

Weekly One Liners 06th to 12th January, 2025

82nd Annual Golden Globe Awards (2025)

The 82nd Annual Golden Globe Awards, held on January 5, 2025, at The Beverly Hilton in Beverly Hills, California, celebrated the achievements of the film and television industries over the past year. From performances to direction, scriptwriting, and musical achievements, the event highlighted exceptional talent and groundbreaking works in both the motion picture and television sectors. Notable winners included Adrien Brody for Best Actor in a Motion Picture — Drama for *The Brutalist*, and Zoe Saldaña for Best Actress in a Supporting Role for *Emilia Pérez*. The ceremony was historic, with Nikki Glaser becoming the first woman to host the Golden Globes solo. Below is a summary of the winners and nominees across various categories.

Key Highlights of Event

Golden Globe 2025 Key Winners and Nominees

Category	Winners	Nominees
Best Performance by an Actor in a Motion Picture — Drama	Adrien Brody, "The Brutalist"	Timothée Chalamet, "A Complete Unknown" Daniel Craig, "Queer" Colman Domingo, "Sing Sing" Ralph Fiennes, "Conclave" Sebastian Stan, "The Apprentice"
Best Performance by an Actress in a Motion Picture — Drama	Fernanda Torres, "I'm Still Here"	Pamela Anderson, "The Last Showgirl" Angelina Jolie, "Maria" Nicole Kidman, "Babygirl" Tilda Swinton, "The Room Next Door" Kate Winslet, "Lee"
Best Motion Picture — Drama	"The Brutalist" "A Complete Unknown"	"Conclave" "Dune: Part Two" "Nickel Boys" "September 5"
Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role in any Motion Picture	Zoe Saldaña, "Emilia Pérez"	Ariana Grande, "Wicked" Selena Gomez, "Emilia Pérez" Felicity Jones, "The Brutalist" Margaret Qualley, "The Substance" Isabella Rossellini, "Conclave"
Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role in Any Motion Picture	Kieran Culkin, "A Real Pain"	Yura Borisov, "Anora" Edward Norton, "A Complete Unknown" Guy Pearce, "The Brutalist" Jeremy Strong, "The Apprentice" Denzel Washington, "Gladiator II"
Best Performance by an Actress in a Television Series — Musical or Comedy	Jean Smart, "Hacks"	Kristen Bell, "Nobody Wants This" Quinta Brunson, "Abbott Elementary" Ayo Edebiri, "The Bear" Selena Gomez, "Only Murders in the Building" Kathryn Hahn, "Agatha All Along"
Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series — Drama	Hiroeyuki Sanada, "Shōgun"	Donald Glover, "Mr. & Mrs. Smith" Jake Gyllenhaal, "Presumed Innocent" Gary Oldman, "Slow Horses" Eddie Redmayne, "The Day of the Jackal" Billy Bob Thornton, "Landman"
Best Screenplay — Motion Picture	Peter Straughan, "Conclave"	Jacques Audiard, "Emilia Pérez" Sean Baker, "Anora" Brady Corbet, Mona Fastvold, "The Brutalist" Jesse Eisenberg, "A Real Pain" Coralie Fargeat, "The Substance"

Category	Winners	Nominees
Best Original Song — Motion Picture	“El Mal,” by Clément Ducol, Camille, and Jacques Audiard (from “Emilia Pérez”)	“Beautiful That Way,” by Miley Cyrus, Lykke Li and Andrew Wyatt (from “The Last Showgirl”) “Compress/Repress,” by Trent Reznor, Atticus Ross & Luca Guadagnino (from “Challengers”) “Forbidden Road,” by Robbie Williams, Freddy Wexler & Sacha Skarbek (“Better Man”)
Best Motion Picture — Non-English Language	“Emilia Pérez” “All We Imagine as Light”	“The Girl with the Needle” “I’m Still Here” “The Seed of the Sacred Fig” “Vermiglio”
Best Director — Motion Picture	Brady Corbet, “The Brutalist”	Jacques Audiard, “Emilia Pérez” Sean Baker, “Anora” Edward Berger, “Conclave” Coralie Fargeat, “The Substance” Payal Kapadia, “All We Imagine as Light”
Best Motion Picture — Animated	“Flow”	“Inside Out 2” “Memoir of a Snail” “Moana 2” “Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl” “The Wild Robot”
Best Television Series — Drama	“Shōgun”	“Mr. & Mrs. Smith” “The Diplomat” “Squid Game” “Slow Horses” “The Day of the Jackal”
Best Performance by an Actor in a Television Series — Musical or Comedy	Jeremy Allen White, “The Bear”	Adam Brody, “Nobody Wants This” Ted Danson, “A Man on the Inside” Steve Martin, “Only Murders in the Building” Martin Short, “Only Murders in the Building” Jason Segel, “Shrinking”
Best Television Series — Comedy or Musical	“Hacks”	“Abbott Elementary” “The Bear” “The Gentlemen” “Nobody Wants This” “Only Murders in the Building”
Best Performance by an Actress in a Limited Series, Anthology Series or Motion Picture Made for Television	Jodie Foster, “True Detective: Night Country”	Cate Blanchett, “Disclaimer” Cristin Milioti, “The Penguin” Sofia Vergara, “Griselda” Naomi Watts, “Feud: Capote vs. The Swans” Kate Winslet, “The Regime”
Best Television Limited Series, Anthology Series or Motion Picture Made for Television	“Baby Reindeer”	“Disclaimer” “Monsters: The Lyle and Erik Menendez Story” “The Penguin” “Ripley” “True Detective: Night Country”

Other Notable Winners

Category	Winners Name
Best Performance by an Actress in a Supporting Role in a Television Series	Jessica Gunning, "Baby Reindeer"
Best Performance by an Actor in a Supporting Role in a Television Series	Tadanobu Asano, "Shōgun"
Best Performance in Stand-Up Comedy on Television	Ali Wong, "Single Lady"
Best Cinematic and Box Office Achievement	"Wicked"
Best Original Score — Motion Picture	Trent Reznor, Atticus Ross, "Challengers"

Amit Shah to Launch CBI's BHARATPOL Portal

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Shri Amit Shah, will launch the **BHARATPOL portal developed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)** on January 7, 2025, at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. The portal aims to facilitate real-time international police assistance and enhance India's efforts to combat transnational crimes. Developed by the CBI, which acts as the National Central Bureau (NCB) for INTERPOL in India, the portal will improve communication between law enforcement agencies (LEAs) across India and INTERPOL. The launch is part of the central government's initiatives to strengthen law enforcement agencies under the leadership of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. Shri Amit Shah will also present Police Medals to 35 CBI officers/officials during the event.

