

Weekly Current Affairs 5th February to 10th February 2024 - English

National News

Union Culture Minister Lays Foundation Stone for India's Digital National Museum of Epigraphy

In a significant development for India's cultural heritage, Union Culture Minister **G. Kishan Reddy** recently laid the foundation stone for the country's **digital National Museum of Epigraphy at the Salar Jung Museum, Hyderabad**. Spearheaded by the **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)**, this museum aims to house approximately one lakh ancient writings spanning various times and languages, preserving them for future generations.

International News

Namibian President Hage Geingob Passes Away at 82

Namibia is mourning the loss of **President Hage Geingob**, who succumbed to cancer at the age of 82. He had been undergoing treatment for the illness, leaving the nation in a period of transition.

Michelle O'Neill Becomes Northern Ireland's First Minister

In a groundbreaking move, **Michelle O'Neill**, an Irish nationalist representing Sinn Fein, has been appointed as **Northern Ireland's First Minister**. This marks a significant departure from the traditional dominance of pro-British unionists in the region's political landscape.

France Takes Lead as First EU Nation to Offer Digital Visas

As of January 1, 2024, France has pioneered the issuance of **Digital Schengen visas**, marking a significant leap in streamlining visa processes within the **European Union**. This groundbreaking initiative precedes the broader digitalization of Schengen visa procedures scheduled for full implementation in **2026**. The move is strategically aligned with the preparations for the **2024 Olympic and Paralympic Games in Paris**, with French authorities aiming to distribute around **70,000 digital visas**.

Yemen Appoints Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak as New Prime Minister

Yemen's Presidential Leadership Council, in a significant move, appointed Foreign Minister **Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak** as the country's new Prime Minister. This appointment comes at a critical time as Yemen faces increased tensions and security challenges. The outgoing Prime Minister, **Maeen Abdulmalik Saeed**, has been appointed as an advisor to the Chairman of the Presidential Leadership Council, marking a notable shift in the country's political landscape.

Israeli Researchers Uncover Underwater Canyon Near Cyprus

The **Geological Institute of Israel** has recently made a groundbreaking discovery near Cyprus, uncovering an underwater canyon of unprecedented proportions. Named **Eratosthenes** after the nearby underwater mountain, this canyon sheds new light on the geological history of the Mediterranean region.

Sri Lanka Pursues Free Trade Agreements with India to Boost Economic Growth

Sri Lanka, facing economic challenges and seeking to spur growth, plans to establish **free trade agreements (FTAs)** with several countries including India by the end of 2024. Foreign Minister **Ali Sabry** outlined the government's strategy to address the nation's economic woes.

- Sri Lanka aims to finalize an FTA with **India** by the end of 2024, alongside similar agreements with **Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, and China**.
- These agreements are intended to open new markets for Sri Lankan businesses, contributing directly to economic growth.
- Iran Abolishes Visa Requirements for Indian Tourists from Feb 4, 2024
- Iran eliminates visa requirements for Indian tourists from **February 4, 2024**, aiming to boost tourism and global engagement. Indian ordinary passport holders can visit every six months for up to 15 days. The move extends to 33 countries, acknowledging India's growing outbound tourism market.

State News

Uttarakhand Cabinet Approves Uniform Civil Code Bill: Tabled in Assembly on Feb 6

The Uttarakhand Cabinet, led by Chief Minister **Pushkar Singh Dhami**, has greenlit the **Uniform Civil Code (UCC) bill**, marking a historic move. The bill, crafted based on recommendations from a government-appointed committee, will be presented in the **Uttarakhand Assembly on February 6**. If passed, Uttarakhand would be the first state post-Independence to adopt the Uniform Civil Code, aiming to standardize civil laws for all citizens, irrespective of their religious affiliations.

Bharat Rang Mahotsav, India's Biggest Theatre Festival, Kicks Off In Gujarat

The prestigious **Bharat Rang Mahotsav**, India's foremost theatre festival, inaugurated its festivities in the culturally vibrant **Kachchh** district of Gujarat, heralding the onset of a lively homage to the performing arts.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Inaugurates ONGC Sea Survival Centre in Goa

Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently embarked on a day-long visit to **Goa**, where he inaugurated several significant infrastructural projects aimed at advancing various sectors, including sea survival training, energy, education, and waste management. These projects not only signify India's progress towards self-reliance but also underscore the government's commitment to fostering development and innovation across different domains.

