slashed to **10% from the earlier 15%**. This decision aligns with India's broader objectives to enhance its role in global supply chains and increase exports. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Business Current Affairs

- In December, UPI transactions soared by an impressive **42% year-on-year**, reaching an astounding value of **Rs 18 lakh crore**. The transaction volume witnessed a substantial **54%** rise, totaling **1,202 crore**. Remarkably, the month-on-month growth in UPI transaction volume was a substantial **7%**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a noteworthy alliance, **ITC**, a prominent Indian conglomerate, has joined forces with **Microsoft and Skymet** to address the escalating challenges faced by tobacco farmers in India due to climate change. The adverse impacts of climate change on agriculture are well-known, and the tobacco sector is no exception, suffering an estimated **loss of ₹800-900 crore in export revenues**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **India's electric vehicle (EV)** landscape is witnessing a groundbreaking development as **Ola Electric**, the IPO-bound electric scooter company, **secures eligibility for the government's Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme**. This achievement positions Ola Electric as a key player in the push towards sustainable transportation. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

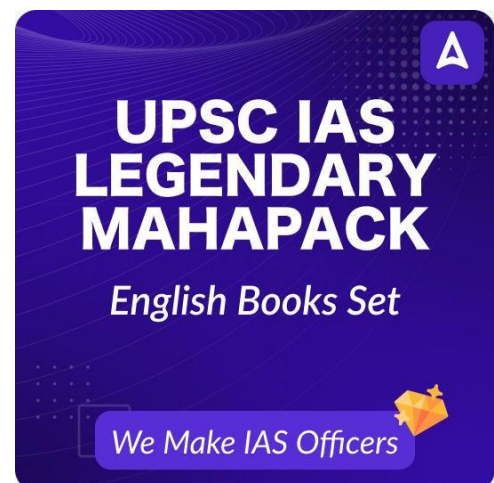
- In a significant development, Binny Bansal, co-founder of **Flipkart**, has ventured into the e-commerce space once again with his latest startup, **OppDoor**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)**, the Mumbai-based conglomerate with a diverse portfolio in energy and petrochemical businesses, concluded the year 2023 on a remarkable note. The company achieved a significant milestone by becoming the **first in India to produce ISCC-Plus certified chemically recycled polymers**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ)**, a prominent player in the ports and logistics sector, recently made significant announcements regarding its leadership structure. The company declared that **CEO Karan Adani would be stepping into the role of Managing Director**, succeeding Gautam Adani. In parallel, the company welcomed **Ashwani Gupta, former global Chief Operating Officer at Nissan Motors, as its new CEO**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **REC Limited**, a prominent Maharatna Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) established in 1969 under the **Ministry of Power**, has recently entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with **Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL)**. This collaboration aims to provide financial support of up to **Rs. 35,000 Crores** for a range of Infrastructure Projects over the next 5 years, showcasing the commitment of both entities to drive essential developments in the sector. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Adidas**, the renowned athletic footwear and apparel giant, is making strategic moves to enhance its global operations by establishing its first and only **Global Capacity Centre (GCC) in Asia outside of China**. This significant development underscores the growing trend of multinational corporations choosing India as a prime destination for setting up their GCCs, capitalizing on the country's abundant software skills. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)**, one of India's leading energy exploration and production companies, achieved a significant milestone on January 7 by commencing the **first oil production from the deep-water KG-DWN 98/2 Block**. Located in the Krishna Godavari (KG) basin off the Bay of Bengal on the **Kakinada coast**, this development marks a crucial step forward in India's energy landscape. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- A recent report by **CBRE-CREDAI** sheds light on the landscape of micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in India, revealing noteworthy trends and state-wise contributions. As of December 2023, the country boasts over 3 crore registered MSMEs, with **Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, and Uttar Pradesh** jointly constituting nearly 40% of this vibrant sector. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a positive development, **Power Finance Corporation (PFC)** witnessed a nearly one percent surge in early trade on January 10, following the green light from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to establish a finance company within **Gujarat's GIFT City**, an International Financial Services Centre (IFSC). ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking move, the **International Hockey Federation (FIH)** has sealed a significant media rights partnership with Viacom18, spanning the four-year period from 2023 to 2027. This exclusive agreement encompasses all FIH events, with the exception of the FIH Nations Cup. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **The World Bank** reveals a surprising resilience in the global economy, though shadows loom over the future, anticipating a **third consecutive year of slowdown** in 2024. After a robust rebound to 6.2% in 2021, global growth waned to 3.0% in 2022 and further to 2.6% in 2023. Projections indicate a continued deceleration to 2.4% in 2024 before a modest recovery to 2.7% in 2025, notably below the 3.1% average of the 2010s. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The semiconductor industry in India is witnessing a significant boost as **Simmtech**, a South Korean firm, announced its plans to set up a manufacturing plant in **Sanand, Gujarat**. With an investment of Rs 1,250 crore, Simmtech aims to contribute to the creation of a **robust semiconductor ecosystem in the state**. This development was disclosed by Union Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Ashwini Vaishnav, during the ongoing Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit in Gandhinagar. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Tata Consumer Products Ltd (TCPL)**, on January 12, revealed its plans to acquire a 100% stake in Capital Foods, renowned for brands such as '**Ching's Secret**' and '**Smith & Jones**,' for a substantial ₹5,100 crore. The strategic acquisition is structured in phases, with an initial 75% equity shareholding secured upfront and the remaining 25% to be acquired over the next three years. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Bengaluru-based **space tech startup Pixxel** marked a significant milestone on January 15 with the inauguration of its cutting-edge spacecraft manufacturing facility, named "**MegaPixxel**." The 30,000 sq ft facility is poised to revolutionize satellite production capabilities in India. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Ministry of Home Affairs in India has revoked the **Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Amendment Act, 2020**, registration of the **Centre for Policy Research (CPR)** in New Delhi, alleging violations. The leading public policy research institution, spearheaded by Congress leader Mani Shankar Aiyar's daughter, Yamini Aiyar, has faced government scrutiny for purportedly breaching FCRA regulations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- The **Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO)** has recently issued a circular stating the removal of **Aadhaar** from the list of acceptable documents for proof of **date of birth (DoB)** for correction and updation purposes. This decision, effective from January 16, 2024, follows a directive from the **Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)** and aligns with the Aadhaar Act, 2016, which does not recognize Aadhaar as proof of date of birth. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Taiwanese tech giant **Foxconn**, a long-time Apple Inc. partner, is diversifying from China and joining forces with **HCL Group** to establish a chip packaging and testing facility in India. Foxconn's subsidiary, **Foxconn Hon Hai Technology India Mega Development**, will invest \$37.2 million for a 40% stake, with the remaining held by HCL. This strategic move comes amidst Foxconn's increased investments in India, motivated by geopolitical tensions with China. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **L&T Construction's railways** strategic business group has clinched a significant contract valued between **₹10,000 to ₹15,000 crore** for a pivotal segment of the Mumbai-Ahmedabad bullet train project. The 'mega' order, received from a Japanese agency overseeing the **Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail Project (MAHSR)**, entails the construction of 508 route km of high-speed electrification works. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)**, a prominent name in the global IT services sector, has achieved a significant milestone by being rated the second most valuable IT services brand in the world, according to the **2024 Global 500 IT Services Ranking by Brand Finance**. This achievement underscores TCS's commitment to innovation, sustainability, and global expansion, positioning it as a leader in the technology industry. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **DLabs at the Indian School of Business (ISB)** has announced the initiation of '**Build for Billions**', a startup accelerator program centered around financial inclusion for the informal economy. This innovative program has been launched in partnership with the **Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH) and Union Bank of India**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move towards fostering international digital transactions, **Google India Digital Services** and **NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL)** have joined hands to propel UPI payments beyond the borders of India. The recently signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two entities is poised to revolutionize the way Indian travellers engage in financial transactions abroad. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a major development at the World Economic Forum 2024, the Adani Group unveiled plans to invest Rs 50,000 crore over the next decade in establishing a **1 GW hyperscale data centre in Maharashtra**. The conglomerate's flagship company, Adani Enterprises Ltd, and the Maharashtra government formalized this commitment through a memorandum of understanding (MoU) signed in the presence of Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde and Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a strategic move, **Tata Sons Private Limited** has successfully utilized its Right to Match card, retaining the prestigious title sponsorship of the **Indian Premier League (IPL)** for the upcoming five seasons, spanning **2024 to 2028**. This development follows the Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) release of an Invitation to Tender (ITT) for Title Sponsor Rights in late December 2023. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, **four electricity distribution companies (DISCOMs)** from Delhi and Uttar Pradesh have achieved the prestigious **A+ rating** in the latest **Consumer Service Rating of Discoms (CSRSD) report**. The report, unveiled by Power Minister RK Singh, is a comprehensive evaluation of DISCOMs across the country, aimed at enhancing their accountability towards consumers. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Sony issued a notice terminating the merger agreement with Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd. (ZEEL) and Culver Max Entertainment Private Limited (CME), formerly known as Sony Pictures Networks India Private Limited. The **\$10-billion deal**, signed on December 22, 2021, faced challenges in meeting closing conditions within the specified timeframe. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has given the nod to significant business transactions, signaling a shifting landscape in the corporate sector. Among the approved deals is the **JSW Group's** strategic move to acquire a substantial **38% stake in MG Motor India**. Facilitated through JSW Ventures Singapore, a newly established subsidiary of JSW International Tradecorp Pte Ltd, the acquisition is poised to reshape the dynamics of the automotive industry. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Air India**, a subsidiary of the Tata Group, incurred a hefty fine of Rs **1.1 crore** from the **Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA)**, the country's aviation regulator, for safety breaches. This penalty was imposed following a pilot's report concerning insufficient emergency oxygen supply on Air India's B777 aircraft, which are crucially utilized for long-range flights. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- In a significant development, **Zomato Payments Private Limited**, the subsidiary of popular food delivery platform Zomato, has obtained the much-coveted payment aggregator (PA) license from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI). The approval, dated January 24, 2024, empowers Zomato Payments to facilitate ecommerce transactions through its platform. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)**, a Government of India enterprise under the administrative control of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, has taken a remarkable step towards fostering transparency and promoting renewable energy initiatives. On January 25, 2024, IREDA unveiled 'Pahal,' the insightful house journal of its Vigilance Department, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to accountability and sustainability.
- **Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA)**, a Government of India enterprise under the administrative control of the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy, has taken a remarkable step towards fostering transparency and promoting renewable energy initiatives. On January 25, 2024, IREDA unveiled 'Pahal,' the insightful house journal of its Vigilance Department, marking a significant milestone in its commitment to accountability and sustainability. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **THDC India Limited (THDCIL)**, a prominent Power Sector PSU, proudly unveiled **India's Largest Electrolyser End Fuel Cell-based Green Hydrogen Pilot Project** at its office complex in Rishikesh. The initiative aligns with the "National Green Hydrogen Mission," showcasing THDCIL's commitment to sustainable energy practices. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **GAIL**, India's leading gas company, has made significant strides in enhancing its liquefied natural gas (LNG) portfolio through a recent partnership with the United Arab Emirates' (UAE) **ADNOC Gas**. Under this deal, GAIL is set to procure 0.5 million tonnes of LNG annually for a decade, marking a crucial step towards meeting India's growing demand for natural gas. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Toyota**, the renowned Japanese automaker, has once again secured its position as the **world's top-selling automaker in 2023**. This achievement underscores Toyota's continued dominance in the global automotive market and its commitment to innovation, quality, and customer satisfaction. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **NTPC Green Energy Ltd (NGEL)**, a subsidiary of NTPC, recently inked a groundbreaking Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) worth **Rs 80,000 crore with the Maharashtra government**. This strategic collaboration aims to pioneer green hydrogen projects within the state, aligning closely with the government's vision outlined in its Green Investment Plan. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

International Current Affairs

- **China** has recently named **Dong Jun** as its **new defense minister**, marking a significant shift in the country's military leadership. This move comes two months after the official removal of his predecessor, **Li Shangfu**, who was last seen in public in August. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **BRICS**, the group of emerging-market nations comprising **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**, is poised to undergo a significant expansion on **January 1**. South Africa's envoy to the bloc revealed that Saudi Arabia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, and Egypt have accepted invitations to join, effectively doubling the organization's membership. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant economic development, Goods and Services Tax (GST) collections for December 2023 reached **₹1,64,882 crore**, marking a notable 10.28% surge compared to the ₹1,49,507 crore collected in the same month the previous year. This accomplishment underscores the seventh consecutive month in the fiscal year where average GST collections have exceeded **₹1.6-lakh crore**. Notably, November 2023 witnessed GST collections at ₹1,67,929 crore, contributing to the overall positive trend. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** is once again in the spotlight as **President Felix Tshisekedi** secures victory in the highly contested December 20 election. However, the results have sparked condemnation from various opposition candidates who label the election a "sham" and demand a rerun. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Cash-strapped Pakistan is poised to receive a crucial **\$700 million bailout tranche** from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) during the Executive Board meeting on January 11. The disbursement, under the existing **\$3 billion Stand-By Arrangement (SBA)**, is expected to provide much-needed financial support to Pakistan's struggling economy. ([Read the Complete Article](#))