Key Points

Event Details

- **Occasion:** Launch of BHARATPOL Portal
- **Date:** January 7, 2025
- **Venue:** Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi
- **Launched By:** Union Home Minister Shri Amit Shah

About BHARATPOL Portal

- **Developed by:** Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI)
- **Purpose:** To facilitate real-time international police assistance for Indian law enforcement agencies (LEAs) through INTERPOL.
- **Access:** Available through the CBI's official website.



Key Objectives of BHARATPOL

Streamline Communication

- Enable faster communication between CBI, INTERPOL Liaison Officers (ILOs), and Unit Officers (UOs).
- Replace traditional communication modes like letters, emails, and faxes.

Real Time Assistance

- Facilitate quicker issuance of INTERPOL Red Notices and other colour-coded notices.
- Assist in dealing with transnational crimes.

Focus Areas of Crime

- Cybercrime
- Financial crimes
- Online radicalization
- Organized crimes
- Drug trafficking
- Human trafficking

CBI's Role as National Central Bureau (NCB)

- CBI serves as the NCB for INTERPOL in India.
- Coordinates international cooperation in criminal matters with law enforcement agencies at Central, State, and UT levels.
- Communication is done through INTERPOL Liaison Officers (ILOs) and Unit Officers (UOs) at the field level.

Benefits of BHARATPOL Portal

- Brings all stakeholders on a common platform for faster and smoother international assistance.
- Enhances efficiency of police officers at the field level.
- Helps in streamlining requests for international cooperation, including criminal investigations and issuing INTERPOL notices.

Medal Presentation by Amit Shah

- Shri Amit Shah will present Police Medals to 35 CBI officers/officials.
- President's Police Medals for Distinguished Service.
- Union Home Minister's Medal for Excellence in Investigation.

Dignitaries Present At Event

- Senior officers from,
- Ministry of Home Affairs
- Ministry of External Affairs
- DoPT (Department of Personnel and Training)
- Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)
- Central Police Organisations

India's First Coastal and Wader Bird Census in Jamnagar, Gujarat

From January 3 to 5, 2025, Gujarat's Jamnagar district hosted India's inaugural census of coastal and wader birds. This significant event aimed to enhance understanding of bird populations and their habitats along the state's coastline.

Event Overview

The census was conducted at the Marine National Park and Sanctuary in Jamnagar, India's first designated marine national park. Spanning approximately 170 km of coastline from Okha to Navlakhi, the park encompasses 42 islands and is situated in the Gulf of Kutch. This region is renowned for its rich marine biodiversity and mangrove ecosystems.

Participation and Activities

The three-day program involved over 100 bird watchers, including experts and researchers from across India. Activities included expert lectures, bird-counting sessions, and knowledge-sharing events. The census covered 25 to 30 wetland areas, such as Narara, Khijadiya, Mulvel, Poshitra, and Charakala, encompassing both protected and unprotected zones.

Significance of the Region

Jamnagar is home to over 300 bird species, including rare wader birds like the Crab Plover and the Great Knot. The Marine National Park lies along the Central Asian Flyway, a critical migratory route for birds extending from the Arctic to the Indian Ocean. This flyway serves as essential breeding and wintering grounds, contributing to global bird diversity.

Conservation Efforts

The Gujarat government's initiative to conduct this census reflects a commitment to bird conservation. By gathering data on bird populations, habitats, and migration patterns, the census aims to inform effective conservation strategies and ensure the sustainable preservation of avian biodiversity in the region.

Nadi Tarangini – India's First Ayurvedic Diagnostic Device Approved by CDSCO

On January 6, 2025, Nadi Tarangini, an AI-powered pulse diagnostic device developed by Atreya Innovations, received approval from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), making it India's first ayurvedic medical device to be

officially recognized. The device, which combines modern technology with ancient Ayurvedic practices, was created after over six years of research, and aims to revolutionize traditional Ayurvedic diagnostic methods by offering precise health insights through pulse examination.

Overview of Nadi Tarangini

First Ayurvedic Diagnostic Service

- India's first ayurvedic medical device to receive CDSCO approval.
- Developed to speed up traditional Ayurvedic practices using AI-powered technology.
- **Price:** ₹55,000
- **Manufacturer:** Atreya Innovations, based in Hinjewadi, Pune.

Development and Research

Brainchild

- **Conceived by Padma Bhushan awardee Prof. J.B. Joshi and Dr. Aniruddha Joshi after over six years of research at IIT Bombay.**
- Research initiated due to a personal health issue faced by Prof. J.B. Joshi, which highlighted the importance of pulse examination in Ayurveda.

Key Technology

- Uses piezoelectric pressure sensors to mimic the tactile sensation of pulse examination.
- Developed after testing multiple sensors to create a device that delivers accurate pulse readings.

Funding and Manufacturing Capacity

- **Seed funding of ₹5 crore** received to expand research and production capacity.
- **Production capacity:** 5,000 devices per year.

Functionality of Nadi Tarangini

Diagnostic Features

- The device analyzes 22 Ayurvedic parameters, including Tridosha balance (Vata, Pitta, Kapha), stress levels, digestive health, and overall well-being.
- Produces a 10-page report with detailed health insights based on pulse data.
- Report available in 10 Indian languages.
- Accuracy of the device is approximately 85%.

Use in Ayurveda

- Primarily used in over 1250 Ayurvedic clinics across India.
- More than 5 lakh individuals have been tested using the device.

Recognition and Patents

- **US Patent awarded for the sensing technology and process.**
- Patents also granted in Europe, Indonesia, and India.

Government and Public Reaction

- Mentioned by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in his Mann Ki Baat program, praising the device’s contribution to Ayurveda and technology integration.

Impact and Future Directions

Standardization of Ayurveda

- Nadi Tarangini is seen as a step towards standardizing Ayurvedic practices through the use of modern technology.
- It marks the beginning of integrating technology into traditional medicine, making it globally accessible.

Expansion Plans

- The company plans to increase its production and expand distribution to make the device widely available across the globe.