Economy News

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RBI Monetary Policy, Repo Rate Holds Steady at 6.5%

The Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has made a pivotal announcement, maintaining the repo rate at **6.5 per cent**. This decision marks the sixth consecutive time the rate has remained unchanged, following closely on the heels of the Interim Budget presented on February 1, 2024. The RBI's stance continues to focus on the withdrawal of its accommodative monetary policy, aiming to balance inflation control with economic growth. The next meeting of the MPC is scheduled during **April 3 to 5, 2024**.

Rankings & Reports News

Mukesh Ambani Tops Global Brand Guardianship Index 2024

In a remarkable achievement, Mukesh Ambani, the visionary leader steering Reliance Industries Limited, secures the first position among Indian executives and an impressive second globally in the prestigious **Brand Guardianship Index 2024** by Brand Finance. This recognition places Ambani ahead of renowned global leaders such as Satya Nadella, Sundar Pichai, Tim Cook, and Elon Musk.

India will become World's Biggest Oil Demand Growth Driver by 2030: IEA Projections

The **International Energy Agency (IEA)** forecasts India to become the primary driver of global oil demand growth by

2030, despite a projected decline in domestic production. This trend, highlighted at the **India Energy Week 2024**, underscores India's emergence as the second-largest crude importer worldwide.

India Ranks 38th Out Of 139 Countries In The World Bank's LPI Report 2023

India's logistics performance has seen remarkable improvements, as indicated by its rank in the **Logistics Performance Index (LPI) Report by the World Bank**. Through collaborative efforts among various ministries and departments, alongside the implementation of key policies and initiatives, India is advancing towards enhancing its competitiveness globally.

Business News

Tata Group Achieves Historic ₹30 Lakh Crore Market Cap, with TCS Crosses 15 Lakh Crore

Tata Group has made history by becoming the first Indian conglomerate to surpass the **₹30 lakh crore mark** in combined market capitalization. This significant achievement is driven by strong performances from key subsidiaries, including **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), Tata Motors, Tata Power, and Indian Hotels**.

Agreement News

Maharashtra Proposes 40 Ropeway Projects, Inks MoU With NHAI For Execution

The collaboration between the **Maharashtra government** and the **National Highways Logistic Management Limited (NHLML)** marks a significant step towards advancing connectivity and tourism development through ropeways under the **National Ropeway Programme 'Parvatmala'**.

UAE's ADIA Plans \$4-5 Billion Investment in India via GIFT City

The Abu Dhabi Investment Authority (ADIA), the largest sovereign wealth fund in the UAE, is establishing a substantial investment fund totaling **\$4-5 billion through India's Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City)**, situated in Prime Minister Narendra Modi's home state.

India-Russia Sign Protocol on Nuclear Reactors Agreement

India and Russia have strengthened their long-standing nuclear cooperation with the signing of a protocol amending the 2008 intergovernmental agreement. The agreement focuses on the construction of additional nuclear reactors at the **Kudankulam Nuclear Power Project** site and the development of Russia-designed nuclear power plants at new locations in India.

ADB and Government of India Sign \$200 Million Loan for Brahmaputra River Project

The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has approved a **\$200 million loan** to enhance flood and riverbank erosion risk management along the Brahmaputra River in Assam, India. This project aims to build on previous successful initiatives and address the persistent challenges of flooding and erosion in the region.

Appointment News

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Naveen Tahilyani Appointed Tata Digital's New CEO & MD

Tata Digital has announced the appointment of **Naveen Tahilyani** as the new **Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director of Tata Group's e-commerce unit**. Tahilyani, who presently holds the position of CEO and MD at Tata AIA Life Insurance, is set to transition into his new role on February 19, taking over from Pratik Pal.

Ravi Kumar Jha Named MD & CEO of LIC Mutual Fund

LIC Mutual Fund Asset Management has appointed **Ravi Kumar Jha** as its Managing Director and Chief Executive. With over 30 years of experience at LIC, Jha brings a wealth of knowledge and expertise to his new role. He previously served in various capacities, most recently as an executive of corporate strategy until December 2023. Jha, aged 57, holds a bachelor's degree in commerce from Ranchi University.

Tata AIA Life Appoints Venkatachalam H as MD and CEO

Tata AIA Life Insurance has announced the appointment of its President and Chief Distribution Officer, **Venkatachalam H**, as the new **Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO)**, pending regulatory approval. This strategic move marks a new chapter for the company as Venkatachalam, a veteran in the insurance and financial services sector, prepares to steer Tata AIA Life towards future growth and innovation.