- **Chad's transitional government** has taken a significant step towards establishing civilian rule by appointing former opposition leader **Succes Masra as the prime minister of Chad.** ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- France's development agency, **AFD**, and Germany's **KfW Bank** are reportedly in talks with India to extend a **€100 million loan** to support the **country's urban infrastructure plan**, specifically the **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) 2.0**. Negotiations for the loan are scheduled for early 2024, with the signing expected to take place in February. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Russian President **Vladimir Putin** officially marked the commencement of **Russia's 2024 BRICS Chairmanship**. During this handover, President Putin emphasized the motto for the upcoming tenure, **"Strengthening Multilateralism for Equitable Global Development and Security."** This signifies Russia's commitment to fostering collaboration among the BRICS nations – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a pioneering move, France has become the first European Union member to introduce fully **digital Schengen visas for the 2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris**. Commencing on January 1, 2024, the newly launched "Olympic Consulate" system operates through the France-Visas portal, streamlining the application process for 15,000 international athletes, 9,000 journalists, and foreign delegations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a surprising turn of events, **Queen Margrethe II of Denmark**, in her **New Year's speech**, revealed her decision to abdicate the **throne after 52 years of rule**. The announcement, made on the **14th of January**, marks the anniversary of her own accession to the **throne at the age of 31**, following the death of her **father, King Frederik IX**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina** has been re-elected for a fifth term, marking a significant milestone in the country's political landscape. The ruling Awami League, under Hasina's leadership, has triumphed once again, securing more than half of the parliamentary seats. This victory reaffirms Sheikh Hasina's position as the world's longest-serving female head of government. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Vietnamese electric vehicle giant **VinFast Auto Ltd** made a significant announcement on Sunday, revealing plans to establish an integrated **electric vehicle facility in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu**. With an eye on breaking into the world's third-largest automobile market, the automaker confirmed its commitment to invest a staggering **\$2 billion** in the state. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- A groundbreaking development in agricultural technology has emerged from the **laboratories of Linköping University in Sweden**. Scientists have unveiled an **electrically conductive "soil"** engineered to foster exceptional growth in crops, particularly barley seedlings, **marking a potential 50 per cent surge in growth within a mere 15-day period**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Tropical Cyclone Alvaro** made landfall in southwest **Madagascar** on January 1st, 2024, marking the first significant cyclone impact on the island nation in the ongoing 2023-2024 cyclone season for the **southwest Indian Ocean region**. This season, spanning late October to May, has brought unprecedented challenges to the region, with Alvaro being the latest cyclone to wreak havoc. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- French President Emmanuel Macron has made a significant political move by appointing **Gabriel Attal as the new prime minister of France**. At 34 years old, Attal not only becomes the youngest prime minister in the country's history but also the **first openly gay official to hold this prestigious position**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The United States, led by Secretary of State Antony Blinken, has identified several nations as **'Countries of Particular Concern'** due to severe violations of religious freedom. This decision aligns with the **International Religious Freedom Act of 1998**, emphasizing the commitment to advancing freedom of religion globally. **China, North Korea, Pakistan, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, Nicaragua, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Myanmar** have been labeled as 'Countries of Particular Concern.' **Algeria, Azerbaijan, the Central African Republic, Comoros, and Vietnam** are placed on the 'Special Watch List' for tolerating severe religious freedom violations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Singapore's Changi Airport** has once again been crowned the **World's Best Airport for the year 2023**, according to the prestigious awards presented by the air transport research firm, Skytrax. After losing the title in the past two years to Qatar's Hamad International Airport, Changi Airport reclaimed its status as the best in the world, marking the **twelfth time** it has received this coveted accolade. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S)** declared that the year gone by was the hottest on record, significantly surpassing previous temperatures and potentially marking the **warmest period in the last 100,000 years**. The announcement sheds light on the alarming trajectory of global warming, with each passing month breaking climate records and raising concerns about the consequences for the planet. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant political development, Bhutanese voters have overwhelmingly chosen **Tshering Tobgay as their Prime Minister for a second term**. The **People's Democratic Party (PDP)**, led by Mr. Tobgay, secured a landslide victory, winning nearly two-thirds of the seats in the recent election, as announced by the election commission on January 10. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- **South Korea's parliament** made history by passing a groundbreaking bill that **bans the eating and selling of dog meat**. This move marks the end of a centuries-old practice that has been increasingly criticized in the face of growing support for animal welfare. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Chinese President **Xi Jinping** and Maldivian President **Mohamed Muizzu** recently held significant talks, culminating in the signing of **20 key agreements** that span various areas of cooperation. The leaders announced the elevation of bilateral ties to a Comprehensive Strategic Cooperative Partnership, demonstrating the mutual commitment to enhancing diplomatic relations between the two nations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **China** has recently sent a groundbreaking astronomical satellite named **Einstein Probe (EP)** into space on a mission to observe mysterious transient phenomena in the universe. The satellite, **shaped like a lotus in full bloom**, employs innovative **X-ray detection technology inspired by the functioning of a lobster eye**. Launched from the Xichang Satellite Launch Centre in southwest China's Sichuan Province, this mission marks a significant step in unraveling the secrets of the cosmos. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **New Zealand's** veteran pace bowler **Tim Southee** has created history by becoming the first bowler to take **150 wickets in T20 Internationals**. This milestone was achieved during a T20 match against Pakistan, where New Zealand secured a convincing victory. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking election, Taiwanese voters have chosen **William Lai Ching-te**, a pro-sovereignty candidate from the **Democratic Progressive Party (DPP)**, as their president, marking a significant departure from China. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Denmark** witnessed a historic moment on January 14 as **King Frederik X ascended the throne**, succeeding his mother, **Queen Margrethe II**, who formally abdicated after an impressive 52 years as the monarch. The capital brimmed with anticipation and excitement as large crowds gathered to witness this significant event in the nation's history. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Bernardo Arévalo** was officially sworn in as the **President of Guatemala** on **January 15, 2024**, overcoming months of political challenges and efforts to derail his inauguration. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **World Economic Forum (WEF) 2024** kicked off on January 15 in Davos, Switzerland, where global leaders are slated to address a peculiar concern known as **Disease X**. This enigmatic term refers to an illness triggered by an unidentified yet potent microbial threat. A panel of the World Health Organization (WHO) is set to collaborate with other health officials to deliberate on this mysterious health menace. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **China's Betavolt**, a cutting-edge startup, has introduced a groundbreaking nuclear battery that claims to provide **uninterrupted electricity for 50 years** without the need for charging or maintenance. The miniaturization of atomic energy sets this battery apart as the first of its kind globally, challenging conventional views on nuclear technology. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels** have intensified their attacks on ships in the **Red Sea**, citing revenge against Israel for its actions in Gaza. This has prompted the **US and UK** to launch strikes against Houthi targets in Yemen, leading to concerns about a broader regional conflict. The attacks have disrupted global trade routes, raising fears of a significant impact on the world economy. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **China faces a demographic crisis as its population dropped for the second year in a row in 2023**. This decline is attributed to a falling birth rate and an increase in deaths, especially after the lifting of COVID-19 restrictions. China's total population stood at **1.4 billion**, with the country falling behind India as the world's most populous nation. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)**, in collaboration with the Government of Denmark, has introduced a groundbreaking initiative in Ukraine, the establishment of **"green rooms"** at the National Police headquarters in **Zaporizhzhia Oblast**. This innovative project aims to create a safe and supportive environment for effective communication between law enforcement officers and child survivors or witnesses of crime. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move towards sustainable development, the **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)** and the **European Union (EU)** have allocated grants totaling over **US\$420,000** (approximately 1.6 million PGK) to support initiatives aimed at combating deforestation, improving food and nutrition security, and adapting to the impacts of climate change. These grants are set to benefit communities across six districts in **Enga Province, Papua New Guinea**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a recent announcement, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** has officially certified **Cabo Verde as a malaria-free country**. This accomplishment positions Cabo Verde alongside Mauritius and Algeria as the third nation in the WHO African region to achieve malaria-free status. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Japan** has marked a significant achievement in space exploration by becoming the **fifth country to successfully soft-land a spacecraft on the Moon**. The Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM) touched down near the Shioli crater, south of the lunar equator, utilizing precision technology that allowed it to land closer to its target site than any previous mission. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- In a remarkable display of goodwill and humanitarian assistance, the **Indian government** has stepped forward to aid the **Afghan people** in confronting the locust menace. The generous support comes in the form of **40,000 litres of Malathion**, an environmentally friendly pesticide known for its efficacy in arid regions and minimal water usage. The supplies were sent through **Iran's Chabahar port**, showcasing a collaborative effort to address a pressing agricultural concern. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Iranian army** marked a significant milestone in its defense capabilities as it **formally received a substantial number of domestically developed reconnaissance and combat drones** in a ceremony held on January 23, 2024. The event, attended by the Iranian Army's Chief Commander **Abdollah Mousavi** and Defense Minister Mohammad-Reza Ashtiani, showcased the latest advancements in unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) technology. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking move, **Saudi Arabia** is preparing to open its first alcohol store, exclusively for diplomats. This significant development represents a notable shift in the Kingdom's approach to alcohol, which has traditionally been banned under its strict interpretation of Islamic law. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking turn of events, **Kenneth Smith**, a convicted murderer, has become the **first person in the United States to be executed by nitrogen gas**. The execution, which took place in Alabama, introduces a new method intended to be the most painless and humane alternative to the previously predominant lethal injection. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- French President **Emmanuel Macron** concluded his two-day visit to India, participating as the chief guest in the 75th Republic Day celebrations. The visit aimed at strengthening strategic ties between India and France, featuring a 40-member delegation and significant diplomatic engagements. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a disputed electoral process, **Comoros President Azali Assoumani** has claimed victory for a fourth term with 63% of the vote, as announced by the electoral body Ceni. However, the opposition, boycotting the poll, decries it as "fraudulent." ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Bhutan's liberal leader, **Tshering Tobgay**, from the People's Democratic Party (PDP), has commenced his second term as prime minister, following recent elections in the nation. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **QatarEnergy and Exceleerate Energy** have finalized a pivotal 15-year LNG Sale and Purchase Agreement (SPA) with the goal of providing LNG to Bangladesh. Under the SPA, Exceleerate will secure up to one million tons per annum (MTPA) of LNG from QatarEnergy. The deliveries, set to commence from January 2026, will be directed to floating storage and regasification units in Bangladesh. The agreement encompasses Exceleerate's procurement of 0.85 MTPA of LNG in 2026 and 2027, and one MTPA from 2028 to 2040. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a historic ceremony, **Sultan Ibrahim of Johor** state has been installed as **Malaysia's 17th king**. This event marks a significant moment in the nation's constitutional monarchy system, where the throne rotates among the rulers of the nine Malay states. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a surprising move, the military regimes in **Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger** have announced their immediate withdrawal from the **Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)**, citing the bloc as a threat to member states. The Sahel nations, facing challenges of jihadist violence and poverty, have had strained relations with ECOWAS since recent coups. Despite being founding members in 1975, they were suspended and faced heavy sanctions for the overthrow of civilian governments. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant milestone, the **World Health Organization (WHO)** has issued its first-ever certificates acknowledging advancements in eliminating trans fatty acids (TFA), both industrially produced and naturally occurring. Five countries—**Denmark, Lithuania, Poland, Saudi Arabia, and Thailand**—have been commended for their pioneering efforts in demonstrating effective policies and robust monitoring and enforcement mechanisms in their TFA elimination strategies. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

National Current Affairs

- The **Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (Divyangjan)**, under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, Government of India, organised a distinctive event aimed at showcasing the products and craftsmanship of Divyang entrepreneurs and artisans from across the nation. The event, titled '**Divya Kala Mela**,' took place in Surat, Gujarat, spanning from December 29, 2023, to January 7, 2024. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **10th phase of Sagar Parikrama**, a government initiative focused on the welfare of fishing communities and coastal development, took place from **January 1st to 6th, 2024**, traversing various locations in **Andhra Pradesh and Puducherry**. This event marks a significant step towards addressing the issues faced by fishermen and fish farmers and facilitating their economic upliftment. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** laid the foundation stone for a slew of development projects worth over **Rs 20,000 crore in Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu**. The projects encompass various sectors, including rail connectivity, roads, oil and gas, and shipping, and are poised to contribute significantly to the state's progress. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- India's Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) has launched the **'National Single Window System (NSWS),'** a unified portal designed by **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** to streamline the import of medical devices. The initiative aims to create a centralized platform for investors, enhancing the ease of doing business. The NSWS, developed by TCS through Invest India, becomes operational from January 1. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi marked a historic moment as he dedicated the **Rs 400 crore Demonstration Fast Reactor Fuel Reprocessing Plant (DFRP)** at the **Indira Gandhi Centre for Atomic Research (IGCAR), Kalpakkam**, to the nation. This facility is a significant step towards advancing India's nuclear capabilities, designed to reprocess fuel from **Prototype Fast Breeder Reactors (PFBR)**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move towards agricultural reform, **Union Cooperation Minister Amit Shah** inaugurated a **tur dal procurement portal**, enabling farmers to register and sell their produce to the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Ltd (NAFED) and the National Cooperative Consumers' Federation of India Limited (NCCF). The portal guarantees a minimum support price (MSP) or market price for the farmers. Minister Shah, during the launch, also highlighted plans to extend this facility for urad, masoor, and maize farmers in the future. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Indian government plans to establish **'Bharat Park,'** a dedicated trade zone in the UAE, featuring showrooms and warehouses to display and store Indian-made goods for a global audience. **Union Minister Piyush Goyal** emphasizes the zone's role in facilitating international purchases of Indian products, with secure transactions in the UAE. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal announced a significant government investment of **Rs 60,000 crore by 2047** in the development of river cruise tourism and eco-friendly vessels. This initiative aims to boost tourism, enhance water transport, and create employment opportunities. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Inland Waterways Authority of India**, operating under the Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW), created history by hosting the **inaugural meeting of the Inland Waterways Development Council (IWDC) in Kolkata**. This significant event, spearheaded by Union Minister of Ports, Shipping & Waterways, **Sarbananda Sonowal**, brought together representatives from waterway states, central government officials, and experts aboard the MV Ganga Queen. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Union Health Minister **Dr Mansukh Mandaviya** recently inaugurated **'Prasadam,'** the **nation's first healthy and hygienic food street**, in a grand ceremony at Neelkanth Van, Mahakal Lok, **Ujjain, Madhya Pradesh**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Hyderabad's Begumpet Airport** is set to host the aviation extravaganza, **Wings India 2024, from January 18 to 21**, marking the country's most significant civil aviation event. Jointly organized by the **Ministry of Civil Aviation (MOCA) and the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce & Indian Industry (FICCI)**, this four-day biennial spectacle promises to be a showcase of cutting-edge aviation technology and machinery. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- This December, **India's 43rd Antarctic expedition**, led by the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, welcomed scientists from **Mauritius and Bangladesh** onboard, marking a significant step in international polar research collaboration. This initiative stems from the maiden **Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) Oceanographers and Hydrographers conference** held in 2022, which laid the groundwork for scientific partnerships among member nations. This conference facilitated joint endeavors in oceanographic and hydrographic studies, paving the way for further cooperation. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Nashik, Maharashtra**, recently hosted the prestigious **27th National Youth Festival from January 12 to 16, 2024**. This significant event was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The festival, coinciding with the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda, celebrated youthful talent and skills across the nation. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurates the new campus of the **National Academy of Customs, Indirect Taxes & Narcotics (NACIN)** at Palasamudram in Andhra Pradesh's Sri Sathya Sai district. The event is scheduled for January 16, marking a significant development in the region's educational infrastructure. NACIN, spread over 500 acres, is dedicated to capacity building in indirect taxation and narcotics control administration. This national-level, world-class training institute will train officials from the Indian Revenue Service (Custom & Indirect Taxes), central allied services, state governments, and partner nations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, India is poised to secure exploration and development rights for **five lithium blocks in Argentina**, marking its second international foray into critical minerals after a partnership with Australia in 2022. India has taken a crucial step towards reducing its ₹24,000 crore lithium import dependency, primarily sourced from China. The deal finalized between **Khanij Bidesh India Ltd. (KABIL)** and **Catamarca Minera Y Energética Sociedad Del Estado (CAMYEN)**, an Argentine state-owned mining and energy company. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- President of India, **Smt Droupadi Murmu**, inaugurated the **5th Edition of the Meghalaya Games** in Tura, Meghalaya. In her address, the President highlighted the tremendous potential for the development of sports and sportspersons in the North East region, citing its rich tradition of a strong sports culture. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- India is set to **launch a year-long festival**, seeking global connections through the celebration of Ramayan and its cultural significance. Coinciding with the Ayodhya Ram Temple inauguration, it marks the commencement of a cultural extravaganza **uniting the world through Ramayana**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Kashi Ropeway in Varanasi**, inspired by the theme of **Lord Shiva**, is set to be a landmark project combining spirituality and modern transportation. This article provides an overview of this unique initiative, intended to enhance the travel experience in one of India's most sacred cities. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Khadi and Village Industries Commission (KVIC)** has recently unveiled a new clothing range called '**Sanatan Khadi Vastra**' at its flagship store in Connaught Place, New Delhi. This launch aligns with the broader vision of promoting Khadi as a symbol of national pride and sustainable fashion. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a remarkable development for **India's wildlife conservation**, the first-ever confirmed sighting of the rare **Tibetan Brown Bear (scientific name: Ursus arctos pruinosus)** was recorded in the high altitudes of **North Sikkim**. This discovery, made by the joint efforts of the Sikkim Forest Department and WWF-India, marks a significant addition to the country's mammal diversity and highlights the ecological richness of the region. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Union Minister for Civil Aviation **Shri Jyotiraditya M Scindia** inaugurated **Wings India 2024**, Asia's largest aviation expo, at Begumpet Airport in Hyderabad. This event marks a significant milestone in the Indian aviation sector, highlighting its growth and future potential. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a noteworthy development aimed at strengthening cultural ties, the **Government of India**, under the **New Education Policy**, has decided to include **Farsi (Persian)** as one of the **nine classical languages of India**. This announcement was made by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar during a two-day visit to Iran, highlighting the cultural, literary, and linguistic connections between Iran and India. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move, the **Ministry of Education in India** has announced new guidelines for coaching centres. These guidelines come in response to growing concerns about student welfare, unregulated growth of private coaching, and rising cases of student suicides and other incidents linked to coaching centres. Students below **16 years old cannot be enrolled**, and admission is allowed only for post-secondary school examinations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Prime Minister, **Shri Narendra Modi**, marked a historic day in Solapur, Maharashtra, by laying the foundation stone for **8 AMRUT projects and dedicating over 90,000 completed houses under PMAY-Urban**. The event also witnessed the distribution of PM-SVANIDHI benefits to 10,000 beneficiaries, showcasing the government's commitment to inclusive development. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a momentous occasion, the Union Minister of Ayush and Ports, Shipping & Waterways, Shri Sarbananda Sonowal, laid the foundation stone for '**Ayush Diksha**,' a pioneering center dedicated to the development of future Ayush professionals. The ceremony took place at the Central Ayurveda Research Institute campus in Bhubaneswar. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a historic first, the **2024 Republic Day Parade in India** will witness the participation of two all-women contingents from the defence forces, marking a significant milestone in the country's journey towards gender equality and empowerment in the military. These contingents will include members from the **Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force**, showcasing the seamless integration and valour of Indian armed forces. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move towards promoting multilingualism in education, the central government has introduced the '**Anuvadini**' app, an Artificial Intelligence-based platform. The initiative aims to make study materials for all school and higher education courses available in digital form, specifically in Indian languages listed in the **8th Schedule of the Indian Constitution**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a historic moment, President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated Kaushal Bhawan, symbolizing India's unwavering commitment to empowering its youth through skill development. Under the aegis of the **Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship (MSDE)**, the Bhawan is set to catalyze the realization of aspirations and nurture the nation's young talent, steering India toward a more skilled future. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **14th edition of the Annual All India Police Commando Competition (AIPCC)** began on January 22, 2024 at the Greyhounds Training Centre in Kapuluppada, Visakhapatnam. Elite commando forces from 16 states are participating in this week-long competition. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for projects worth over **Rs 19,100 crores in Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh**. The diverse projects spanned crucial sectors such as rail, road, oil and gas, and urban development. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **Diamond Jubilee celebration of the Supreme Court** of India and unveiled key technology initiatives during the event held at the Supreme Court auditorium in Delhi. The occasion marked the beginning of the **Supreme Court's 75th year**, coinciding with the 75th year of the Indian Constitution. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- **The Republic Day Parade 2024** witnessed a remarkable tableau that captured the essence of India as the **'Mother of Democracy.'** This stunning representation not only enthralled the audience but also clinched the **first spot in the parade**, symbolizing India's rich democratic heritage. The tableau of the **Ministry of Culture** has secured the first prize at the Republic Day Parade 2024. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move, the President of India nominated **Shri Satnam Singh Sandhu** as a member of the Rajya Sabha. This decision recognizes Sandhu's remarkable contributions to education, philanthropy, and community development. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