PRAVASI BHARATIYA DIVAS 2025

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, also known as Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Day, is an annual event celebrated on **January 9th** in India to honour and engage with the Indian diaspora worldwide. This significant occasion aims to strengthen the bonds between India and its overseas citizens, leveraging their expertise and resources for the nation’s development.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2025- Date

The 18th PBD Convention was held from January 8th to 10th, 2025, in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The convention focused on fostering deeper engagement with the diaspora, particularly youth, and exploring avenues for their active participation in India’s growth story.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2025-Theme

The theme for this year’s Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was **“Diaspora’s Contribution to a Viksit Bharat”**. This theme highlighted the significant contributions of the Indian diaspora in India’s development.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas- History

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas is celebrated to strengthen India’s ties with the Indian diaspora. This day is observed by the Government of India to acknowledge the contributions of Indian expatriates and to involve them in India’s development.

- **First Pravasi Bharatiya Divas:** The first Pravasi Bharatiya Divas was celebrated in 2003.
- **Objective:** The main objective of this day is to make the Indian diaspora partners in India’s development and to promote partnerships with them.
- **Significance:** Pravasi Bharatiya Divas plays a crucial role in strengthening relations between India and the Indian diaspora.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas-Key Events and Discussions

1. **Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas:** The convention commenced with a dedicated day for young diaspora members, focusing on their leadership potential and innovative ideas.
2. **Plenary Sessions:** A series of insightful plenary sessions were held, covering diverse topics such as:
 - **“Beyond Borders: Diaspora Youth Leadership in a Globalized World”**
 - **“Building Bridges, Breaking Barriers: Stories of Migrant Skills”**
 - **“Green Connections: Diaspora’s Contributions to Sustainable Development”**
3. **“Diaspora Divas: Celebrating Women’s Leadership and Influence – Nari Shakti”¹**
2. **Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards:** Prestigious awards were conferred upon distinguished members of the Indian diaspora who have made significant contributions to India and their respective host countries.
3. **Interactive Sessions:** A series of interactive sessions facilitated networking and knowledge sharing among participants, fostering a dynamic exchange of ideas and perspectives.

Pravasi Bharatiya Divas-Significance

- **Economic Growth:** The Indian diaspora plays a vital role in India’s economic development through:
- **Remittances:** Significant inflows of remittances from overseas Indians contribute significantly to India’s foreign exchange reserves and support economic growth.
- **Investments:** Investments from the diaspora in various sectors such as infrastructure, technology, and startups drive economic progress.
- **Skill and Expertise:** The diaspora brings valuable skills, knowledge, and expertise to India, contributing to innovation and development across various sectors.
- **Cultural Exchange:** PBD promotes cultural exchange between India and the global Indian community, fostering a deeper understanding and appreciation of Indian culture and heritage worldwide.
- **Soft Power Enhancement:** The event enhances India’s soft power by showcasing the achievements and contributions of the Indian diaspora on the global stage.
- **Building Bridges:** PBD serves as a crucial platform for building bridges between India and its diaspora, strengthening ties and fostering a sense of shared identity.

10 Years of UJALA Scheme

The UJALA (Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All) scheme, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 5th January 2015, has **completed a decade of impactful service to the nation**. This initiative, originally launched as the Domestic Efficient Lighting

Programme (DELP), revolutionized India's domestic lighting sector by providing affordable, energy-efficient LED bulbs, tube lights, and fans to households across the country. It has contributed to not only lowering energy consumption but also reducing carbon emissions, making India a global leader in energy-efficient lighting. The UJALA scheme, along with the **Street Lighting National Programme (SLNP)**, has significantly impacted the country's energy efficiency, economic savings, and environmental sustainability.

Key Highlights of UJALA Scheme

- **Launch Date:** 5th January 2015.
- **Vision:** To promote affordable energy-efficient lighting in Indian homes, reduce electricity consumption, and contribute to environmental sustainability.
- **Partnerships:** The scheme is jointly executed by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) and DISCOMs under the Ministry of Power.
- **Scope:** Distribution of LED bulbs, tube lights, and fans at affordable prices across India.
- **Objective:** To reduce energy consumption, lower household electricity bills, and decrease carbon emissions.
- **Impact:** As of 6th January 2025, the UJALA scheme has distributed 36.87 crore LED bulbs, leading to savings of ₹19,153 crore annually.

Illuminating Efficiency : Need for UJALA

Before UJALA, traditional lighting systems, such as incandescent bulbs (ICLs) and compact fluorescent lamps (CFLs), were widely used but consumed large amounts of electricity and were expensive for consumers. A significant barrier to the adoption of LED bulbs was their high initial cost, which was around ₹450-500 per bulb in 2014, compared to ₹100-150 for CFLs and ₹10-15 for ICLs. To overcome this challenge, the **UJALA scheme aimed to provide LED bulbs at significantly reduced rates**, thus facilitating widespread adoption and enabling consumers to save on energy costs.

- **Energy Efficiency:** A 7W LED bulb provides the same lighting as a 14W CFL and a 60W ICL, saving almost 90% of energy compared to ICLs and 50% compared to CFLs.
- **Affordability:** UJALA enabled consumers to purchase LED bulbs for ₹70, LED tube lights for ₹220, and energy-efficient fans for ₹1,110.
- **Cost Savings:** An LED bulb uses only 1 unit of electricity for 140 hours, compared to 2 units for a CFL and 9 units for an ICL. This results in a significant reduction in electricity costs.

UJALA's Decade of Impact

Since its launch, the UJALA scheme has had transformative effects on India's energy sector and consumer habits.

- **Distribution:** 36.87 crore LED bulbs have been distributed across India by 2025.

- **Economic Savings:** The scheme has resulted in an annual saving of ₹19,153 crore in electricity costs for households.
- **Environmental Impact:** The widespread adoption of LED lighting has contributed to reducing the nation's carbon footprint.
- **Market Transformation:** The UJALA scheme has successfully fostered the growth of the LED market, leading to 407.92 crore LED bulbs sold in India.

Street Lighting National Programmes (SLNP)

- **Implementation:** The program was implemented by EESL in collaboration with Urban Local Bodies (ULBs), Municipal Bodies, and Gram Panchayats (GPs).
- **Business Model:** EESL handles the upfront costs and recoups the investment through monthly or quarterly payments made by municipalities.
- **Achievements:** By January 2025, over 1.34 crore LED streetlights have been installed, saving 9,001 million units (MUs) of electricity annually.