IRS Officer Narendra Kumar Yadav Leads the "Fit India" Movement as Brand Ambassador

Fit India Movement broke the mold by appointing **Narendra Kumar Yadav, an IRS officer**, as its new brand ambassador. This groundbreaking choice highlights the diverse paths to fitness and challenges us to rethink what it means to be a role model for a healthier India.

Science & Technology News

India's Woman Robot Astronaut "Vyommitra" will fly into Space ahead of ISRO's ambitious "Gaganyaan" mission

In a pioneering leap for India's space endeavors, **Vyommitra**, the woman robot astronaut developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), is set to embark on an uncrewed mission in the third quarter of this year. The mission, named after the Sanskrit words "**Vyoma**" (**Space**) and "**Mitra**" (**Friend**), signifies a significant stride towards the ambitious Gaganyaan mission, the country's maiden manned space flight, slated for 2025.

AIIMS Launches iOncology.ai for Early Cancer Detection

In a landmark collaboration between AIIMS, New Delhi, and the Centre for Development of Advanced Computing (CDAC), Pune, the groundbreaking **AI platform iOncology.ai** has been unveiled. This cutting-edge technology focuses on the early detection of cancer, particularly targeting breast and ovarian cancers, which are prevalent among women in India.

NASA Discovers Super-Earth in the Habitable Zone

NASA's Transiting Exoplanet Survey Satellite (TESS) has made a significant discovery—a **super-Earth** located in a habitable zone, offering tantalizing possibilities for the conditions conducive to life. This discovery sheds light on the diversity of planets in our universe and the potential for habitable worlds beyond our solar system.

NASA Launches PACE Mission to Study Oceans and Atmosphere

The vast expanse of our planet's oceans and the intricate dance of Earth's atmosphere hold key secrets to understanding and battling climate change. In a recent groundbreaking move, **NASA** launched the **Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, ocean Ecosystem (PACE)** mission, embarking on a crucial journey to unlock these mysteries. This ambitious project promises to revolutionize our understanding of the complex interactions between air, water, and life, providing invaluable insights into our planet's changing climate.

Summits & Conference News

PM Narendra Modi To Address World Government Summit In Dubai

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to address the prestigious **World Government Summit (WGS)** in Dubai on February 14. This marks his second invitation to the WGS, with the **first being in 2018**. The WGS, an annual global gathering held in Dubai since 2013, convenes world leaders, policymakers, and experts to tackle pressing global issues.

2024 World Governments Summit in Dubai: India, Türkiye, and Qatar Named Guests of Honor

The **2024 World Governments Summit**, scheduled to be held in Dubai from February 12-14, has designated **India, Türkiye, and Qatar** as guests of honor. Themed ‘Shaping Future Governments,’ the summit aims to facilitate

discussions among over 25 government and state heads worldwide.

Awards & Honors News

Grammy Awards 2024, Check The Complete List Of Winners
The **66th Annual Grammy Awards**, marking a significant milestone in the music industry, celebrated the most remarkable recordings, compositions, and artists of the year, from **October 1, 2022, to September 30, 2023**. Chosen meticulously by the esteemed members of The Recording Academy, this prestigious ceremony took place on February 4, 2024. Returning to the iconic **Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles for its 21st year**, the event was broadcast live on CBS, with streaming options available on Paramount, ensuring a global audience could partake in the festivities.

Category	Winner
Song of the Year	Billie Eilish – What Was I Made For? from Barbie
Best Pop Vocal Album	Taylor Swift – Midnights
Best R&B Song	SZA – Snooze
Best Country Album	Lainey Wilson – Bell Bottom Country
Best Música Urbana Album	Karol G – Mañana Será Bonito
Best Pop Solo Performance	Miley Cyrus – Flowers
Best Progressive R&B Album	SZA – SOS
Best R&B Performance	Coco Jones – ICU
Best Folk Album	Joni Mitchell – Joni Mitchell at Newport (Live)
Producer of the Year, Non-Classical	Jack Antonoff
Songwriter of the Year, Non-Classical	Theron Thomas
Best Pop Duo/Group Performance	SZA featuring Phoebe Bridgers – Ghost in the Machine
Best Dance/Electronic Recording	Skrillex, Fred again.. and Flowdan – Rumble
Best Pop Dance Recording	Kylie Minogue – Padam Padam
Best Dance/Electronic Music Album	Fred again.. – Actual Life 3 (January 1 – September 9 2022)
Best Traditional R&B Performance	PJ Morton featuring Susan Carol – Good Morning
Best R&B Album	Victoria Monét – Jaguar II
Best Rap Performance	Killer Mike featuring André 3000, Future and Eryn Allen Kane – Scientists & Engineers
Best Melodic Rap Performance	Lil Durk featuring J Cole – All My Life
Best Rap Song	Killer Mike featuring André 3000, Future and Eryn Allen Kane – Scientists & Engineers
Best Rap Album	Killer Mike – Michael
Best Country Solo Performance	Chris Stapleton – White Horse
Best Country Song	Chris Stapleton – White Horse
Best Song Written for Visual Media	Billie Eilish – What Was I Made For? from Barbie
Best Comedy Album	Dave Chappelle – What’s in a Name?