States Current Affairs

- **Gujarat**, known for its rich cultural heritage and commitment to health and wellness, achieved a remarkable feat on New Year's morning by making an indelible mark in the **Guinness Book of World Records**. The state hosted the largest simultaneous Surya Namaskar performance, involving over 4,000 participants from 108 locations across 51 categories. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking move for the state of **Uttar Pradesh**, Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath inaugurated the **state's first floating air-conditioned restaurant** during his visit to Sangam City. The restaurant, managed by the **Uttar Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation (UPSTDC)**, is set to redefine the dining experience for visitors on the picturesque Yamuna river. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Chief Minister Hemant Soren of **Jharkhand** announced a reduction in the qualifying age for old-age pensions. The decision primarily targets tribals and Dalits, lowering the age threshold **from 60 to 50 years**. This bold initiative **aims to provide financial support to a broader segment of the population**, acknowledging the specific challenges faced by these communities. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant step towards environmental sustainability, **Assam Chief Minister Himanta Biswa Sarma** flagged off **200 electric buses from Guwahati**. This initiative marks one of the state government's most substantial efforts to create a pollution-free environment in Assam. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- For the **third** consecutive year, **Uttar Pradesh** has achieved the **highest entry rate on the Inter-Operable Criminal Justice System (ICJS) platform**, showcasing the state's commitment to leveraging technology in the administration of justice. The ICJS platform, a brainchild of the Supreme Court's e-committee and implemented by the **Ministry of Home Affairs**, plays a pivotal role in enhancing the efficiency of the criminal justice system in India. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Punjab**, known for its vibrant culture and rich heritage, has achieved a significant milestone in road safety. The state has become the **first in India to meticulously map all 784 accident black spots using the Mappls App**, a cutting-edge navigation system developed by MapMyIndia. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Assam government** is gearing up for the **fifth edition of 'Gunotsav 2024'**, a comprehensive state-wide assessment aimed at evaluating the performance of approximately 40 lakh students across government schools. The initiative, slated to run from January 3 to February 8, 2024, is poised to play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of education and improving learning outcomes in the state. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a landmark decision, the **Maharashtra government** appointed **Rashmi Shukla**, a distinguished 1988 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, as the **Director General of Police (DGP)**. This appointment is groundbreaking as Ms. Shukla becomes the first woman to hold this prestigious position in the state. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Tamil Nadu government, led by Chief Minister MK Stalin, revealed its ambitious vision for the state to achieve a **\$1 trillion economy by 2030** during the **Global Investors Meet** in Chennai on January 7. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Mulugu district of Telangana** has become the stage for an unexpected archaeological revelation following the devastating floods in July 2023. Amidst the aftermath of the natural disaster, a team of amateur historians stumbled upon a **collection of paleolithic quartzite tools** that have not only captivated the local community but also pushed back the understanding of human habitations in Telangana and central India. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- West Bengal Chief Minister **Mamata Banerjee** has recently introduced a comprehensive social welfare scheme named **"Yogyasree."** The initiative aims to provide free training modules for **Scheduled Caste (SC) and Scheduled Tribe (ST) students in West Bengal**, specifically targeting entrance and competitive examinations. This move comes ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, reflecting the government's commitment to educational empowerment. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In the heart of **Odisha's Mayurbhanj district**, a unique culinary tradition has thrived for centuries. Locally known as **'Kai Chutney'**, this savoury delight is crafted using red weaver ants, scientifically identified as **Oecophylla smaragdina**. These ants, infamous for their painful sting, are harvested from the lush forests of Mayurbhanj, including the renowned Similipal forests, Asia's second-largest biosphere. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- Chhattisgarh Government will launch the Ramlala Darshan Scheme, a pilgrimage to the newly built Ram Temple at Ayodhya. The decision was made during a state cabinet meeting held in Raipur. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Maharashtra government has established a crucial new wildlife habitat in Sangli district, aptly named the **Atpadi Conservation Reserve**. Spanning a compact 9.48 sq. km, this reserve prioritizes the protection of the endangered 'canid' family, including wild dogs, wolves, jackals, and foxes. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the **27th National Youth Festival in Nashik**, Maharashtra, on January 12th, 2024. This annual event honors the inspiring ideals of Swami Vivekananda and empowers young minds across the nation. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Naveen Patnaik**, achieved a significant milestone with the inauguration of the **Malkangiri airport** in the southwestern region of the state. This strategic initiative is designed to **enhance connectivity and foster development in the tribal-dominated areas**, marking a crucial step forward in the region's progress. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant stride towards bolstering Gujarat's infrastructure, the **Shanghai-based New Development Bank (NDB)** inked an agreement during the Vibrant Gujarat Summit, pledging a substantial \$500 million loan to the Gujarat government. This financial infusion is earmarked for the **Mukhayamantri Gram Sadak Yojana**, a pivotal project in the state. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Government of Maharashtra** has recently declared the establishment of a new Conservation Reserve in the Atpadi region of Sangli district, named the '**Atpadi Conservation Reserve**'. This significant development is a step forward in the conservation of wildlife and biodiversity in the region. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Pench Tiger Reserve** in Maharashtra has made history by securing recognition as **India's inaugural Dark Sky Park**, marking its position as the fifth in Asia. This prestigious acknowledgment underscores the reserve's unwavering commitment to protecting the sanctity of the night sky and creating an optimal setting for astronomy enthusiasts. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a spectacular display of talent, Madhya Pradesh emerged as the undisputed overall champion at the **first-ever Beach Games 2024** hosted in Diu. The landlocked state secured an impressive total of 18 medals, including 7 golds, showcasing the depth of its athletic prowess. The competition, unfolding from January 4-11 at the pristine **Ghoghla Beach**, featured 1404 young athletes from 28 states and Union Territories engaging in various disciplines. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Kerala Drug Control Department** has taken a proactive step to combat the growing threat of **antimicrobial resistance (AMR)** through **Operation Amrith** (Antimicrobial Resistance Intervention For Total Health). This initiative **aims to curb the overuse of antibiotics** in the state by conducting surprise raids in pharmacies and detecting over-the-counter (OTC) sales of antibiotics without a doctor's prescription. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Tamil Nadu**, a lively state in South India renowned for its cultural richness and traditional festivities, kicked off the **Jallikattu competition** in the village of Avaniyapuram within Madurai district. The spirited audience erupted with cheers as the traditional and widely-loved sport unfolded. Jallikattu, a highlight of the Pongal harvest festival held in the second week of January, is poised to extend its excitement over a **three-day period** with Avaniyapuram hosting the first day, followed by Palamedu on the second day and Alanganallur on the third. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a momentous event, Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi** inaugurated **three pivotal infrastructure projects** in Kochi, Kerala, signaling a significant stride towards transforming India's ports, shipping, and waterways sector. These projects, **collectively worth over Rs 4,000 crore**, align with the Prime Minister's vision to enhance the nation's maritime capabilities and foster self-sufficiency. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **SMPP (Shree Mandir Parikrama Prakalpa)** introduces a **75-meter-wide space around the temple**, referred to as the **heritage corridor**. This expansive area has been meticulously divided into **nine distinct zones**, each serving a specific purpose aimed at **enhancing the overall experience for visitors and preserving the cultural heritage** surrounding the Shree Jagannath Temple. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move to boost fish production and promote sustainable fishing, Union Fisheries Minister **Parshottam Rupala** inaugurated an artificial reef project in **Vizhinjam, Kerala**. This initiative aims to double the income of fishermen by enhancing fish stocks and contributing to the economic well-being of the local fishing community. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Arunachal Pradesh**, nestled in the northeastern part of India, boasts a vibrant cultural mosaic and unparalleled biodiversity. The **Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival (PPHF)** serves as a testament to this diversity, bringing together communities, traditions, and conservation efforts. Let's delve into the intricacies of this festival, explore the Nyishi tribe, and uncover the conservation initiatives contributing to the region's ecological balance. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- The **Andhra Pradesh government** is set to unveil the **world's tallest statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, the esteemed architect of the Indian Constitution, in a grand ceremony today in Vijayawada. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- After a hiatus of nine years, **Moh-Juj**, the traditional buffalo fights, have made a comeback in **Assam**. This revival, held during the Magh Bihu festival in mid-January 2024, marks a significant cultural reclamation in Assam. The Assam Government's approval, along with strict Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), ensures a balance between cultural preservation and animal welfare. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee inaugurated the **47th International Kolkata Book Fair** on January 18, amidst a drizzle that posed challenges for last-minute preparations for several stall owners. Despite the weather, the event kicked off at the **Boi Mela Prangan in Central Park, Salt Lake**, marking an early start compared to the previous edition when the gates opened on January 30. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Assam government** recently launched a financial assistance scheme, the **Mukhyamantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyaan (MMUA)**, with the aim of empowering rural women entrepreneurs. The program is designed to **provide financial assistance to women** who aspire to embark on their entrepreneurial journey independently, beyond their association with Self-Help Groups (SHGs). This initiative introduces unique conditions, focusing specifically on the number of eligible children for the beneficiaries. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The beautiful town of **Udhampur** witnessed a glorious spectacle today as the sacred precincts of the **Jagannath Temple** came alive with the vibrant celebrations of the much-anticipated '**Gole Mela.**' Devotees from Udhampur district and beyond flocked to the temple to partake in this annual religious and cultural extravaganza. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant stride towards its ambitious goal of becoming a USD 1 trillion economy, Maharashtra Chief Minister Eknath Shinde announced the signing of **19 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** during his visit to the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting in Davos. Accompanied by Industries Minister Uday Samant and senior officials, Shinde expressed his determination to lead the state towards economic prosperity. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Yogi government of Uttar Pradesh** has announced the prestigious '**UP Gaurav Samman**' award for two distinguished personalities – eminent scientist **Dr. Ritu** and **renowned entrepreneur Naveen**. This award highlights the government's commitment to acknowledging excellence and inspiring future generations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, the **Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation (IICF)** has announced the commencement of the construction of a grand mosque in Ayodhya, starting this May. The mosque, named "**Masjid Muhammed bin Abdullah**" after Prophet Muhammad, aims to foster unity and goodwill among people, transcending religious differences. The initiative comes on the same day as Prime Minister Narendra Modi presides over the consecration ceremony of the Ram Temple. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Chief Minister of Telangana, **Revanth Reddy**, has taken significant strides to expedite the implementation of various welfare schemes, including the much-anticipated **Gruha Jyothi Scheme**. The state government aims to roll out this scheme from the first week of February, bringing relief to numerous households. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move, the YS Jagan Mohan Reddy government in **Andhra Pradesh** has initiated a comprehensive caste census, marking the state's commitment to understanding and addressing the complex caste dynamics within its population. Launched with the aid of a specially designed phone app, this ambitious census aims to enumerate all castes in the state and is expected to be **completed within the next 20 days to one month**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking move, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has unveiled plans for the establishment of the **world's first 'black tiger safari'** near the Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Mayurbhanj. This visionary project aims to provide tourists and visitors with a rare glimpse of the melanistic tigers, commonly known as black tigers, recently spotted at the **Similipal National Park**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **63rd gathering of the Central Geological Programming Board (CGPB)** took place in **Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh**, with Shri V.L. Kantha Rao, Secretary of the Ministry of Mines, presiding. Notable participants included Shri Sanjay Lohiya, Additional Secretary of the Ministry of Mines, and Shri Janardan Prasad, Director General of the **Geological Survey of India (GSI)**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant turn of events ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, Janata Dal-United (JDU) chief **Nitish Kumar** was sworn in as Bihar Chief Minister for the ninth time, breaking ties with the 'Mahagathbandhan' and securing support from the BJP. The swearing-in ceremony, held at Raj Bhavan in Patna, saw Bihar Governor Rajendra Arlekar administering the oath of office. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The vibrant hues of oranges and the aroma of citrus filled the air as the **4th edition of the Rüsoma Orange Festival** unfolded in the picturesque village of Rüsoma, nestled in the Kohima district in **Nagaland**. With approximately 3400 attendees, this year's event showcased the best of organic produce, community spirit, and rural entrepreneurship. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- The **National Chilika Birds Festival**, a hallmark event in Odisha's calendar, commenced with grandeur on January 26. Hosted against the breathtaking backdrop of Chilika Lake, this festival brings together birders and enthusiasts from across India to celebrate the State of India's Birds. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- Under the visionary leadership of **Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann**, a groundbreaking initiative has been unveiled to enhance road safety across the state. The inauguration of the **Sadak Surakhya Force (SSF)** marks a significant leap forward in safeguarding lives and preventing accidents on Punjab's extensive road network. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Schemes and Committees