Energy Savings and Environmental Benefits

- Reduction in peak demand by over 1,500 MW.
- Decrease in CO₂ emissions by 6.2 million tonnes annually.

Impact and Conclusion

The UJALA and SLNP schemes have had a transformative effect on India's energy consumption patterns and environmental sustainability:

- **Economic Impact:** UJALA has reduced household electricity bills, contributing to significant savings for Indian families.
- **Environmental Sustainability:** Both UJALA and SLNP have played a major role in reducing the nation's carbon footprint, supporting India's climate change mitigation efforts.
- **Market Shift:** UJALA's success in making LED technology affordable has transformed the lighting market in India, setting a global example of energy efficiency.

The UJALA scheme, alongside SLNP, reflects **India's commitment to sustainable development and energy efficiency**. These programs not only foster economic growth but also contribute significantly to global environmental goals, providing a model for energy-efficient initiatives worldwide.

NITI AAYOG Completes a Decade

NITI Aayog, established on January 1, 2015, emerged as a visionary reform in India's governance structure, replacing the Planning Commission to better address the needs of a growing, market-driven economy. In his first Independence Day speech in 2014, Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced NITI Aayog as an institution with a new design and structure, emphasizing a shift towards decentralization and competitive federalism. Over the past decade, NITI Aayog has evolved into a platform for policy

innovation, addressing the country's development challenges and promoting inclusive growth through collaborative governance. **This article examines NITI Aayog's evolution over the last 10 years, its key principles, major initiatives, and future challenges.**

**Key Insights and Achievements of NITI AAYOG's First Decade
Decentralization and Competitive Federalism**

- **The establishment of NITI Aayog marked a significant shift away from the centralization of power seen in the Planning Commission.**
- The focus has been on competitive and cooperative federalism, encouraging states to take initiative in their development.
- NITI Aayog introduced data-driven comparative indicators to track state progress and encourage healthy competition, such as the SDG India Index and the Composite Water Management Index.

Principle of Limited union-Level Involvement

- NITI Aayog's role at the Union level is to promote new initiatives and provide strategic advice, but it does not directly manage financial allocations.
- Union ministries remain responsible for implementing the programs, while NITI Aayog plays a coordinating and advisory role in cross-ministry issues.

Key Initiatives and Their Impact

Aspirational District Program – 2018

- Focused on improving conditions in 112 underdeveloped districts across India in areas like health, education, agriculture, and infrastructure.
- Monthly performance tracking and rewards for high-performing districts created healthy competition and encouraged local governance reforms.

Aspirational Block Program – 2013

- Expanded to 500 underdeveloped blocks, empowering local officials and ensuring 100% coverage of key government schemes at the block level.

Atal Innovation Mission

- Launched in 2016 to promote innovation and entrepreneurship through Atal Tinkering Labs and Atal Incubation Centres.
- AIM 2.0 aims to expand innovation ecosystems, especially in tribal and hilly regions like Jammu and Kashmir and the Northeast.

Production Linked Initiative

- Aimed at boosting manufacturing and job creation, it encourages domestic production in key sectors such as electronics, textiles, and automobiles.

Partnership with States and Local Governance

- NITI Aayog works as a neutral, politically independent body, fostering a partnership with states and union territories to create a shared vision for development.
- Annual meetings with Chief Ministers and Chief Secretaries provide an opportunity for collaboration and discussion on development priorities.
- The "Team India" concept emphasizes a unified approach to address the country's challenges and ensures that development transcends political differences.

Focus on Data Driven Decision-Making

- NITI Aayog has developed data-driven management systems to track national performance and ensure transparency in governance.
- The SDG India Index tracks states' progress toward Sustainable Development Goals, while other indices, such as the Composite Water Management Index, have been vital in tackling pressing issues like water scarcity.

Technological Innovation for Youth Employment

- PM Modi has highlighted the importance of technology in creating employment opportunities for India's youth. NITI Aayog's initiatives, like AIM and PLI schemes, aim to harness technological advancements for job creation and labor productivity.

Challenges and Future Directions

- **Cross-Departmental Coordination:** NITI Aayog's success hinges on its ability to work across departmental silos at the central level and with state governments to ensure coherence between short-term imperatives and long-term development goals.
- **Sustainability and Climate Goals:** NITI Aayog's role in aligning India's development agenda with global challenges, particularly climate change, will be crucial in the coming years.
- **Youth Employment and Skill Development:** As India's workforce continues to grow, NITI Aayog must focus on increasing employment opportunities and skill development, leveraging technology to meet the demands of the future workforce.

Goals for 2030

- **Energy Transition:** Achieving 50% of energy needs from renewable sources, with 500 GW of non-fossil energy capacity and reducing carbon emissions by one billion tonnes.
- **Public Health Enhancement:** Strengthening public health surveillance to cover non-communicable diseases and environmental conditions.
- **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):** Aligning national policies with SDGs, focusing on poverty reduction, education, and gender equality.

Vision for 2035

- **Economic Growth:** Focusing on long-term economic growth while ensuring social equity and environmental sustainability, leveraging technology and innovation.
- **Energy Security:** Ensuring energy access, affordability, and security to meet both present and future energy demands.
- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) Integration:** Utilizing AI in sectors like healthcare, agriculture, education, and urban infrastructure to improve efficiency and service delivery.

About NITI AAYOG

- **Established:** 2015, replacing the Planning Commission.
- **Aim:** Focus on contemporary challenges like sustainable development, policy innovation, and governance reforms.

Composition

- **Chairperson:** Prime Minister of India.
- **Vice-Chairperson and CEO:** Lead the executive functions.
- **Governing Council:** Includes Chief Ministers of states and Union Territories, Lieutenant Governors of Union Territories (except Delhi and Puducherry), Vice Chairman, and full-time members.

Roles of NITI-AAYOG

- **Policy Formulation & Strategic Advice:** Provides advice to central and state governments.
- **Promote Cooperative Federalism:** Encourages collaboration between state and central governments.
- **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Monitors the implementation of policies and programs.
- **Innovation & Research:** Promotes innovation and research in key sectors.
- **Promotion of SDGs:** Aligns development programs with global Sustainable Development Goals.