Best Global Music Album	Indian musicians Shankar Mahadevan and Zakir Hussain's fusion band 'Shakti'
Best African Music Performance	Tyla - Water
Best Musical Theater Album	Some Like It Hot
Best Alternative Music Album	boygenius - The Record
Best Alternative Music Performance	Paramore - This Is Why
Best Rock Album	Paramore - This Is Why
Best Rock Song	boygenius - Not Strong Enough
Best Metal Performance	Metallica - 72 Seasons
Best Rock Performance	boygenius - Not Strong Enough
Best Country Duo/Group Performance	Zach Bryan featuring Kacey Musgraves - I Remember Everything

PT Usha Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award by SJFI and DSJA

Legendary sprinter and current President of the Indian Olympic Association (IOA), **PT Usha**, was honoured with the prestigious '**Lifetime Achievement**' award. This accolade was presented to her by the **Sports Journalists Federation of India (SJFI) and Delhi Sports Journalists Association (DSJA)**, recognizing her extraordinary contributions to Indian athletics. The award ceremony saw the attendance of notable personalities, including **Rajeev Shukla, Member of Parliament - Rajya Sabha and Vice President of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**, and former Indian shooter **Jaspal Rana**, among the Guests of Honour.

Dr. Bina Modi Named 'Outstanding Business Woman Of The Year 2023'

Dr. Bina Modi, the esteemed Chairperson of Modi Enterprises, has been honored with the prestigious '**Outstanding Business Woman of the Year Award**'. This recognition, bestowed upon her by **Rajnath Singh**, Defence Minister of India, at a distinguished conference organized by the Indo-American Chamber of Commerce (IACC), underscores her exceptional leadership and contributions to the industry.

Bharat Ratna Award Winner 2024

Five people have been honored with the Bharat Ratna Award in 2024.

- **Karpuri Tagore:** A noted socialist leader and former Chief Minister of Bihar, was posthumously honored with Bharat Ratna, India's highest civilian award.
- **Lal Krishna Advani:** Veteran Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) leader Lal Krishna Advani has been honored with the prestigious Bharat Ratna Award. This recognition symbolizes a significant honor for Advani's contribution to Indian politics and public life.

- **PV Narasimha Rao, Chowdhury Charan Singh and eminent agricultural scientist MS Swaminathan:** honored with India's most prestigious civilian award for their unparalleled contribution to India's progress.

Pyarelal Sharma Honored with Lakshminarayana International Award

Pyarelal Sharma, one-half of the legendary composer duo **Laxmikant-Pyarelal**, has been felicitated with the prestigious Lakshminarayana International Award. This honour was bestowed upon him as part of the Lakshminarayana Global Music Festival, acknowledging his invaluable contributions to the Indian music industry.

Neeraj Chopra honoured at Jungfrau's Ice Palace in Switzerland

The iconic **Jungfrau**, also known as the **Top of Europe**, witnessed a momentous event recently. India's Olympic gold medalist and world champion javelin thrower, **Neeraj Chopra**, was honoured with a **commemorative plaque** at the renowned **Ice Palace**. This prestigious recognition adds another feather to his cap and strengthens the bond between **Switzerland and India**.

Sports News

Telangana Football Association To Host FIFA World Cup Qualifiers In Hyderabad

The **Telangana Football Association (TFA)** has achieved a significant milestone by securing approval to host the FIFA World Cup qualifiers round between **India and Kuwait**. The match is scheduled to take place on June 6th of this year in **Hyderabad**, announced Dr. K.T. Mahi, Chairman of TFA.

SCA Stadium Renamed in Honor of Niranjan Shah Ahead of India-England Test Match

Saurashtra Cricket Association (SCA) Stadium is set to be rebranded as the **Niranjan Shah Stadium**. This change comes as a tribute to the former first-class cricketer and senior cricket administrator, Niranjan Shah, marking his immense contributions to the sport and the region. The renaming ceremony will be a notable event, taking place in Khandheri, where the stadium has been a central hub for national cricket matches for over a decade.