- In a promising **New Year development** for small businesses, loans disbursed under the **Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY)** have soared to an unprecedented ₹3-lakh crore in **December 2023**, showcasing a remarkable **16% year-on-year growth**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** has recently approved the appointment of **Vivek Srivastava**, a seasoned 1989-batch IPS officer of Gujarat cadre, as the **Director General of Fire Service, Civil Defence & Home Guards under the Ministry of Home Affairs**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The newly elected BJP government in Rajasthan is making strides to merge its state health insurance scheme, **Chiranjeevi**, with the central **Ayushman Bharat programme**. This move, pending approval from the union health ministry, aims to create a unified initiative called the **Ayushman Bharat Mukhyamantri Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Jammu and Kashmir** has taken a significant step towards empowering its vibrant community of artisans and craftspeople by becoming the first Union Territory (UT) to implement the **PM Vishwakarma Yojana (PMVY)**. This initiative, launched by the Central government in September 2023, aims to uplift and recognize the crucial role these skilled individuals play in preserving and enriching India's cultural heritage. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- In a groundbreaking collaboration with **Compassion Unlimited Plus Action (CUPA)**, Murty Trust unveils the **'Maitri' initiative**, a trailblazing community cat sterilization center in Bangalore. This state-of-the-art facility, inaugurated on January 1, 2024, signifies goodwill and friendship while addressing challenges in India's animal welfare sector. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Department of School Education & Literacy, Ministry of Education**, proudly presents **Prerana: An Experiential Learning program**. This unique initiative aims to empower students of classes IX to XII with leadership qualities and provide them with a meaningful, unique, and inspiring experience. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
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- In a significant move to promote ethical practices in higher education, the **University Grants Commission (UGC) of India** has introduced **Mulya Pravah 2.0**. This new guideline comes as a response to surveys that highlighted unethical practices such as favouritism, sexual harassment, and gender discrimination within various educational organizations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **ANUBHAV Awards Scheme**, initiated by the **Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare (DoPPW)**, is an innovative platform for recognizing the contributions made by retired officials to nation-building during their tenure in government service. Launched in 2015 under the guidance of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India, the scheme is a step towards documenting India's administrative history through written narratives by retired Central Government employees. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move towards uplifting **Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs)**, Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to **release ₹540 crore**, the inaugural tranche of funding, for pucca homes under the **Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana-Gramin (PMAY-G)** on January 15. This disbursement, part of the recently launched **PM-JANMAN package**, aims to foster the comprehensive development of PVTG habitations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

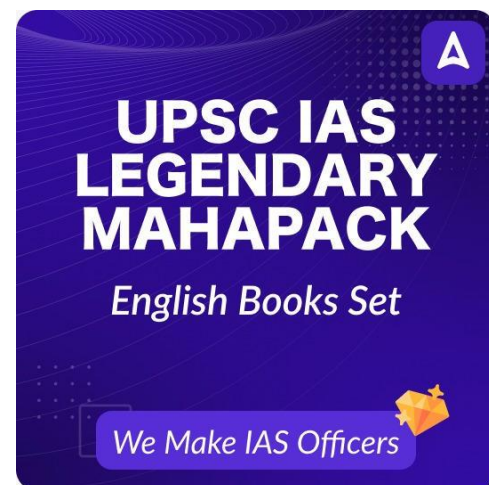


- The state of **Chhattisgarh**, inspired by the successful implementation of the 'Aarthik Sarkari Ladli Bahna Yojana' organized by the Madhya Pradesh government, has recently launched a new scheme known as **Mahtari Vandana Yojana 2024**. Under this initiative, the government aims to provide economic assistance of **one thousand rupees to women every month**, amounting to a total annual financial aid of **12,000 rupees**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move to enhance the efficiency of the **Electronic Toll Collection (ETC) system** and streamline traffic at Toll Plazas, the **National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)** has introduced the '**One Vehicle, One FASTag**' initiative. This strategic measure aims to curb the prevalent practice of using a single FASTag for multiple vehicles or **linking multiple FASTags to a specific vehicle**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The launch of the **e-SAKSHI mobile application** marks a significant advancement in the administration of the **Member of Parliament Local Area Development Scheme (MPLADS) in India**. This digital initiative, spearheaded by the Union Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), aims to transform the way MPs engage in and manage development projects within their constituencies. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a progressive move aligning with the National Education Policy (NEP)-2020, the state of **Himachal Pradesh** has unveiled the ambitious '**My School-My Pride**' campaign under the '**Apna Vidyalay**' programme. This initiative is set to revolutionize the quality of education in government schools, providing a holistic approach to student growth and development. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi, on a historic day after presiding over the consecration ceremony of the Ram temple in Ayodhya, announced a groundbreaking initiative aimed at harnessing solar energy. The initiative, named '**Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana**,' seeks to propel India towards self-reliance in the energy sector while benefitting the common citizens. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a landmark event at Dr Ambedkar International Centre, Vice-President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar launched the nationwide campaign '**Hamara Samvidhan, Hamara Samman**' to mark India's 75th year as a Republic. The initiative seeks to reinforce commitment to constitutional principles, fostering pride and responsibility among citizens. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, REC Ltd, a Maharatna power finance company, has been designated as the nodal agency for the ambitious **Pradhan Mantri Suryoday Yojana**. This initiative, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 22, aims to install rooftop solar panels in one crore households. REC Ltd, under the leadership of CMD Vivek Kumar Dewangan, is set to lend up to Rs 1,20,000 crore for this massive undertaking. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Union Cabinet, on January 24, 2024, gave the green light to a groundbreaking **Viability Gap Funding (VGF) scheme**, allocating Rs 8,500 crores for **Coal Gasification Projects**. This strategic move is a pivotal step towards realizing the government's ambitious mission to **gasify 100 million tonnes of coal by 2030**. The initiative is set to revolutionize the energy sector, particularly with the active involvement of major players like Coal India, GAIL (India), and BHEL. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move towards the development and empowerment of approximately one crore tribals in Odisha, the state government, led by Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik, has approved the launch of the '**LABHA**' scheme. LABHA, an acronym for **Laghu Bana Jatya Drabya Kraya**, is a 100% state-funded Minimum Support Price (MSP) for Minor Forest Produce (MFP). ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Agreement/Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)

- In a significant move towards self-reliance in defence manufacturing, the Ministry of Defence has finalized two pivotal contracts, collectively valued at Rs 802 crore. The agreements include the procurement of **697 Bogie Open Military (BOM) Wagons** and **56 Mechanical Minefield Marking Equipment (MMME) Mark II** from domestic firms. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India and Nepal solidified their commitment to a long-term energy partnership with the signing of an agreement for the export of **10,000 MW of power to India over the next 10 years**. The bilateral agreement, signed by India's Energy Secretary Pankaj Agrawal and Nepal's Energy Secretary Gopal Sigdel, is a testament to the shared vision of sustainable energy cooperation. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Indian Railways**, a key player in the transportation sector, has reaffirmed its commitment to environmental sustainability by renewing its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the **Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)**. The collaboration aims to reduce energy and water consumption, ultimately **lowering greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions**. This marks the third consecutive term of partnership between Indian Railways and CII. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Researchers from the prestigious **Indian Institutes of Technology (IIT) Madras** and **Mandi** have achieved a significant milestone in the field of biotechnology. They have successfully metabolically engineered plant cells to boost the production of the anti-cancer drug camptothecin (CPT). ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- In a significant move towards sustainable development, the Union Cabinet, chaired by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, has given its approval for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between **India and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID)**. The focus of this collaboration is to support Indian Railways in **achieving 'net zero carbon emission' by the ambitious target year of 2030**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Union Cabinet, under the leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has granted approval for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the **Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas, Government of India, and the Ministry of Natural Resources, Republic of Guyana**. This MoU aims to **foster collaboration in the hydrocarbon sector**, covering various aspects of the value chain. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **The Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras)**, a leading engineering institute in India, is set to expand its horizons by establishing a new campus in **Kandy, Sri Lanka**. This move is a significant development in educational collaboration between India and **Sri Lanka**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant diplomatic move, Ukrainian President **Volodymyr Zelenskiy** and British Prime Minister **Rishi Sunak** signed an unprecedented **security agreement** between their nations in **Kyiv**. The accord, as described by Zelenskiy, holds immense importance for Ukraine's security and signifies a robust alliance with the United Kingdom. The signed security accord is poised to remain **in effect until Ukraine becomes a member of NATO**, marking a strategic commitment between the two nations. Zelenskiy emphasized the historical significance of the agreement, underlining its potential impact on Ukraine's defense capabilities. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a strategic partnership, the **Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras)** has joined forces with Altair, a global technology leader specializing in simulation, **high-performance computing (HPC), and Artificial Intelligence (AI)**. Together, they are set to inaugurate the cutting-edge eMobility Simulation Lab within the Department of Engineering Design at IIT Madras. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a historic breakthrough, Switzerland and India have finally sealed a **free-trade agreement (FTA)** following a marathon 16-year negotiation period. The announcement came from Swiss Economy Minister Guy Parmelin, who, after attending the World Economic Forum in Davos, swiftly headed to India for crucial discussions with his counterpart, Piyush Goyal. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development for global health preparedness, the **Serum Institute of India (SII)** has joined the **Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI)** network of vaccine producers in the Global South. This collaborative effort **aims to strengthen the response to future public health disease outbreaks** through rapid, agile, and equitable means. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- With the growing activities of international pirates off the Gulf of Aden driving up the costs of freight and shipping, the Indian government has taken a significant step to ensure the safety of international shipping lanes. In a recent development, the **Ministry of Defence (MoD)** signed a contract with **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL)**, Mumbai, for the acquisition of **14 Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs)** for the **Indian Coast Guard (ICG)**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has given the green light for the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between **India and Oman** in the field of **Information Technology (IT)**. The MoU, inked on December 15, 2023, between the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology of India and Oman's Ministry of Transport, Communications, and Information Technology, aims to foster comprehensive collaboration through mutual support, technology sharing, information exchange, and investments in IT. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **India's ACME Group and Japan's IHI Corporation** have inked a groundbreaking deal for the supply of 0.4 million metric tons per annum (MMTPA) of green ammonia from Odisha, India, to Japan. The agreement, signed by Manoj Upadhyay, ACME Group's Founder and Chairman, and Hiroshi Ide, President and CEO of IHI Corporation, establishes a long-term partnership covering production, logistics, and supply of green ammonia for diverse industrial uses in Japan, ultimately aimed at reducing emissions. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Amidst the grandeur of India's Republic Day celebrations, a significant milestone was quietly achieved as **French Defence Minister Sebastien Locornu** and India's National Security Advisor Ajit Doval sealed the **Defence Space Agreement** on January 26. The low-key signing belied the transformative potential of this pact, marking a pivotal moment in Indo-French relations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))



New Appointments: International

- Government has appointed **Arvind Panagariya**, former Niti Aayog vice chairman and Columbia University professor, as the **chairman of the Sixteenth Finance Commission**. The Commission is entrusted with the crucial task of recommending the tax revenue sharing formula between the Centre and the States for the upcoming five-year period starting from April 2026. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Rashmi Govil**, a seasoned HR executive with nearly **three decades of experience at Indian Oil Corporation (IOC)**, is poised to step into the **role of Director (Human Resources) at the state-owned firm**. Her nomination for the position was recommended by the **Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB)**, highlighting her exceptional qualifications and contributions to the organization. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Power Grid Corporation**, a leading state-owned enterprise, announced a significant change in its leadership on January 1. **Ravindra Kumar Tyagi** has been appointed as the new Chairman and Managing Director (CMD), succeeding Sreekant Kandikuppa who retired upon reaching the age of superannuation. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Nivea India**, a leading personal care products company, has appointed **Geetika Mehta** as its **new managing director**. This significant announcement marked a strategic move for the renowned brand. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Kia India** has appointed **Gwanggu Lee** as the new **Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer**, effective immediately. This transition marks an important shift in the leadership of the company, with Gwanggu Lee taking the reins from the former MD and CEO, **Tae Jin Park**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant transition at the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), **Arindam Bagchi**, the official spokesperson, has passed on the baton to **Randhir Jaiswal**. This move comes after Arindam Bagchi's appointment as India's next Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva in October 2023. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a formal ceremony held at **INS Shikra**, the naval air station in Colaba, Mumbai, **Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh** took charge as the **Flag Officer Commanding in Chief (FOC-in-C) of the Indian Navy's Western Naval Command**. The ceremony marked the transition of leadership from Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, who had been serving as the FOC-in-C. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, **P Balaji**, **Director (Regulatory and Corporate Affairs) at Vodafone Idea**, has tendered his resignation, marking the end of his nearly decade-long association **with the telecom giant**. This move has garnered attention due to Balaji's pivotal role in liaising with government officials, considering Vodafone Idea's status as the largest shareholder in the loss-making company. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- President of India has appointed **Justice Sanjiv Khanna** as the **Executive Chairperson of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)**. Justice Khanna, the senior-most judge of the Supreme Court, has taken over from Justice **S. K. Kaul**, who retired on December 25. This appointment adheres to the convention of appointing the second senior-most judge of the Supreme Court to the crucial position of NALSA Executive Chairman. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a recent development, **Puneet Chhatwal**, the Managing Director and CEO of Indian Hotels Company Limited, has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the **Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism & Hospitality (FAITH)**. This move comes as he succeeds **Nakul Anand**, the retired Executive Director at ITC Hotels. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a historic move, **Nadia Calvino** has been named the new president of the **European Investment Bank**, taking office on January 1. She succeeds Werner Hoyer to become the eighth president of the EU bank. Notably, Calvino is the first woman and the first Spaniard to lead this prestigious institution, marking a significant milestone in the bank's history. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **All India Rubber Industries Association (AIRIA)**, the foremost authority representing India's rubber industry, has recently announced a significant leadership change. **Shashi Singh** has been elected as the new President, succeeding **Ramesh Kejriwal**. This transition marks a new era for AIRIA, with Singh set to advance the association's mission and goals. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **P Santhosh**, Chief General Manager at Canara Bank, has been appointed as the **Managing Director of National Asset Reconstruction Company (NARCL)** with effect from January 5, succeeding Natarajan Sundar, who resigned from the post. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** recently announced the appointment of **G Ram Mohan Rao** as **Executive Director (ED)** for a tenure of **three years**. With over 25 years of experience at SEBI, Rao brings a wealth of expertise to his new role. In his capacity as ED, he will oversee the investigation department and the internal inspection department, reinforcing SEBI's commitment to maintaining market integrity. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a strategic move to bolster its leadership team, the **National Investment and Infrastructure Fund Limited (NIIFL)** has welcomed **Sanjiv Aggarwal** as its new **Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director**. Aggarwal, formerly a partner at the UK-based private equity firm Actis, brings a wealth of experience in energy investments, particularly in the Asian market, including India. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- India has appointed seven accomplished civil servants to crucial positions abroad, showcasing the country's global engagement. Notably, **Mr. Vikas Sheel**, a seasoned bureaucrat, is now the Executive Director of the **Asian Development Bank (ADB) in Manila**, emphasizing India's commitment to international development. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **The Indian Olympic Association (IOA)** has welcomed a seasoned professional, **Raghuram Iyer**, as its new CEO, marking a significant development after a meticulous selection process conducted by the nomination committee. The appointment, long-awaited and in response to reminders from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), brings a wealth of experience to the forefront. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone (APSEZ)**, India's premier ports and logistics company, has announced significant changes in its leadership structure, marking a new era in its corporate journey. APSEZ has promoted its **CEO Karan Adani** to the role of Managing Director. This move signifies a shift in responsibilities, with Karan Adani stepping into a role previously held by **Gautam Adani**, Chairman of the Adani Group. Gautam Adani will now serve as the 'Executive Chairman' of APSEZ, reflecting a focus on strategic oversight and global growth. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, **Ambassador Indra Mani Pandey**, a seasoned diplomat from India, officially assumed the role of **Secretary General (SG)** of the **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)**. This appointment marks a crucial chapter in the organization's leadership, with Ambassador Pandey succeeding Tenzin Lekphell of Bhutan. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a strategic move, Walmart-owned fintech firm **PhonePe** has appointed **Ritesh Pai** as the **Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** of its **international payments business**. This development aligns with India's ambition to globalize the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), attracting interest from countries like Japan, Singapore, the United Arab Emirates, France, and the United Kingdom. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a recent bureaucratic reshuffle, the Centre has announced several key appointments, signifying a strategic realignment of responsibilities. Among the notable changes, Senior IAS officer **Samir Kumar Sinha** has been appointed as **Additional Secretary and Director General (Acquisition)** in the Defence Ministry. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Indian government has named IAS officer **Senthil Pandian C** as the **ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva**. This appointment follows the conclusion of **Brajendra Navnit's** term as India's ambassador to the WTO on March 31, 2024. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, **Sheel Vardhan Singh**, the former Director General of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF), has been appointed as a **member of the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC)**. The decision was conveyed through a personnel ministry order, marking a notable milestone in Singh's distinguished career. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Rear Admiral Upal Kundu**, an esteemed alumnus of the Indian Naval Academy, has recently taken over as the **Chief of Staff at the Southern Naval Command (SNC)**. This seasoned naval officer brings with him a wealth of experience and expertise, particularly in anti-submarine warfare (ASW). ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **India's headline retail inflation** surged to a **four-month high of 5.69% in December**, disclosed by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on January 12. Despite exceeding November's 5.55%, it fell short of economists' 5.9% prediction. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) showcased a month-on-month decrease of 0.3%. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Experian**, a global leader in information services, has appointed **Manish Jain** as the Country Managing Director for its operations in India. This appointment marks a significant step in the company's efforts to strengthen its leadership team and expand its market presence in India. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, **Vice Admiral AN Pramod** assumed the pivotal role of **Director General Naval Operations (DGNO)** on January 15, 2024. A distinguished alumnus of the 38th Integrated Cadet Course at Naval Academy, Goa, Vice Admiral Pramod was commissioned into the Indian Navy in 1990. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Vice Admiral Vineet McCarty** officially assumed the prestigious position of **Commandant at the Indian Naval Academy** on January 15, 2024. A seasoned officer with a remarkable career, Vice Admiral McCarty brings a wealth of experience and expertise to this significant role. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **The RuPay Prime Volleyball League (PVL)** has taken a significant stride in its marketing and promotion efforts by appointing the acclaimed Bollywood actor **Hrithik Roshan** as the brand ambassador for its third season. This development marks a notable merger of sports and entertainment, promising to enhance the visibility and appeal of the league. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Senior IPS officer **Daljit Singh Chaudhary** has been appointed as the **Director General of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)**. This appointment is a significant development in the administrative reshuffling within India's internal security apparatus. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **PepsiCo India**, in a strategic realignment, has appointed **Jagrut Kotecha** as its new CEO, succeeding **Ahmed El Sheikh**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted approval for the appointment of **Praveen Achuthan Kutty** as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of DCB Bank. The official confirmation came on January 16, signaling a tenure of three years starting from April 29, 2024, as outlined in the regulatory filing. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Justice **Prasanna B Varale**, currently serving as the Chief Justice of the Karnataka High Court, will now become the **third sitting judge from the Dalit community in the Supreme Court**. His appointment adds to the diversity of the apex court, joining the ranks of Justice BR Gavai and Justice CT Ravikumar. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Sharat Chauhan**, a seasoned 1994 batch IAS officer of the AGMUT cadre, has been designated as the **new Chief Secretary of Puducherry**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Awards Current Affairs