Pravasi Bharatiya Express Launched

On January 9, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flagged off the **Pravasi Bharatiya Express**, a special **state-of-the-art tourist train for the Indian diaspora**, from Bhubaneswar, Odisha. The launch coincides with the 110th anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi’s return to India from South Africa on this date in 1915. The train, designed under the Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana (PTDY), aims to connect Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) with India’s rich cultural and religious heritage by offering a fully sponsored tour across the country.

Key Features of Pravasi Bharatiya Express

- **Launch Date:** January 9, 2025
- **Flagged Off By:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi
- **Purpose:** To reconnect Indian diaspora with India’s cultural and religious roots
- **Organized Under:** Pravasi Teerth Darshan Yojana (PTDY) by the Ministry of External Affairs in collaboration with IRCTC

Eligibility Criteria For Travelers

- Only Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) in the age group of **45-65 years** can travel on this train.
- Preference given to PIOs from low-income categories, who otherwise cannot afford to visit India.

Government Support For Travelers

- The **Indian government will bear all expenses related to the train tour.**
- The government will **also cover 90% of the return airfare** from the PIOs’ country of origin to India.
- PIOs will only need to pay 10% of the return airfare.

Journey Details of Express

- **Tour Duration:** 14 Nights and 15 Days (total 17 days, including pre and post-tour stay)
- **Departure Station:** Delhi Safdarjung Railway Station
- **Tour Type:** Fully conducted tour across multiple destinations of cultural and religious significance in India.

Destinations Covered and Details

Destination	Key Attraction
Delhi	Parliament House, Rashtrapati Bhawan, India Gate, Bangla Sahib Gurudwara
Ayodhya	Ram Mandir, Hanuman Garhi, Kanak Bhawan, Saryu Aarti
Patna	Buddha Smriti Park, Patna Saheb Gurudwara
Gaya	Vishnupad Temple, Mahabodhi Temple, 80 ft Buddha Statue
Varanasi	Kashi Vishwanath Temple, Ganga Aarti
Mahabalipuram	Shore Temples
Rameshwaram	Dhanushkodi, Ramanathaswamy Temple
Madurai	Meenakshi Temple
Cochin	Fort Kochi, Chinese Fishing Nets, Cruise Ride
Goa	Basilica of Bom Jesus, North & South Goa
Ekta Nagar	Statue of Unity (World’s tallest statue of Sardar Patel)
Ajmer	Dargah of Khwaja Moinuddin Chishti
Pushkar	Brahma Temple, Pushkar Lake
Agra	Taj Mahal

Ticket and Tour Costs

- The train accommodates a maximum of 156 passengers.
- All travel, food, and accommodation costs during the train tour are covered by the government.
- The government will also cover 90% of return airfares, while PIOs will bear only 10% of the airfare cost.

Hanley Passport Index 2025

India's ranking in the Henley Passport Index for 2025 has dropped to 85th, five points lower than its 80th position in 2024. The index, based on data from the International Air Transport Authority (IATA), is a globally recognized tool for assessing passport mobility. Singapore retains its top spot for the second consecutive year, while Japan ranks second after holding the top position from 2018-2023.

Key Highlights

Henley Passport Index Overview

- **Published by Henley & Partners**, a citizenship advisory firm.
- Based on IATA data with historical data spanning 19 years.
- Includes 199 passports and 227 travel destinations.
- A standard reference for global mobility ranking.

India's Ranking Trends

- **2025:** 85th
- **2024:** 80th
- **Best ranking:** 71st (2006)
- **Lowest ranking:** 90th (2021)

India and Its Neighbor Country Rankings

- **China** – 60th
- **India** – 85th
- **Bhutan** – 90th
- **Sri Lanka**- 96th
- **Bangladesh** – 100th
- **Nepal** – 101st
- **Pakistan** – 103rd
- **Afghanistan** – 106th

Top 10 Rankers in Index

- **1st.** Singapore
- **2nd.** Japan
- **3rd.** Finland, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, South Korea
- **4th.** Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway
- **5th.** New Zealand, Switzerland, Portugal, United Kingdom
- **6th.** Australia, Greece
- **7th.** Canada, Malta, Poland
- **8th.** Czechia, Hungary
- **9th.** Estonia, United States
- **10th.** Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, UAE

Note: Many Countries are tied with same number of score in the index and they have same number of position in the index.

Key Global Ranking

- **Singapore:** 1st (second year in a row)
- **Japan:** 2nd (previously top from 2018-2023)
- **US:** Second-biggest faller over a decade, from 2nd (2015) to 9th (2025).

Notable Climbers and Fallers

- **China:** Improved from 94th (2015) to 60th (2025), gaining 40 visa-free destinations.
- Venezuela, US, Vanuatu, UK, and Canada are the top five fallers over the past decade.

Global Mobility Trends

- Only 22 passports have declined in ranking over the past decade.
- Wealthy individuals increasingly seek alternative residence or citizenship to optimize outcomes amid global volatility.

Earth Breaches 1.5°C Limit for the First Time in 2024

In a landmark event for climate change, **2024 became the first year in recorded history when the mean global temperature exceeded the critical 1.5°C threshold above pre-industrial levels**, as reported by the **Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S)**. This breach marks a dangerous trajectory for global warming, bringing humanity closer to a point of no return. Climate experts warn that if this trend continues without drastic emission cuts, global temperatures could exceed the 2°C limit by 2050, with devastating consequences for ecosystems, economies, and human livelihoods.

Key Highlights of the Report

Record Breaking Global Temperatures in 2024

- **2024 marked the first time global temperatures breached 1.5°C** above pre-industrial levels.
- The annual average global temperature was 15.1°C, making 2024 the warmest year on record.
- It was **1.60°C higher than pre-industrial levels (1850-1900)** and 0.72°C above the 1991-2020 average.
- Each month from January to June 2024 was warmer than any corresponding month in history.
- July 22, 2024, was recorded as the hottest day ever, with a global temperature of 17.16°C.

Sea Surface Temperature (SST) Records

- The **annual average sea surface temperature in 2024 was 20.87°C**, the highest ever recorded.
- SSTs were at record levels for the time of year from January to June 2024.
- From July to December 2024, SSTs were the second warmest on record, after 2023.