FIFA To Introduce Blue Cards And Sin-Bins

The **International Football Association Board (IFAB)** is preparing to debut a new card, the **blue card** as part of trials involving sin bins in professional football. In November 2023, the governing body recognized the necessity of addressing player conduct towards match officials, leading to the implementation of temporary dismissals for dissent and certain tactical infractions.

SAFF Women's U-19 Championships: India and Bangladesh Declared Joint Winners

In a surprising turn of events, the **SAFF Women's U-19 Championships** concluded with **India** and **Bangladesh** being declared joint winners. The tournament, held in Dhaka, witnessed a series of unusual occurrences that led to this unprecedented decision.

NADA's "Road to Paris 2024" Conference: Promoting Clean Sports and Anti-Doping Unity

With the Paris Olympic Games approaching, the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) hosted the **"Road to Paris 2024: Championing Clean Sports and Uniting for Anti-Doping"** Conference. The event aimed to educate Indian athletes about the dangers of prohibited substances while emphasizing ethical competition.

Ethihad Airways Takes Flight as Official Sponsor of CSK

Ethihad Airways joins forces with the **Chennai Super Kings (CSK)** as their official sponsor, marking a thrilling new chapter for both entities. This strategic partnership, announced on February 9th, 2024, promises to propel the excitement of cricket to new heights for fans around the world.

Obituaries News

Rocky Actor Carl Weathers Passed Away At 76

On February 1st, 2024, the entertainment world was rocked by the news of the passing of **Carl Weathers**, a beloved Hollywood actor renowned for his unforgettable roles in

'Rocky' and 'Predator.' The announcement, made by **Deadline**, a leading US-based media outlet, marked the end of an era in Hollywood.

Farooq Nazki, poet and Sahitya Akademi Winner, Passes Away at 83

Farooq Nazki, a revered poet, broadcaster, and a distinguished recipient of the **Sahitya Akademi Award**. At the age of 83, Nazki's passing marks the end of an era in Kashmiri literature, leaving behind a legacy that will inspire generations to come. Known for his profound contributions to poetry and his efforts in cultural preservation, Nazki's life was a testament to the power of words in bridging hearts and minds across diverse backgrounds.

Former Chile President Sebastian Pinera Dies In Helicopter Crash

Chile's political landscape was shaken as news broke on February 6th of the tragic death of former **President Sebastian Pinera** in a helicopter crash in the south of the country. Pinera, aged 74, was a towering figure in Chilean politics, having **served two terms as president**, from 2010 to 2014 and again from 2018 to 2022. The nation mourns the loss of a leader who played a significant role in shaping its modern history.

Defence News

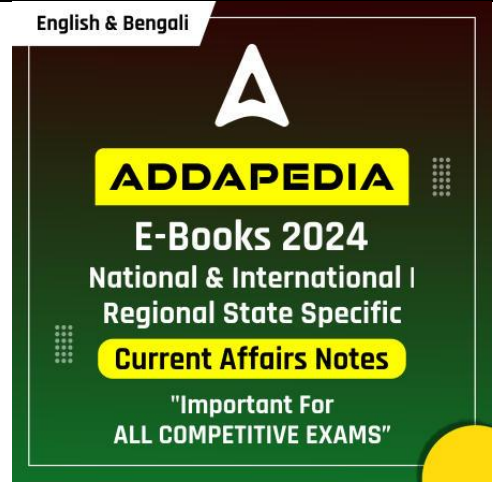
Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi Appointed Army Vice Chief

In a strategic move within the Indian Army, **Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi** has been appointed as the new **Army Vice Chief**, effective February 15. This transition signifies a seamless succession plan as Lt Gen Dwivedi steps into the role, succeeding Lt Gen MV Suchindra Kumar, who is set to assume command at the Northern Army Command in Udhampur.

Miscellaneous News

Health Minister Mansukh Mandaviya Inaugurates AIIMS Bhubaneswar's New Facilities

Union Health Minister **Mansukh Mandaviya** recently spearheaded the inauguration of cutting-edge healthcare facilities at **AIIMS Bhubaneswar**, marking a pivotal moment for healthcare in Odisha. Executive Director Ashutosh Biswas expressed gratitude towards Minister Mandaviya for his unwavering dedication to advancing healthcare in the region.



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