- In a notable achievement, **Prof. B.R. Kamboj**, the Vice Chancellor of **Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University**, has been bestowed with the prestigious **M.S. Swaminathan Award**. This recognition comes in appreciation of his significant contributions as a scientist and extension specialist in the field of agronomy. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Hero MotoCorp**, the world's largest two-wheeler manufacturer, has made significant waves in water conservation, bagging the **CII National Award for Excellence in Water Management** and setting an ambitious goal to become 500% water positive by 2025. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The New Year Honours list for 2024 has acknowledged the outstanding contributions of individuals across various fields in the UK. Among the distinguished honorees is **Professor Adrian Michael Cruise**, a leading figure in space science research, particularly known for his role in the Gravitational Wave Research Group at the University of Birmingham. The recognition highlights his services to space and places him alongside other influential figures in the realm of UK astronomy. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a prestigious recognition of his literary contributions, renowned Bengali writer **Shirshendu Mukhopadhyay** has been awarded the **2023 Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar**. The national award, named in honour of the late Kannada poet Kuvempu, celebrates writers who have made significant contributions to any Indian language. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports** has recently unveiled the recipients of the prestigious '**Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar**' for the year **2023**. These awards are a testament to the commendable contributions made by corporate entities, Sports Control Boards, NGOs, and sports bodies at the State and National levels towards the promotion and development of sports in India. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **National Institute of Construction Management and Research (NICMAR)**, located in Hyderabad, has recently been awarded the prestigious Platinum certification by the **Indian Green Building Council (IGBC)** under its **Green Campus Rating program**. This accomplishment highlights NICMAR Hyderabad's commitment to sustainability and eco-friendly practices in its campus operations and infrastructure. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a heart-touching ceremony, **President Draupadi Murmu** posthumously conferred the prestigious **Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award** upon **Savita Kanswal**. The award, presented to her father Radheshyam Kanswal, is a testament to Savita's exceptional achievements in the field of mountaineering. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Deepa Bhandare**, associated with **Shri Datta Cooperative Sugar Factory (SSK) in Shirol taluka of Kolhapur**, emerged as a trailblazer as she clinched the prestigious **Best Environment Officer Award** at the ceremony. The award, conferred by VSI Chairman Sharad Pawar, marks a historic moment as Bhandare becomes the only woman in the long and illustrious history of Maharashtra's sugar industry to receive this accolade. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking moment, Second Lt. **Madison Marsh**, an officer in the U.S. Air Force, was crowned **Miss America**, marking the **first time an active-duty service member has clinched this prestigious title**, as confirmed by the Air Force. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **REC Limited**, a prominent **Maharatna Public Sector Unit** and a leading **Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC)** under the **Ministry of Power**, has been honored with the prestigious 'Plaque' at the ICAI Awards for Excellence in Financial Reporting. The recognition is in the 'Financial Services Sector (Other than Banking and Insurance)' category for the financial year 2022-23. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a glittering ceremony at the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Creative Sports Awards, **FIFA President Gianni Infantino** was bestowed with the prestigious **International Sports Personality of the Year award**. The event, inspired by the love of sport exhibited by Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, has been recognizing outstanding achievements in the realm of sports since its inception in 2009. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Former Chief Justice of India and current Rajya Sabha MP, **Ranjan Gogoi**, is set to be honored with the prestigious '**Assam Baibhav**' award, the highest civilian award in Assam. This announcement was made by the Chief Minister of Assam, Himanta Biswa Sarma, who highlighted Gogoi's significant contributions to the **field of justice and jurisprudence**. The award ceremony is scheduled to take place on February 10. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- At the prestigious Wings India Awards 2024, both the **Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru and the Indira Gandhi International Airport in Delhi were jointly awarded the 'Best Airport of the Year'**. This accolade celebrates world-class operators and individuals who have significantly contributed to the aviation industry, especially during challenging times. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Skyways Air Services Pvt Ltd** has been recognized for its outstanding cargo services at the prestigious **Wings India Awards held in Hyderabad**. This recognition is a testament to Skyways Air Services' commitment to excellence in the aviation cargo sector. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Former India captain and head coach **Ravi Shastri** expressed his gratitude on January 21, 2024 for being awarded the prestigious **Col CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award** at a glittering ceremony organized by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). The ceremony also saw other cricketing stalwarts, such as **Farokh Engineer**, being honored for their contributions to the sport. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The International Cricket Council (ICC) announced five ICC Teams of the Year across formats for men and women as part of the ICC Awards 2023. Six Indians were featured in the ICC Men's ODI team of the year with Rohit Sharma named as the captain of the 11-member team. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Ranks and Reports Current Affairs

- In a recent on-time performance review conducted by aviation analytics firm **Cirium, Hyderabad and Bengaluru airports** have emerged as global leaders in punctuality, securing the second and third ranks, respectively. With over 84 per cent on-time departures, these airports have showcased their commitment to efficiency and reliability in air travel. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Francoise Bettencourt Meyers** has made history by becoming the **first woman to amass a staggering \$100 billion fortune**. This remarkable achievement not only cements her status as a global financial powerhouse but also signifies a significant milestone for the expanding fashion and cosmetics industries in France. Bettencourt Meyers' wealth surged to an astounding **\$100.1 billion** as reported by the **Bloomberg Billionaires Index**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **International Labour Organization (ILO)** warns of a slight increase in global unemployment this year, with the rate projected to reach 5.2%, up from 5.1% in 2023. This modest rise, outlined in the ILO's "World Employment and Social Outlook Trends: 2024" report, is primarily driven by job losses in advanced economies. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Hyderabad**, the capital city of Telangana, achieved a significant milestone by **securing the ninth position** in cleanliness among cities with a **population exceeding one lakh** in the Swachh Survekshan Awards 2023. Additionally, **Siddipet**, a city in Telangana, proudly clinched the national award for being the **cleanest city in south India** within the 50,000-1 lakh population category. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant stride towards poverty alleviation, a recent NITI Aayog report reveals that **24.82 crore people in India** have successfully moved out of **multidimensional poverty** from 2013-14 to 2022-23. The decline is remarkable, dropping from **29.17% to 11.28%** during this period. The multidimensional poverty index assesses deprivations across health, education, and standard of living using 12 sustainable development goals-aligned indicators. At the state level, **Uttar Pradesh takes the lead** with 5.94 crore people escaping poverty, followed by Bihar at 3.77 crore and Madhya Pradesh at 2.30 crore. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In the recently unveiled **Edelman Trust Barometer 2024**, India emerges as a global frontrunner in trust, topping the charts in confidence in businesses and non-governmental organizations (NGOs). However, the nation secures the 4th spot for media trust and the 5th position for trust in the government. The comprehensive survey, encompassing over 32,000 respondents across 28 countries, highlights a pattern where developing nations outpace their developed counterparts in overall trust perception. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The startup ecosystem in India witnessed a significant boost as **Gujarat, Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu** emerged as the **best-performing states in the Startup Ranking for 2022**. The rankings, released by Union Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal, highlight the commendable initiatives undertaken by these states to foster the growth of startups and encourage budding entrepreneurs. **Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Telangana** were also recognized as top performers in this dynamic landscape. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The World Health Organization (WHO) has issued comprehensive guidelines for the ethical use and governance of **Large Multi-Modal Models (LMM) in healthcare**. These advanced generative AI technologies, such as ChatGPT, Bard, and Bert, have rapidly transformed healthcare delivery and medical research by processing diverse data inputs like text, videos, and images. Despite their potential benefits, WHO emphasizes the critical need to carefully evaluate the risks associated with LMM adoption. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- **Bhopal**, the capital city of Madhya Pradesh, has made significant strides in cleanliness, emerging as the **5th cleanest city in India** among those with a population exceeding 1 lakh. The Bhopal Municipal Corporation's persistent efforts have not only elevated its ranking from 6th in 2022 but also earned it a coveted **5-star Garbage Free City (GFC) rating**, making it the cleanest State capital in the nation. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The '**INDIA AGEING REPORT 2023**,' jointly conducted by the **International Institute for Population Sciences** and the **United Nations Population Fund**, provides a comprehensive overview of the aging demographic in Jammu Kashmir. **Jammu Kashmir** emerges as a region with remarkable resilience against elderly poverty, boasting a mere 4.2 percent of its aged population falling below the poverty line. Among the elderly, constituting 9.4 percent of the region's population, Jammu Kashmir stands out with the **highest life expectancy after the age of 60**. Males exhibit a life expectancy of 20.3 percent, and females, 23.0 percent, making it the leader in this demographic indicator between 2015-19. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **All India Survey on Higher Education (AISHE) 2021-22**, released by the Ministry of Education, unveils a significant spike in higher education enrollment. The total enrollment soared from 4.14 crore in the previous session to nearly 4.33 crore in 2021-22, marking a notable uptick of 19 lakh students. The report highlights a commendable rise in female enrollment in the science stream, surpassing male counterparts. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Union Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Shri **Bhupender Yadav**, released a significant report on the status of Snow leopards in India. This groundbreaking study, part of the **Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI) Program**, marks the first-ever scientific exercise to assess the population of this elusive species in the country. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India's placement in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2023 remained largely unchanged, securing the **93rd position out of 180 countries**. The CPI, curated by Transparency International, evaluates nations based on their perceived levels of public sector corruption, utilizing a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 signifies high corruption and 100 represents very clean governance. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Sports Current Affairs