The Role of El Niño

- The El Niño phenomenon, which began in June 2023, contributed to the record temperatures in 2024.
- El Niño causes warming of the Central Equatorial Pacific Ocean, influencing global climate patterns.
- The anticipated La Niña cooling effect did not materialize in 2024.

Climate Implications for Developing Economies

- Developing economies are more vulnerable to climate disasters like floods, droughts, and heatwaves.
- Failed climate talks at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, highlight the challenge of securing financial support for mitigation efforts.
- Experts warn that developing countries will need to divert more funds to deal with climate impacts, affecting their mitigation ambitions.

The Urgent Need for Emissions Reductions

- Scientific assessments say global greenhouse gas emissions must peak before 2025 and decline by 43% by 2030 to prevent catastrophic warming.
- Current commitments by countries would only achieve a 2.6% reduction in emissions by 2030.
- In 2023, 53 billion tonnes of carbon emissions were recorded, with year-on-year increases (except for 2020, due to the pandemic).

Warnings from Climate Experts

- Roxy Mathew Koll, climate scientist at the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, warns that there is no going back from this trajectory unless there is serious global action on carbon emissions.
- Joeri Rogelj, Director of Research at the Grantham Institute, emphasizes that every fraction of a degree increase causes more harm to people and ecosystems.
- Vaibhav Chaturvedi, Senior Fellow at CEEW, highlights that developing economies will suffer the most from climate disasters without financial support from wealthier nations.

Global Water Cycle Disruption in 2024 Caused Wayanad Landslides

The **2024 Global Water Monitor Report** highlights significant **disruptions in the global water cycle** due to climate change, which led to devastating water-related disasters worldwide. These events caused over 8,700 deaths, displaced 40 million people, and resulted in economic losses exceeding \$550 billion. The report emphasizes how extreme weather events, such as landslides, floods, and droughts, are becoming more frequent and intense due to global warming, affecting ecosystems, livelihoods, and infrastructure. Among the major events highlighted, the Wayanad landslides in India stood out as a particularly destructive disaster.

**Key Points from the 2024 Report
Global Water Cycle Disruption**

- Climate change significantly **altered the global water cycle in 2024.**
- The disruption contributed to water-related disasters like landslides, floods, droughts, and tropical cyclones.
- Over 8,700 deaths, 40 million displaced, and \$550 billion in economic losses.

Wayanad Landslides (India)

- **Triggered by 409mm of rainfall** in 24 hours in July 2024.
- 375 lives lost and 10,000 displaced.
- Economic losses of \$140 million.
- Highlighted as a key example of the deadly impacts of climate-induced rainfall events.

Other Major Disasters

- Flash floods and river floods in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and East Africa.
- Severe flooding in Rio Grande do Sul (Brazil) and heavy flooding in the Amazon Basin (Brazil).
- Tropical cyclones, landslides, and droughts attributed to rising global temperatures.

Climate Change Impact

- **Rising sea surface temperatures** contributed to prolonged droughts in Southern Africa and the Amazon.
- Extreme rainfall events occurred 52% more frequently in 2024 compared to previous decades.
- Record-dry months increased by 38%, intensifying water scarcity.

Temperature and Precipitation Trends

- **2024 recorded the highest-ever average global land temperatures.**
- A significant rise in extreme rainfall and extreme dry months.
- 34 countries experienced record-high annual maximum temperatures.
- The frequency of extreme weather events, such as heatwaves and flash floods, increased.

Declining Water Storage

- Global reductions in lake and reservoir water storage for the fifth consecutive year.
- Declines were particularly significant in South America, while increases were seen in certain regions of Africa.

Forecast for 2025

- Potential for more extreme weather events, including flash floods, droughts, intense storms, and heatwaves.
- Regions at risk: Northern South America, Southern Africa, Central Asia, North America, and Western Australia.
- Increased flooding risks in Sahel, Horn of Africa, Europe, and Asia.

PM to Inaugurate Z-Morh Tunnel, Boosting Kashmir-Ladakh Connectivity

The **Z-Morh tunnel**, set to be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on January 13, 2024, marks a significant step in creating a year-round strategic corridor between **Kashmir and Ladakh**. The tunnel is critical for ensuring continuous access to Sonamarg, a popular tourist destination, which was previously inaccessible during the winter months due to snow and avalanches. Built under the Thajiwas Glacier, it bypasses landslide-prone areas and includes an intelligent traffic management system to enhance safety and control vehicle flow. The tunnel is also expected to boost winter tourism in Kashmir and support military logistics to Ladakh.

Key Highlights

Details

- **Tunnel Inauguration:** PM Modi is set to inaugurate the Z-Morh tunnel on January 13, 2024.
- **Strategic Importance:** Facilitates a year-round access route to Ladakh, crucial for security and tourism.
- **Tourism Boost:** Opens up Sonamarg for winter tourism, which was previously inaccessible due to harsh winter conditions.
- **Location:** The tunnel is located between Gagangir and Sonamarg in Ganderbal district, under the Thajiwas Glacier.
- **Cost and Size:** Built at ₹2,680 crore, the 6.5 km tunnel is a vital part of the Kashmir-Ladakh corridor.
- **Security Enhancements:** Additional security measures have been implemented across Kashmir, especially ahead of the inauguration.
- **Impact on Local Economy:** Will increase footfall and business for hoteliers in Sonamarg during the winter.
- **Future Projects:** The Z-Morh tunnel will link to the Zojila tunnel, which, when completed, will be Asia's longest tunnel.

Tunnel Features

- **Construction:** Bypasses landslide-prone areas with an intelligent traffic management system.
- **Dimensions:** The main tunnel is 10.8 meters wide, with an escape tunnel of 7.5 meters, and ventilation tunnels of 8.3 meters.
- **Purpose:** Enhances access to Ladakh, ensures safe winter access to Sonamarg, and reduces travel risks.

Zojila Tunnel Connection

- **Zojila Tunnel:** Will be Asia's longest tunnel, improving travel between Ganderbal (Kashmir) and Kargil (Ladakh).
- **Travel Time:** Reduces travel time from 3 hours to just 20 minutes.
- **Future Development:** Built at ₹6,800 crore, the Zojila tunnel will provide reliable access to Ladakh during winter, which is currently cut off for months due to snow.
- **Military Importance:** Critical for the movement of goods and security forces to Ladakh.