- Australian cricket stalwart **David Warner** officially announced his retirement from ODI cricket. This announcement came just before his final Test match against **Pakistan at the Sydney Cricket Ground**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **India's Koneru Humpy** showcased her prowess in chess by clinching the **women's individual silver medal** at the **2023 World Rapid Chess Championships held in Samarkand, Uzbekistan**. Despite a valiant effort, the **36-year-old Grandmaster succumbed to Russian player Anastasia Bodnaruk** in a tie-break sudden death on time. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Anahat Singh**, a rising star in Indian squash, secured victory in the **girls' under-19 category at the 2023 Scottish Junior Open squash held in Edinburgh**. Her remarkable triumph added another feather to her cap, concluding a stellar year that included a double win at the National championships and success in the Asian Games. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Oman** is set to unveil its latest sports marvel—a cutting-edge complex designed to host the **FIH Hockey5s World Cup qualifiers**. This grand facility is a testament to Oman's commitment to fostering excellence in the world of sports, particularly in the realm of hockey. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Kenya's Beatrice Chebet** concluded her remarkable year by smashing the **world record for the women's 5 km marathon at the Cursa dels Nassos in Barcelona**. **Clocking an astounding 14:13**, Chebet outpaced her competitors and bettered the previous record by six seconds, setting the stage for a memorable achievement. Although subject to World Athletics' ratification procedure, this victory marks a triumphant end to **Chebet's stellar 2023 campaign**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Germany** beat top seeds **Poland** to clinch the United Cup on Sunday after **Alexander Zverev** and **Laura Siegemund** won the deciding mixed doubles tie over **Hubert Hurkacz** and **Iga Swiatek**. **The United Cup** final delivered a spectacle of tennis prowess, determination, and sportsmanship, leaving fans on the edge of their seats until the last point was played. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a historic moment for Indian sports, the accomplished equestrian athlete, **Divyakriti Singh**, has been conferred with the prestigious **Arjuna Award**, making her the first woman from Rajasthan to achieve this honour. The award was presented in a grand ceremony at Rashtrapati Bhavan by the President of India, Droupadi Murmu. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Asian Shooting Championships 2024** in Jakarta, Indonesia, **Rhythm Sangwan** secured a **bronze medal in the women's 25m pistol event**, obtaining a Paris 2024 Olympic quota for India. This accomplishment marked **India's 16th shooting quota** for the upcoming Olympics, surpassing the previous record tally of 15 set for the Tokyo 2020 Games. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- The **9th Asian Winter Games**, set to illuminate the winter sports landscape in 2025, have officially entered an exciting phase with the unveiling of its core symbols – the slogan, emblem, and mascots. Embracing the spirit of unity and sportsmanship, the official slogan “Dream of Winter, Love among Asia” resonates deeply with the ethos of the Games. The heart and soul of the Games are personified in its mascots, “Binbin” and “Nini”, two charming Siberian tiger cubs. The official emblem, aptly named “Breakthrough”, is a creative masterpiece blending Chinese cultural elements with Olympic symbols. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India’s young wrestling sensation, **Aman Sehrawat**, set the stage on fire at the **Zagreb Open 2024** by winning a **gold medal in the 57 kg category of the men’s singles event**. The 20-year-old wrestler demonstrated his prowess by defeating China’s Zou Wanhao 10-0 in the final, securing victory by technical superiority. This impressive win marked a stellar beginning for Sehrawat in the year 2024. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Real Madrid** played against **Barcelona** and won 4-1. This big game was part of the Spanish Super Cup final and happened on January 14, 2024. It took place in **Riyadh, Saudi Arabia**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a historic moment for Indian cricket, **Rohit Sharma**, the captain of Team India, etched his name in the record books by becoming the **first men’s player to feature in 150 T20 International matches**. This milestone was achieved during the second T20I against **Afghanistan** at the Holkar Cricket Stadium, marking a remarkable feat in Rohit’s illustrious career. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Australia’s Shaun Marsh**, a renowned name in international and domestic cricket, has announced his retirement from all forms of the sport. This article provides a comprehensive overview of his career and the impact he has had on the game. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Rameshbabu Pragnanandhaa**, an 18-year-old chess prodigy from Chennai, achieved a historic milestone in his career by defeating World Champion **Ding Liren from China**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Indian cricket team captain **Rohit Sharma** has created history by becoming the first batsman to score five centuries in T20 Internationals (T20Is). This milestone was achieved during the third T20I match against Afghanistan in Bengaluru on January 17, 2024. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking development for women’s cricket, **Sue Redfern from England** is set to become the **first ICC-appointed female neutral umpire** to officiate in a bilateral series. This historic moment is scheduled to take place during the upcoming WT20I between Australia and South Africa, marking a significant step forward for gender inclusivity in cricket officiating. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Asia Olympic Qualifiers** witnessed a remarkable display of skill and precision from Indian shooters, with **Yogesh Singh** emerging as the star of the event. Singh not only **secured the individual gold medal** in the **men’s 25m centre fire pistol** competition but also led the Indian trio to clinch the team gold. Additionally, other Indian shooters showcased their talent in different categories, contributing to the nation’s successful campaign. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Carlos Sainz**, at the age of 61, has made history by winning the **Dakar Rally for the fourth time**. His latest victory in the 2024 rally marks him as the oldest winner of this gruelling race. Sainz, also known as ‘**El Matador**’, is renowned for his extraordinary skills and endurance in one of the most challenging motorsport events in the world. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Tokyo Olympic silver medallist **Ravi Kumar Dahiya**, who faced a setback in the form of injuries, made a triumphant return to the wrestling arena by securing a **bronze medal** at the prestigious **Grand Prix De France Henri Deglane wrestling tournament** held in Nice, France. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In the Olympic year, badminton enthusiasts witnessed an extraordinary performance by Chinese Taipei’s legendary player, **Tai Tzu Ying**. After facing a Malaysian Open final loss, Tai Tzu Ying bounced back with determination, **securing victory in the India Open 2024 women’s singles title**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Madrid** is set to become the new host city for the **Spanish Formula 1 Grand Prix starting from 2026**. This marks a significant shift in the Spanish Grand Prix’s location, as Barcelona has been the **event’s home since 1991**. The transition will see Madrid hosting the Grand Prix for 10 years, from 2026 to 2035, introducing a brand-new circuit to the world of Formula 1. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a spectacular display of skill and determination, the Indian shooting duo **Raiza Dhillon and Gurjoat Singh Khangura** clinched the **bronze medal** in the mixed skeet team event at the **Asian Shotgun Championships 2024 in Kuwait City**. The event marked a triumphant conclusion for India, securing a total of one gold, three silvers, and four bronze medals on the closing day. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **The Asian Marathon Championships 2024** marked a historic moment for Indian athletics as **Man Singh**, a 34-year-old marathon runner from India, clinched the gold medal. This achievement is significant for Man Singh and Indian sports, showcasing the country’s growing prowess in long-distance running. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Indian table tennis player **Sreeja Akula** achieved a significant milestone in her career by securing her **maiden international title at the WTT Feeder Corpus Christi 2024 in Texas, USA**. The 25-year-old athlete displayed exceptional skill and determination in the women’s singles event, culminating in a remarkable victory. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- Indian tennis star **Rohan Bopanna** has etched his name in the history books by becoming the oldest player to claim the **No. 1 spot in the men's doubles rankings at the age of 43**. This remarkable achievement was secured following his quarter-final victory at the 2024 Australian Open, alongside Australia's Matthew Ebden. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **India** finished as runner-up at the inaugural edition of the FIH Hockey 5s Women's World Cup after a 7-2 loss to the **Netherlands** in the final in Muscat. India tried to make a comeback and scored twice – **Jyoti Chhatri (20th minute) and Rutaja Dadaso Pisal (23rd minute)** – but could not catch the Dutch team which added one more goal courtesy of Kalse before the full-time hooter. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Hyderabad's Tanmay Agarwal** scored an unbeaten **323 off just 160 balls** against **Arunachal Pradesh in the Ranji Trophy Plate Group game**. His innings included 33 fours and 21 sixes, showcasing his aggressive batting style. Agarwal achieved his triple century in a record 147 balls, surpassing the previous record of 191 balls set by Marco Marais. This feat also marked the second-fastest triple ton by time, taking 183 minutes. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Naorem Roshibina Devi**, the pride of Manipur, has clinched the prestigious title of **International Wushu Federation Female Athlete of the Year**, solidifying her place as a powerhouse in the world of wushu. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Sonam Maskar** made a remarkable debut in the **shooting World Cup in Cairo, Egypt**, clinching the women's air rifle **silver medal**. Despite her impressive performance, she was narrowly **beaten by Anna Janssen of Germany** by a mere 0.9 points. Maskar's stellar performance highlights her potential as a rising star in the sport. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Indian boxer **Mandeep Jangra** secured a remarkable triumph at the US-based National Boxing Association's (NBA) intercontinental **super featherweight championship**. His win came after a compelling bout against American Gerardo Esquivel in Toppenish City, Washington. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The mascot for the Khelo India Winter Games 2024 is the majestic snow leopard, named **'Sheen-e She' or 'Shan' in the Ladakh region**. Native to the high-altitude areas of J&K and Ladakh, the snow leopard symbolizes the spirit of the Games and brings attention to the conservation of this endangered species. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India's shining moment at the **ISSF (International Shooting Sport Federation) World Cup** was marked by stellar performances in the **10m air pistol mixed team event** and the **10m air rifle mixed team event**. Rhythm Sangwan and Ujjwal showcased exceptional skill and coordination to secure gold in the 10m air pistol mixed team event, while **Arjun Babuta and Sonam Uttam Maskar** displayed resilience to clinch silver in the 10m air rifle mixed team event. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Divyansh Singh Panwar** continues to carve his name in the annals of shooting history, securing his **fourth World Cup gold in the 10m air rifle event**. This latest triumph adds to his impressive collection, which includes victories in Munich, Beijing, and Delhi since 2019. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Summits And Conferences

- In preparation for the upcoming **biennial Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit**, the Indian state of Gujarat has sealed preliminary investment deals totaling **7.17 trillion Indian rupees (\$86.07 billion)** with 58 companies spanning sectors like energy, oil and gas, and chemicals. Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state has been strategically securing these agreements ahead of the summit scheduled from January 10 to January 12 in Gandhinagar. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **10th edition of the Vibrant Gujarat Global Investors Summit (VGGS)** is set to take place in **Gandhinagar from January 10 to 12, 2024**. The theme for this edition is **"Gateway to the Future."** This biennial event serves as a crucial platform for global policymakers, diplomats, business leaders, and investors to foster collaborations, partnerships, and explore investment opportunities. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- At a curtain-raiser program in New Delhi, Union Minister Piyush Goyal revealed the logo and booklet for the highly anticipated **"Bharat Mobility Global Expo 2024."** Emphasizing India's innovative and holistic approach under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership, Goyal encouraged the automotive industry to target a 50% export share, highlighting global economic opportunities. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- At the **Global Investors Meet (GIM) 2024**, Denmark unveiled the **Green Fuels Alliance India (GFAI)**, a pivotal initiative under the **Green Strategic Partnership (GSP)** signed between India and Denmark in 2020. The GFAI aims to accelerate collaboration in the sustainable energy solutions sector, aligning with the joint global objective of carbon neutrality. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a momentous event, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show** in Gandhinagar, alongside esteemed guests including President Filipe Nyusi of Mozambique, President José Ramos-Horta of Timor Leste, and Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel. The grand affair, held at Mahatma Mandir, is a precursor to the upcoming Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- In a historic milestone for India, the nation is set to chair the **UNESCO World Heritage Committee and host its 46th session in New Delhi from July 21 to 31, 2024**. This significant announcement was made by Vishal V Sharma, India's Permanent Representative to UNESCO, on January 9, underlining the nation's growing influence and commitment to global cultural and natural heritage conservation. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a momentous event, Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution, and Textiles, Shri Piyush Goyal inaugurated '**Indus Food 2024**' at India Exposition Mart, Greater Noida. Commending India's diverse food industry, Goyal emphasized its global potential and underscored the need for technological innovation in the culinary landscape. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Gensol Engineering**, a prominent player in the sustainable energy sector, has embarked on a significant venture by entering into a strategic partnership with the **Government of Gujarat**. This collaboration is a pivotal step towards advancing the country's journey towards a sustainable future. The Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was formalized as part of the investment promotion activities associated with the **Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit 2024**, signifying a landmark agreement between the two entities. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- During the **Vibrant Gujarat Global Summit**, Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman outlined ambitious projections for India's economic growth. Currently the world's fifth-largest economy at USD 3.4 trillion, India aims to become the third-largest by 2027-28, reaching a GDP of over USD 5 trillion. Sitharaman expressed confidence that even with conservative estimates, India's economy could soar to USD 30 trillion by 2047. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Ukrainian President **Volodymyr Zelenskiy** has secured Switzerland's agreement to host a **global peace summit** aimed at resolving the conflict sparked by Russia's incursion into Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022. Switzerland, known for its neutrality and past mediation roles, will facilitate talks to find a resolution. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **IndoSpace**, a leading player in industrial and logistics real estate, has solidified its commitment to **Tamil Nadu's economic development** by signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) valued at **Rs 2000 crore**. This landmark agreement was unveiled during the **Tamil Nadu Global Investors Meet 2024**, a prestigious event attended by key dignitaries, including MK Stalin, Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu, and Piyush Goyal, Union Minister of Commerce and Industry. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **The India International Science Festival (IISF) 2023** has commenced today on January 17, marking the beginning of a four-day extravaganza celebrating the achievements of India in the frontier areas of science and technology. Organized by the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)**, Govt. of India, and coordinated by the **National Innovation Foundation-India**, IISF 2023 aims to foster scientific temperament, acknowledge achievements, and spread awareness among the Indian populace. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move on the sidelines of the World Economic Forum Annual Meeting, India has unveiled the **"Alliance for Global Good-Gender Equity and Equality."** The initiative has gained support from influential entities, with the World Economic Forum (WEF) and Invest India joining as crucial partners. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar recently provided a glimpse into the **19th Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) Summit, which commenced in Uganda**. The two-day summit, under the theme '**Deepening Cooperation for Shared Global Affluence**,' brings together over 120 developing countries, signifying a crucial moment in history. India, as a leading and founding member of NAM, wholeheartedly supports Uganda's theme, reaffirming its commitment to the movement's principles and values. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a momentous event, Union Minister for Culture and Tourism, G. Kishan Reddy, inaugurated five new galleries at the renowned **Salar Jung Museum** in Hyderabad. Recognized as one of India's premier cultural institutions, the Salar Jung Museum has undertaken significant initiatives under the leadership of Kishan Reddy to revitalize its exhibitions. ([Read the Complete Article](#))



Important Days

Date	Day & Theme
January 1	Global Family Day
January 3	International Mind-Body Wellness Day
January 4	World Braille Day
January 5	National Bird Day
January 6	World Day of War Orphans
January 8	Earth’s Rotation Day
January 9	Pravasi Bharatiya Divas
January 10th	World Hindi Day Theme: Hindi–Bridging Traditional Knowledge and Artificial Intelligence
January 11	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Human Trafficking Awareness Day 58th death anniversary of Lal Bahadur Shastri,
January 10th to January 18th	Startup India Innovation Week 2024
January 11 to 17	National Road Safety Week
January 12th	National Youth Day
January 15	Indian Army Day Theme: In Service of the Nation
January 16	National Startup Day
January 19th	Kokborok Day
January 21st	52nd anniversary of statehood for Tripura, Manipur, and Meghalaya
January 23rd	Parakram Diwas
January 24th	International Day of Education Theme: Learning for Lasting Peace
January 24th	National Girl Child Day 2024
January 25	The National Voters’ Day Theme: ‘Nothing Like Voting, I Vote For Sure’
January 25	National Tourism Day
January 26	International Customs Day
January 27	National Geographic Day 2024
January 28th	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indian Newspaper Day World Leprosy Day
January 30th	Martyrs’ Day, also known as Shaheed Diwas
January 31	International Zebra Day

Defence Current Affairs

- India’s **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** commemorated its **66th Foundation Day on January 1, 2024**, marking a significant journey of innovation and self-reliance in the country’s defence sector. The day was celebrated with great enthusiasm and a renewed commitment to bolstering India’s defence capabilities. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The collaborative military exercise ‘**Desert Cyclone 2024**’ is set to mark a significant milestone in the partnership between **India** and the **United Arab Emirates (UAE)**. Scheduled to take place in **Rajasthan** from January 2 to January 15, this joint manoeuvre aims to enhance interoperability through the exchange of knowledge and best practices, particularly in urban operations. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Defence Minister **Rajnath Singh** inaugurated the **first all-girl Sainik School in Vrindavan, Mathura district, Uttar Pradesh**. This groundbreaking event marks a significant advancement in women empowerment and educational reform in India. The Defence Minister hailed this initiative as a “golden moment in the history of women empowerment.” ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- On January 4, 2024, **Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, AVSM, NM**, officially took over as the **Vice Chief of the Naval Staff**, succeeding in a distinguished naval career. The assumption of this crucial position was marked by a solemn tribute to the fallen heroes at the National War Memorial. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

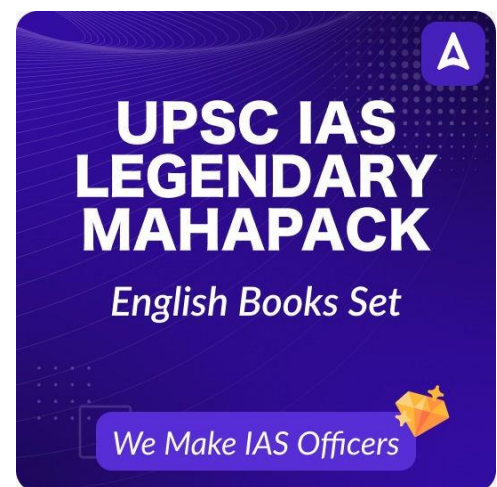
- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of India**, in a significant advancement, introduced **'Ugram,' an advanced 7.62 x 51 mm calibre assault rifle**. This rifle, embodying a blend of indigenous design, development, and production, was unveiled in Pune by Dr. Shailendra V. Gade, Director General of Armament and Combat Engineering Systems at the DRDO. This development marks a key achievement in collaboration with the private sector, specifically with Hyderabad-based Dvipa Armour India Private Limited. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Indian Navy** marked its presence in the Pacific, on **January 9th, 2024**, with the arrival of a **P-8I aircraft at Guam, USA**. This deployment signals the navy's participation in the fourth edition of **Ex Sea Dragon 24**, an Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) exercise spearheaded by the US Navy. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** has embarked on a crucial **three-day visit to London**, emphasizing the multifaceted dimensions of the **India-UK Defence Partnership**. The visit aims to foster high-level discussions covering a broad spectrum of defence, security, and industrial cooperation issues between the two nations. Accompanied by a delegation from the Ministry of Defence, Singh's itinerary includes meetings with top UK officials, industry leaders, and engagements with the Indian diaspora. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Indian Navy** has recently acquired its first indigenous **medium-altitude long-endurance (MALE) drone, the Drishti 10 Starliner unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)**. This marks a significant development in enhancing the navy's intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance capabilities. Manufactured by Adani Defence and Aerospace in collaboration with Israeli defence firm Elbit Systems, the drone offers versatility and advanced features. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant step towards modernization and operational efficiency, the **Indian Army has declared 2024 as the "Year of Technology Absorption."** This move underscores the Army's commitment to leveraging technology as a catalyst for transformative change, enhancing operational and logistic capabilities through in-house expertise, and working in collaboration with the domestic defence industry. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Indian and Japanese Coast Guards** have recently conducted a successful joint exercise named **'Sahyog Kaijin'** off the coast of Chennai. This exercise is a part of the ongoing collaboration between the two countries under the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed in 2006. The joint exercise, which commenced on January 8, focused on enhancing interoperability and sharing best practices in maritime law enforcement, search and rescue operations, and pollution response at sea. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** achieved a significant milestone with the successful flight test of the **New Generation AKASH (AKASH-NG) missile**. The test, conducted at the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha, showcased the system's capability to intercept high-speed unmanned aerial targets at very low altitudes. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- India's Defence Minister, **Rajnath Singh**, has recently approved a groundbreaking scheme aimed at **providing insurance cover to casual workers employed by the Border Roads Organisation (BRO)**. This move is designed to address the inherent risks associated with the challenging tasks these workers undertake in remote and hazardous areas. The scheme is **expected to offer financial security and welfare to the families of casual paid labourers** who play a crucial role in building infrastructure in the country's farthest frontiers. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Union Minister of State for Defence, **Ajay Bhatt**, marked a historic moment on January 14, by flagging off the indigenously developed **Astra air-to-air missiles**. The ceremony took place at the **Kanchangbagh unit of Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) in Hyderabad**, signifying a crucial step towards the missile's induction into the Indian Air Force (IAF). ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Indian Navy and Royal Thai Navy (RTN)** joined forces for the maiden bilateral exercise named **'Ex-Ayutthaya'** in December 2023. This maritime collaboration, symbolizing the invincible spirit, holds profound significance as it connects the ancient cities of **Ayodhya in India and Ayutthaya in Thailand**, reflecting shared historical narratives and rich cultural ties dating back centuries. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Indian Army**, in a groundbreaking collaboration with the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)**, is spearheading the development of **cutting-edge military-grade software**. This partnership aims to harness the power of technology for bolstering national defense capabilities, focusing on areas such as artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, digital infrastructure, and healthcare. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In response to escalating terrorist activities in **Jammu and Kashmir**, the **Indian Army** is launching **Operation Sarvashakti**, a strategic initiative aimed at curbing the influence of Pakistani proxy terrorist groups. Focused on the **Pir Panjal mountain ranges** in the Union Territory, this operation seeks to eliminate terrorists operating in the sensitive Rajouri Poonch sector. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **11th edition of the India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise KHANJAR** has kicked off at the Special Forces Training School in Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh. Scheduled to take place from 22nd January to 3rd February 2024, this annual event has become a crucial platform for fostering collaboration and enhancing the capabilities of both nations' special forces. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- In a significant milestone for the Indian aviation industry, **Timetooth**, a Bengaluru-based engineering company, has unveiled **India's first-ever domestically manufactured aircraft passenger seat** at the **Wings India 2024** event. This groundbreaking development marks a departure from the industry norm, where 100% of aircraft seats used by India's registered air travel companies are imported. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Indian Army contingent**, comprised of 25 highly skilled personnel from **The Parachute Regiment (Special Forces)**, has arrived in Egypt to participate in the eagerly awaited 2nd edition of the **India-Egypt Joint Special Forces Exercise CYCLONE**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Indian Navy has strategically chosen Telangana as the location for its second **Very Low Frequency (VLF) communication transmission station** in the country. This significant development is set to take place in the Vikarabad district, with the new VLF center scheduled for completion by 2027. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant move towards strengthening military cooperation and addressing regional security concerns, **India, France, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)** conducted a major air exercise, named **'Desert Knight'**, **over the Arabian Sea**. This joint exercise, held on January 23, 2024, comes against the backdrop of rising global concerns over Houthi militants targeting commercial vessels in strategic waterways. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The inaugural joint military exercise, **Sada Tansseq**, between the armies of **India and Saudi Arabia**, is poised to commence in **Rajasthan**, showcasing a significant leap in bilateral relations between India and Saudi Arabia. Scheduled from **January 29th to February 10th, 2024**, Sada Tansseq signifies a landmark collaboration, epitomizing the growing strategic partnership between India and Saudi Arabia. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In the realm of national defense, rapid deployment and robust infrastructure are paramount. The **Indian Army**, under the Ministry of Defence, stands vigilant against external threats, prioritizing cutting-edge equipment like **SARVATRA** – a Multispan Mobile Bridging System. Crafted by **Armament and Combat Engineering Systems (ACE)** under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), SARVATRA epitomizes innovation in bridging solutions, ensuring seamless connectivity for the Indian Army. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Science and Technology

- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** marked the beginning of 2024 with a significant milestone, launching its first mission of the year. On January 1, ISRO successfully lifted off the **XPoSat (X-ray Polarimeter Satellite)** along with 10 other satellites from the Sriharikota spaceport, using the reliable PSLV-C58 rocket.
- This groundbreaking mission **marks India's foray into space-based polarisation measurements of X-ray emissions from celestial sources**, with a specific focus on the enigmatic world of black holes. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking move, **NewSpace India Ltd (NSIL)**, the commercial arm of the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**, has announced its collaboration with **SpaceX**, owned by billionaire Elon Musk, to **launch the communication satellite GSAT-20**. This marks India's first partnership with SpaceX, reflecting a significant stride in space exploration and satellite deployment. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- On January 1, 2024, the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** achieved a significant milestone by successfully testing a **100 W class Polymer Electrolyte Membrane Fuel Cell based Power System (FCPS)** in its orbital platform, **POEM3**. This remarkable feat took place aboard the **PSLV-C58 mission**, marking a crucial step in the assessment of fuel cell technology for future space missions. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a monumental achievement, the **Peregrine-1 lunar lander**, operated by private firm Astrobotic, successfully launched from Cape Canaveral, marking the first American lunar mission in 51 years. Scheduled to land on February 23, the mission, conducted under **NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) initiative**, aims to study the Moon's surface environment in preparation for upcoming human missions. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Microsoft India** has unveiled the **'AI Odyssey' initiative**, aiming to train **100,000 Indian developers** in the latest AI technologies. Emphasizing AI as the future of innovation, Microsoft underscores India's leadership in tech talent. The program seeks to equip developers with skills essential for executing AI projects aligning with business goals. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Mitsubishi Heavy Industries** has achieved a significant milestone in space exploration and national security with the successful launch of an **H-IIA rocket carrying Japan's Information-Gathering Satellite "Optical-8"**. This event marks a key development in Japan's aerospace capabilities and strategic surveillance. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking initiative, researchers at the **University of Oxford in the United Kingdom** have commenced the **first-in-human vaccine trials for the deadly Nipah virus**. This initiative is a significant step forward in addressing the severe impact of the virus on various Asian countries, including India. The trials will be conducted on 51 individuals aged 18 to 55 and are led by the Oxford Vaccine Group. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- The Indian Science, Technology, and Engineering facilities Map, known as **I-STEM**, is set to embark on a groundbreaking initiative named **'Samavesha.'** This ambitious project, spearheaded by the Office of Principal Scientific Advisor, Government of India, aims to **transform research collaboration in the country** by facilitating easier access to scientific facilities and laboratories. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** has been at the forefront of technological innovation, contributing significantly to various fields. One such noteworthy development is the second-generation **'Distress Alert Transmitter' (DAT-SG)**, a remarkable advancement in satellite communication and navigation capabilities. Operational since **2010**, the DAT-SG has become a crucial tool for fishermen at sea, allowing them to send emergency messages and receive real-time acknowledgments. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant development, MeitY Secretary S Krishnan inaugurated the **India Innovation Centre for Graphene (IICG)** and a Centre of Excellence (CoE) in **Intelligent Internet of Things (IIoT) Sensors** in Kerala. The Digital University Kerala (DUK) (formerly IIITMK) and CMET, Thrissur, play crucial roles as technical partners in establishing these pioneering centers. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a significant industry shift, **Apple Inc.'s iPhone** has outpaced **Samsung Electronics Co. devices**, securing the title of the best-selling smartphone series in 2023. This marks the first time since 2010 that Samsung has conceded the top spot in the smartphone market. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Japan** is poised to join an exclusive group of nations that have successfully landed on the Moon. The **Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM)**, developed by the **Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)**, is scheduled to touch the lunar surface on January 20, 2024. This mission marks a significant milestone in Japan's space exploration endeavours and offers a unique opportunity to advance lunar science. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a historic event, SpaceX successfully launched the **Ax-3 mission** to the International Space Station (ISS) from NASA's Kennedy Space Center on January 18. The Crew Dragon capsule, named "Freedom," was propelled into space atop a Falcon 9 rocket, marking the third mission organized by Houston-based Axiom Space. The launch, initially scheduled for January 17, was delayed by a day for additional prelaunch checks. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **CoRover.ai**, a leading player in the Conversational AI space, has recently introduced **BharatGPT, India's first Large Language Model (LLM)**. This groundbreaking development aims to revolutionize **AI conversations across 22 Indian languages**, addressing the language diversity challenges prevalent in the country. Positioned as an Indigenous Generative AI platform, BharatGPT integrates seamlessly with both voice and text modalities, offering a unique solution to the complexities of linguistic diversity. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** announced that it has successfully executed all experiments within the **Payload Orbital Experiment for Microgravity (POEM-3)** mission, which was launched as part of the PSLV-C58 mission. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)** is set to launch its latest meteorological satellite, **INSAT-3DS**, marking a significant advancement in India's space capabilities. This satellite, **designed to enhance weather forecasting and disaster management**, represents a culmination of rigorous testing and collaboration between ISRO and various stakeholders. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a remarkable discovery, scientists have identified a new species of tiny lizards in the biodiverse forests of the Western Ghats, describing them as **"diminutive dragons."** The newfound species, named **Agasthyagama edge** or the northern kangaroo lizard, belongs to the **Agamidae family**, characterized by its diminutive size with a maximum snout-vent length of 4.3 cm. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a groundbreaking development, **Neuralink**, the neurotechnology company co-founded by **Elon Musk**, has successfully implanted its first brain chip into a human being. This marks a significant step forward in the field of **brain-computer interfaces (BCIs)** and opens up a myriad of possibilities for the future of medical treatment and human enhancement. ([Read the Complete Article](#))



Books & Authors

- In a significant cultural event, the Governor of Kerala, **Arif Mohammad**, unveiled a book titled **“Ram Mandir Rashtra Mandir Ak Sajhi Virast”** at the Rang Bhawan Auditorium in Delhi. The book launch ceremony was attended by prominent figures, including Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP) president Alok Kumar and Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Teerth Kshetra Treasurer Govind Giri Maharaj. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi** was graced with a special presentation. BJP State President K. Annamalai presented him with a unique coffee table book titled **“Srirangam – The Resplendent Kingdom of Rangaraja.”** This significant work, published by The Hindu Group of Publications, was launched during the auspicious Vaikunta Ekadasi festival at the Sri Ranganathaswamy Temple in Srirangam. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- General Manoj Mukund Naravane**, the former Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) of the Indian Army, has penned his autobiography titled **“Four Stars of Destiny: An Autobiography.”** ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- General V.K. Singh (Retd.)**, Union Ministers of State (MoS), Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) and Ministry of Civil Aviation (MoCA) released the book **‘Sanskriti ke Ayaam’** authored by **Manorama Mishra**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Union Minister Bhupender Yadav**, heading the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC), has recently unveiled an insightful book titled **“Modi: Energising A Green Future”**. This book, a significant addition to environmental literature, is published by Pentagon Press in collaboration with the **Dr. Shyama Prasad Mookerjee Research Foundation**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Renowned author **M.J. Akbar**, along with co-author **K. Natwar Singh**, launched a new book titled **“Gandhi: A Life in Three Campaigns.”** This book was unveiled at a significant event hosted by **Nripendra Misra**, Chairman of the Executive Council of the Prime Minister’s Museum and Library Society, at the Prime Minister’s Museum and Library at the Pradhan Mantri Sangrahalaya. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The book **“An Uncommon Love: The Early Life of Sudha and Narayana Murthy,”** authored by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- “Conversations with Aurangzeb”** is a novel by **Tamil literary icon Charu Nivedita**, translated into English by **Nandini Krishnan**. This book represents a unique fusion of historical narrative and satirical commentary, offering readers a fresh perspective on both historical and contemporary themes. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, **Shri Amit Shah**, released the book **‘Assam’s Braveheart Lachit Barphukan’** in Guwahati, Assam. The event witnessed the presence of several dignitaries, including Assam Chief Minister **Shri Himant Biswa Sarma**.
- Assam Chief Minister **Himanta Biswa Sarma** released the first edition of **‘Political History of Assam (1947-1971)- Volume 1**, marking a significant step in documenting the state’s political journey. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- ‘Ek Samandar, Mere Andar,’** a collection of 75 poems penned by **BrahMos Aerospace Deputy CEO Sanjeev Joshi**, was launched in a prestigious event graced by top Indian defence and literary figures. This book reflects the confluence of creative expression and defence expertise. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Miscellaneous Current Affairs

- In a remarkable archaeological discovery, an inscription dating back to the **10th century A.D.** has been found in the **Mahadeva temple at Cacoda in southern Goa**. The inscription, written in both Kannada and Sanskrit, sheds light on a historical episode during the Kadamba period, providing valuable insights into the region’s past. Retired associate professor **T. Murugeshi**, specializing in ancient history and archaeology at **Mulki Sundar Ram Shetty College in Udupi district**, meticulously studied the inscription.
- Kyrgyzstan**, a country nestled in the heart of Central Asia, has **officially declared the snow leopard as its national symbol**, signifying a profound commitment to conservation and ecological balance. **President Sadyr Zhaparov**, through a signed decree, emphasized the snow leopard’s role not only as a symbol of natural wealth and cultural prosperity but also as a vital indicator of the stability and health of the mountain ecosystems that cover a substantial portion of the global territory. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a remarkable achievement, **Delhi’s per capita income** surged by over 14%, reaching Rs 4,44,768 in the current fiscal year. The latest **Statistical Handbook-2023**, released by the Economic and Statistics department of the Delhi government, highlights the capital’s outstanding socio-economic progress. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- International Purple Fest – Goa 2024**, India’s inaugural inclusive festival for persons with disabilities, kicked off today and is set to captivate audiences until January 13. The festival, organized by the Office of the State Commissioner of Persons with Disabilities, Government of Goa, and supported by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, showcases unity and diversity in a spectacular display. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