Understanding the 2025 Southern California Winter Wildfires

In January 2025, **Southern California** experienced a **severe wildfire outbreak that devastated large portions of Los Angeles**, including celebrity homes and neighborhoods like Hollywood Hills. Wildfires such as the Palisades fire, Eaton fire, Sunset, Hurst, and Lidia fires led to significant destruction, killing 10 people, displacing 130,000 individuals, and delaying the Oscars nominations. Despite winter traditionally being an off-season for wildfires, these fires are particularly intense due to three main contributing factors: wet weather followed by dry conditions, Santa Ana winds, and climate change.

Key Points

- **Palisades Fire & Other Blazes:** Wildfires burned through Los Angeles, including celebrity homes.
- **Evacuations:** Over 130,000 people forced to evacuate; 10 lives lost.
- **Oscar Delays:** Nominations delayed by two days due to the fire's impact.

Reasons for Intensity of Fires

Wet Weather Followed by Dry Conditions

- Unusually wet winters (2022-2023) led to abundant vegetation growth.
- The current winter (2024) is extremely dry, causing all the vegetation to dry up and become a fire hazard.
- NASA and climate scientists report the driest winter in Southern California on record since 1944, contributing to the fire's severity.

Santa Ana Winds

- A high-pressure system builds in the Great Basin, causing winds to blow towards the coast.
- These winds, which are stronger and drier than usual, spread the fire rapidly by fanning the flames.
- Winds blow at high speed and high temperature after passing through mountain passes.

Climate Change

- Climate change has lengthened the wildfire season, shifting peak fire periods from summer to earlier months.

- Warmer temperatures and early spring snow melts lead to longer dry seasons, stressing vegetation and making it more susceptible to fires.
- Higher global temperatures exacerbate the severity and frequency of wildfires.

National Affairs

- On January 5, 2025, **PM Narendra Modi** inaugurated a **13-km section** of the **Delhi-Meerut Regional Rapid Transit System (RRTS)**, connecting **Sahibabad** (Uttar Pradesh) to **New Ashok Nagar** (Delhi). This forms part of the **82-km Delhi-Ghaziabad-Meerut Namu Bharat corridor**, aiming to reduce travel time. The section includes a **6 km underground stretch**, with **Anand Vihar** station serving as a major transit hub. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **DGFT** has amended the **Foreign Trade Policy (FTP) 2023** to promote **inclusivity** and **transparency** in trade policy. The amendment mandates **consultations with stakeholders** like **importers, exporters, and industry experts** during the policy formulation or amendment process. A structured mechanism will provide **feedback** on why certain suggestions aren't accepted, fostering **trust** and **clarity** between the government and trade participants. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Recent reports highlight a significant **decline in rural-to-urban migration** in India, with **migration dropping by 53.7 million** in 2023, reflecting a **11.8% decrease** from 2011. This has led to increased **ruralization** and associated economic challenges. The **migration rate** fell from 37.6% in 2011 to 28.9% in 2023, with a decrease in **economic migration**. The **workforce** has become more reliant on **agriculture**, with 46.1% of people employed in the sector in 2023-24, up from 42.5% in 2017-18. This has led to **food inflation, disguised unemployment, and stagnant wages**, especially among **women**, whose **real wages** fell by 2.3% annually over the past five years. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 6, 2025**, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** virtually inaugurated the **Jammu Railway Division**, the **69th division** under the **Northern Railway Zone**. The division, headquartered in Jammu, covers **742.1 route kilometers**, including key sections like **Pathankot-Jammu-Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla** and others, aimed at boosting **connectivity** and **socio-economic development** in northern India. ([Click here to read article](#))
- As of **January 2025**, India's **metro rail network** has surpassed **1,000 kilometers**, making it the **third-largest** in the world, after **China** and the **United States**. India's metro journey began with **Kolkata Metro** in 1984, followed by the **Delhi Metro** in 2002, which is now the country's largest with a network of **395 km**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Aero India 2025**, Asia's premier aerospace exhibition, will be held from **February 10-14, 2025**, in **Bengaluru** under the theme **"The Runway to a Billion Opportunities."** The event aims to enhance **India's aerospace sector** and foster global partnerships. Key highlights include the **Defence Ministers' Conclave** for strategic partnerships and the **CEOs' Round-Table** for global leaders and Indian defence manufacturing executives to explore **OEM opportunities** in India. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **India's first organic fisheries cluster** was launched in **Soreng District, Sikkim**, by **Union Animal Husbandry Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh**. This initiative promotes **sustainable, antibiotic-free, chemical-free, and pesticide-free** fish farming practices, aligning with **Sikkim's reputation for organic agriculture**. The cluster aims to cater to **eco-conscious global markets**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto** will be the **chief guest** at India's **2025 Republic Day parade**, strengthening **India-Indonesia relations** and supporting the **Act East Policy**. This visit aims to enhance **strategic cooperation, defense ties, and economic engagement**. The two nations share **over 2,000 years** of cultural and commercial ties, with Indonesia's traditions influenced by the **Ramayana** and **Mahabharata**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Central Government** has approved a **memorial** for former President **Pranab Mukherjee** at **Rashtriya Smriti Sthal** in **Rajghat, Delhi**. This tribute, honoring his contributions to Indian politics, was announced on **January 1, 2025**, and was appreciated by his daughter, **Sharmistha Mukherjee**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Frankie Remruatdika Zadeng**, born on **January 1, 2025**, in **Aizawl, Mizoram**, is **India's first Generation Beta** baby. Weighing **3.12 kg**, Frankie symbolizes the beginning of a new chapter in India's progress. **Generation Beta**, a term coined by Australian futurist **Mark McCrindle**, refers to those born from the mid-2020s, marked by rapid **technological advancements** and a focus on **sustainability**. Frankie's birth reflects the hope and progress of this generation, which will thrive in a **digitally connected** and **AI-driven** world. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Justice B.N. Srikrishna** has been appointed as the Chairman of the **Advisory Board for Equal** and its investee **OneMoney**, focused on **identity verification** and **data-sharing**. The board includes notable figures such as **Jagdish Kapoor, Rakesh Mohan, Anand Sinha, J. Satyanarayana, Ajay Prakash Sawhney, P.H. Ravikumar, Anitha Ramachandran, and Sunil Kulkarni**. This appointment comes amid the government's push for stronger data security with the release of the **Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act** draft rules. ([Click here to read article](#))