- Kerala teenager **Suchetha Satish** achieved a remarkable feat by setting a **Guinness World Record** during her performance at the 'Concert for Climate' in **Dubai** on November 24, 2023. Singing in an astounding **140 languages**, she captivated the audience and earned widespread acclaim for her musical prowess. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The **Ganga Sagar Mela** stands as a testament to the vibrant cultural and spiritual tapestry of India. Held annually in **Sagardwip, West Bengal**, this magnificent fair has earned the distinction of being the **second most popular mela** in the country, surpassed only by the revered **Kumbh Mela**. The festival draws a massive influx of devotees who converge to partake in rituals, seek spiritual purification, and celebrate with immense fervor. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Delhi Lieutenant Governor **VK Saxena** inaugurated the much-anticipated '**Patang Utsav**' at **Bansera**, the city's first bamboo-theme park located at Sarai Kale Khan on the scenic banks of the Yamuna River. The two-day festival, organized by the Delhi Development Authority, **promises a visual feast as over 30 professional kitists from diverse states**, including Rajasthan, Sikkim, Maharashtra, Karnataka, Punjab, Lakshadweep, and Gujarat, showcase their artistic prowess in the sky. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- As the devoted city of Ayodhya eagerly counts down to the grand opening of the **Ram Temple on January 22**, a spectacular celebration is set to unfold. In a remarkable display, the **world's largest lamp, standing at an impressive 300 feet**, will illuminate the city at **5:00 p.m. on Friday, adding a dazzling touch to the festivities**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- As the **Ram Mandir in Ayodhya** gears up for its **Pran Pratishtha (consecration) ceremony**, it has received two unique offerings: the **world's largest lock, weighing 400 kg, and a colossal 1,265 kg laddoo Prasad**. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The vibrant **Mamani Ethnic Food Festival of Purig**, held annually at Heritage Village Styangkung Barsoo, stands as a triumphant celebration of culinary diversity, cultural heritage, and community unity. Organized by the **Himalayan Cultural Heritage Foundation** in collaboration with **Nyarpa Committee Styangkung**, this annual festival has become a cornerstone in preserving and reviving the rich traditions of the Ladakh region. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Kachchhi Kharek**, the indigenous date variety from the arid region of **Kutch in Gujarat**, has recently been awarded the prestigious **Geographical Indication (GI) tag**. This accolade recognizes Kachchhi Kharek as the second fruit from Gujarat, after the **Gir Kesar mango**, to be distinguished with such an honour. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **The Doomsday Clock**, established by the **Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists**, is a metaphorical representation of the proximity of humanity to global catastrophes, primarily caused by man-made technologies and environmental challenges. Recently, this symbolic clock has drawn significant attention due to its alarming setting close to midnight. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** is on the brink of etching her name in history books as she gears up to **present her sixth consecutive Budget** (Five consecutive annual Budgets and one interim Budget), an unparalleled feat in Indian parliamentary annals. Building upon her legacy of fiscal stewardship, Sitharaman's tenure resonates with the tenure of former Prime Minister Morarji Desai, who previously held the finance portfolio during 1959-1964. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- In a monumental stride towards sustainability, maritime titan **Maersk** unveils its latest marvel: **the Ane Maersk**, a revolutionary container vessel powered by green methanol derived from green hydrogen. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- On the **occasion of the 159th birth anniversary of Lala Lajpat Rai, January 28, 2024**, we commemorate the life and contributions of one of India's most revered freedom fighters, politicians, and authors. Fondly known as **Punjab Kesari, Lala Lajpat Rai** left an indelible mark on India's struggle for independence and its socio-political landscape. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- On **January 28**, we celebrate the **birth anniversary of Field Marshal Kodandera M. Cariappa**, the **inaugural Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army**. Recognized as a national hero, Cariappa's pivotal role in shaping the Indian military from colonial to independent India remains revered. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **India** has nominated the '**Maratha Military Landscapes**' for inclusion in the **UNESCO World Heritage List for the 2024-25 cycle**. This significant move by the Culture Ministry highlights the exceptional fortification and military systems envisioned by the Maratha rulers. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- A remarkable feat unfolded as two-year-old **Carter Dallas** from **Scotland** etched his name into the annals of mountaineering history by becoming the **youngest person to reach the Mount Everest base camp**. Accompanied by his parents, Ross and Jade, Carter embarked on an extraordinary journey that captured the world's attention. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Obituaries Current Affairs

- **Professor Ved Prakash Nanda**, a luminary in the Indian diaspora, recently passed away, leaving behind a legacy of profound contributions to literature, education, and international law.
- **Franz Beckenbauer**, one of only three men to have won the **FIFA World Cup** as a player and as a manager, has died at the age of 78. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Indian classical music world mourns the passing of **Ustad Rashid Khan**, a towering figure who left an indelible mark on the **Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana and beyond**. At just 55, this musical prodigy succumbed to complications arising from prostate cancer, leaving a legacy that resonates with profound beauty and innovative spirit. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **German actor Christian Oliver**, known for his roles in films like Speed Racer and Valkyrie, met an untimely demise in a plane crash in the Caribbean. The 51-year-old actor, whose real name was Christian Klepser, was accompanied by his two daughters, Madita, 10, and Annik, 12. The **ill-fated flight was en route to St Lucia** after departing from the nation of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines (SVG). ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Munawwar Rana**, a celebrated Urdu poet, passed away at the age of 71 due to cardiac arrest in Lucknow. He had been enduring a prolonged illness, including throat cancer, kidney, and heart-related ailments. He was receiving treatment at the Sanjay Gandhi Post Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences (SGPGIMS) in Lucknow. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The Indian classical music fraternity mourns the loss of **Dr. Prabha Atre**, a revered classical vocalist and a luminary of the Kirana Gharana, who passed away in Pune at the age of 91. Known for her multifaceted contributions to the world of music, Dr. Atre's passing brings an end to a glorious chapter in the history of Indian classical music. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- Malayalam music director **K J Joy** has passed away in Chennai. **He was 77 years old**. Joy, is known as the first 'techno musician' in the Malayalam film music world for his use of instruments like the keyboard in the 1970s. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Norman Jewison**, the acclaimed Canadian director best known for his work on the classic film '**In the Heat of the Night**', has passed away at the age of 97. His death marks the end of a remarkable era in cinema history, where Jewison's contributions played a pivotal role in shaping the landscape of modern filmmaking. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- **Dr. Nitya Anand**, who made the first oral contraceptive pill '**Saheli**' in India, passed away at 99 in Lucknow. Dr. Anand was in charge of the Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) from 1974 to 1984. He was part of CDRI since it started in 1951. He guided 100 PhD students, wrote over 400 papers, and had more than 130 patents. ([Read the Complete Article](#))
- The academic community is in mourning following the passing of **R. Champakalakshmi**, a revered historian, former president of the Indian History Congress, and professor at the Centre for Historical Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University. ([Read the Complete Article](#))

Static Current Affairs

- UNESCO Headquarters: Paris, France;
- UNESCO Founded: 16 November 1945, London, United Kingdom;
- UNESCO Head: Audrey Azoulay; (Director-General).
- Press Council of India Headquarters: New Delhi;
- Press Council of India Founder: Parliament of India;
- Press Council of India Founded: 4 July 1966, India.
- Justice Ranjana Prakash Desai is chairman of the council .
- All India Football Federation President: Kalyan Chaubey;
- All India Football Federation Founded: 23 June 1937;
- All India Football Federation HQ: Dwarka, New Delhi.
- Adobe CEO: Shantanu Narayen (1 Dec 2007-);
- Adobe Headquarters: San Jose, California, United States;
- Adobe Founders: Charles Geschke, John Warnock;
- Adobe Founded: December 1982, Mountain View, California, United States.
- Assam's Industries & Commerce Minister: Chandra Mohan Patowary
- The Chairman and Managing Director of VA Tech Wabag: Rajiv Mittal
- Singapore's Minister for Education: Mr Chan Chun Sing
- State Bank of India (SBI) Chairman – Dinesh Kumar Khara
- State Bank of India (SBI) Headquarters – Mumbai, Maharashtra
- State Bank of India (SBI) Established in – 1955
- State Bank of India (SBI) Tagline – The Banker to Every Indian
- Managing Director & CEO of YES BANK: Mr. Prashant Kumar
- Chief executive officer (CEO) of Jio Financial Services: Hitesh Sethia
- Official currency of Thailand: Thai baht
- Khelo India Programme was launched in the year: 2018
- Chief Marketing and Communications Officer at Mastercard: Raja Rajamannar
- Chief Executive Officer of ICC: Geoff Allardice
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL): Shri Mihir Kanti Mishra
- Wrestling Federation of India President: Brij Bhushan Sharan Singh;

- Wrestling Federation of India Founded: 27 January 1967;
- Wrestling Federation of India Headquartered in New Delhi, India.
- Minister of Assam for Environment and Forest: Chandra Mohan Patowary
- Competition Commission of India (CCI) was formed on: October 14, 2003.
- Chairperson of the Competition Commission of India (CCI): Ravneet Kaur.
- Minister of Assam for Environment and Forest: Chandra Mohan Patowary
- Competition Commission of India (CCI) was formed on: October 14, 2003.
- Chairperson of the Competition Commission of India (CCI): Ravneet Kaur.
- Chairman of All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE): T G Sitharam
- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) Founded: 1 October 2003;
- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) Headquarters: Chōfu, Tokyo, Japan.
- United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Secretary-General: Zurab Pololikashvili;
- United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Headquarters: Madrid, Spain;
- United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO) Establishment: 1975.
- Mozambique Capital: Maputo;
- Mozambique Official language: Portuguese;
- Mozambique Currency: Mozambican metical;
- Mozambique Government: Republic, Semi-presidential system, Unitary state, Constitutional republic;
- Mozambique Population: 3.21 crores (2021) World Bank;
- Mozambique President: Filipe Jacinto Nyusi;
- Prime Minister of Mozambique: Adriano Afonso Maleiane.
- SEBI Formed: April 12, 1988;
- SEBI Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra;
- SEBI Chairperson: Madhabi Puri Buch.
- Survey of India (Sol) Surveyor General of India– Hitesh Kumar S. Makwana;
- Survey of India (Sol) Headquarters– Dehradun, Uttarakhand;
- Survey of India (Sol) Established in– 1767.
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization Director General: Gerd Müller;
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization Headquarters: Vienna, Austria;
- United Nations Industrial Development Organization Founded: 17 November 1966.
- CEO of JioMart: Sandeep Varaganti
- Union Minister of Environment, Forest and Climate Change: Bhupender Yadav
- Chief of the Air Staff of India: Vivek Ram Chaudhari
- Chief Minister of Assam: Himanta Biswa Sarma
- President of Badminton World Federation: Poul-Erik Hoyer Larsen
- Headquarters of Badminton World Federation: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- Chairman & MD of Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers (RCF): S. C. Mudgerikar
- Adobe Founded: December 1982, Mountain View, California, United States.
- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) Founded: 1 October 2003;
- Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) Headquarters: Chōfu, Tokyo, Japan.
- Universal Postal Union Headquarters: Bern, Switzerland;
- Universal Postal Union Founded: 9 October 1874;
- Universal Postal Union Founder: Heinrich von Stephan;
- Universal Postal Union Head: Director-General; Masahiko Metoki;
- Universal Postal Union Parent organization: United Nations Economic and Social Council.
- President of the World Federation for Mental Health: Dr. Nasser Loza;
- World Federation for Mental Health Founded: 1948.
- IDFC FIRST Bank CEO: V. Vaidyanathan (19 Dec 2018–);
- IDFC FIRST Bank Ltd: Mumbai.
- CEO & Managing Director of The Tata Power Company Limited: Praveer Sinha
- MD of Bridgestone India: Stefano Sanchini
- International Olympic Committee President: Thomas Bach;
- International Olympic Committee Headquarters: Lausanne, Switzerland;
- International Olympic Committee Founded: 23 June 1894, Paris, France;
- International Olympic Committee Director General: Christophe De Kepper;
- International Olympic Committee Founders: Pierre de Coubertin, D. Bikélas;
- International Olympic Committee Official language: French.
- Association of Mutual Funds in India Founded: 22 August 1995;
- Association of Mutual Funds in India Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra, India.
- World Health Organization (WHO) Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland;
- World Health Organization (WHO) Founded: 7 April 1948;
- World Health Organization (WHO) Director-General: Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus;
- International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness Founded: 1975;
- International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness Chief Executive: Peter Holland;
- International Agency for the Prevention of Blindness Headquarters: London.

List of 8 Wonders of the World

S.No.	Wonder	Location	Description	Notable Features
1.	Great Wall of China	China	An extensive wall built to protect the Chinese states against invasions. Spanning over 13,000 miles, it's the largest man-made structure in the world.	Ancient defensive architecture
2.	Chichen Itza	Mexico	A complex of Mayan ruins famous for the Kukulcan Pyramid (El Castillo). This site exemplifies the Mayan-Toltec civilization in the Yucatán.	Mesoamerican pyramids, architecture
3.	Petra	Jordan	An archaeological city known for its rock-cut architecture and water conduit system. Famous for the Al-Khazneh temple and its Hellenistic facades.	Nabatean architecture, historical significance
4.	Machu Picchu	Peru	An Incan citadel set high in the Andes Mountains with sophisticated dry-stone walls. Known for its historical connection with Inca civilization.	Inca architecture, panoramic views
5.	Christ the Redeemer	Rio de Janeiro, Brazil	A towering statue of Jesus Christ atop the Corcovado Mountain, known for its Art Deco style. It's a symbol of Christianity and a cultural icon of both Rio de Janeiro and Brazil.	Symbol of peace and Christianity
6.	The Colosseum	Rome, Italy	An ancient Roman amphitheater, known for its vast scale and is considered one of the greatest architectural feats of the Roman Empire.	Roman architecture, historical importance
7.	Taj Mahal	Agra, India	A white marble mausoleum built by Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in memory of his wife. It's celebrated for its architectural magnificence and aesthetic beauty.	Mughal architecture, symbol of love
8.	Angkor Wat	Cambodia	A temple complex and the largest religious monument in the world. Originally constructed as a Hindu temple dedicated to the god Vishnu, it was transformed into a Buddhist temple in the 14th century.	Hindu-Buddhist architecture, archaeological site

Comprehensive Book List on India's Budget and Economy

1. "India's Economic Policy: Preparing for the Future" by Arvind Panagariya
2. "Indian Economy: Performance and Policies" by Uma Kapila
3. "Budget 2023-24: Unraveling India's Fiscal Priorities" by Economic Times
4. "The Indian Fiscal System: A Comprehensive Guide" by M. L. Mathur
5. "India's Economic Reforms and Development: Essays for Manmohan Singh" edited by Isher Judge Ahluwalia
6. "Economic Survey of India" by Ministry of Finance, Government of India
7. "The Budgetary Process in India" by Bimal Jalan
8. "India's National Budget: A Blueprint for Growth" by C. Rangarajan
9. "Fiscal Policy in India: Trends and Trajectory" by Montek Singh Ahluwalia
10. "Indian Economy: Problems of Development and Planning" by D. Mishra
11. "Budget and Economic Survey: Decoding India's Financial Landscape" by Rajiv Mehrishi
12. "India's Economic Development: Strategies for the New Millennium" by S. P. Gupta
13. "Public Finance in India" by R. K. Lekhi
14. "Economic Policies and Performance in India" by Deepak Nayyar
15. "India's Economic Challenges" by Bibek Debroy
16. "Goods and Services Tax: Journey of One Nation, One Tax" by Arun Jaitley
17. "Economic Reforms in India: From First to the Second Generation and Beyond" by Jagdish Bhagwati
18. "Budgetary Politics in India" by Sudipta Adhikari
19. "India's Fiscal Federalism" by Y. V. Reddy and Sajal Lahiri
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