- The Indian government has announced a ₹50,000 crore investment over five years to enhance inland water transport, focusing on **new national waterways, green shipping**, and the introduction of **1,000 green vessels**. The plan includes expanding **Water Metro projects** to 15 cities, including **Guwahati**, and developing infrastructure like **floating steel jetties** on the **Godavari River**, boosting urban connectivity and trade. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI)** has been selected by **ICMR** to establish **South India's first Infectious Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (IRDL)**. The lab will focus on **bacterial, fungal, and parasitic diseases**, aiming for faster diagnosis and improved healthcare outcomes. It will enhance **research on antibiotic resistance, fungal infections, and tropical diseases**, reducing the need for out-of-state sample testing. ([Click here to read article](#))

States in the News

- The first **Jallikattu** event of **2025** took place on **January 4** at **Thatchankurichi village, Pudukkottai district**. Over **600 bulls** and **350 bull-tamers** participated, marking the start of **Pongal** celebrations. The event is a significant part of **Tamil Nadu's cultural heritage**, showcasing bravery and strength. The **rituals** included an **oath-taking ceremony** with District Collector M. Aruna, and the term "**Jallikattu**" refers to rewards given to tamers in the form of silver and gold coins. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Odisha government** has announced a ₹15 crore sponsorship deal for the **Indian national kho kho team**, running from **January 2025 to December 2027**. The ₹5 crore **annually** will be funded through the **Odisha Mining Corporation**. The sponsorship aims to **enhance team development**, improve **training infrastructure**, and support participation in **national and international competitions**, reflecting Odisha's continued commitment to **sports development**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M.K. Stalin** announced a **\$1 million prize** for deciphering the **Indus Valley script**, marking the **centenary** of the **Indus Valley Civilization** discovery. Speaking at an **International Conference in Chennai**, he emphasized the significance of decoding this ancient script and affirmed the state's support for **research and archaeological efforts**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The Assam government launched **Gunotsav 2025**, an education evaluation program aimed at improving **learning outcomes** for **14.11 lakh students** in **16,056 schools**. The program, themed "Ensuring Quality Education," will be conducted in **three phases**: Phase 1 (January 6-9, 2025) covers **11 districts**, including **Barpeta, Kamrup, and Nagaon**. The initiative involves **external evaluators** and aims to assess and enhance **education quality** across the state. ([Click here to read article](#))

International Affairs

- **Tomiko Itooka**, recognized as the **world's oldest person** by **Guinness World Records**, passed away at **116** in January 2025. Born in **May 1908**, she lived through major historical events, including both **World Wars** and significant **technological advancements**. Her remarkable life story serves as a testament to **resilience** and **longevity**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Hanoi**, Vietnam's capital, was recently reported as the **world's most polluted city** on January 3, 2025, with **PM2.5 levels** reaching **266 micrograms per cubic meter**. The major sources of **pollution** include **heavy traffic, trash burning, and industrial emissions**, raising serious **health concerns** among residents. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau** announced his resignation as leader of the **Liberal Party** after nearly a decade in power, citing **internal conflicts** and declining **public support**. He will remain in a **caretaker role** until a new leader is elected. This comes amid growing support for **Pierre Poilievre** and the **Conservative Party**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Sister Inah Canabarro Lucas**, from **Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil**, has been confirmed as the **world's oldest living person** at **116 years old**. Born on **June 8, 1908**, she is a lifelong **nun, teacher, and soccer enthusiast**. Lucas is also the **20th oldest person** ever recorded and the **second-oldest nun** in history. She is the **great-granddaughter** of **General David Canabarro**, a leader in the **Ragamuffin War**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 9, 2025**, **General Joseph Aoun** was elected **Lebanon's new president**, ending a **two-year political vacuum**. The election concluded Lebanon's **political paralysis** that began after **Michel Aoun's** term ended in **October 2022**. General Aoun, who has led the **Lebanese Armed Forces** since 2017, secured **99 out of 128 votes** in the second round, overcoming divisions within the **Lebanese parliament**, particularly between **Hezbollah** and its opponents. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Southern California, particularly **Los Angeles County**, is grappling with some of its most destructive **wildfires** in January 2025. Key fires, including the **Pacific Palisades** and **Eaton fires**, have destroyed thousands of structures, with over 179,000 residents evacuated. At least 10 deaths have been confirmed, and looting has led to arrests. **Firefighting efforts** are ongoing, with some fires uncontained, such as the **Kenneth** and **Eaton fires**. **Power outages, traffic congestion, and school closures**, including at **UCLA**, are further disrupting daily life. Climate change continues to intensify fire risks in the region. ([Click here to read article](#))

- Japan has imposed new sanctions on **Russia**, targeting **11 individuals, 29 organizations, and 3 banks** within Russia, as well as entities in other countries aiding in sanction evasion. Japan has also enforced **export bans** on **22 Russian organizations** and **31 non-Russian groups** in countries like **China, Turkey, and Hong Kong**. Additionally, from **January 23**, Japan will ban the export of **335 items** including **construction vehicle engines, motorized bicycles, and communication devices**, aiming to hinder Russia's military and industrial capabilities. ([Click here to read article](#))

Agreements/MoUs Signed

- The **Uttar Pradesh government** has partnered with **Google Cloud (India)** to launch the **Uttar Pradesh Open Network for Agriculture (UPONA)**, powered by **Gemini AI** and **Beacon technology**. This digital infrastructure will provide **farmers** with access to **advisory services, credit, mechanization, market connectivity, and real-time weather data**. The initiative aims to **double farmers' income** and enhance **digital empowerment** in agriculture. The **MoU** was signed by **Manoj Kumar Singh** (UP Chief Secretary) and **Anil Bhansali** (Google Cloud India VP). ([Click here to read article](#))

Banking/Economy/Business News

- **HDFC Bank** has received **RBI** approval to acquire up to **9.5%** stake in **Kotak Mahindra Bank, AU Small Finance Bank, and Capital Small Finance Bank** through its group entities, including **HDFC Mutual Fund, HDFC Life Insurance, and HDFC ERGO**. The approval is valid until **January 2, 2026**. This strategic investment aims to **diversify portfolios** and strengthen **partnerships** within the banking sector. The combined stake across entities must not exceed **9.5%** in each target bank. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Suzuki Motor Corporation** will acquire a **26% stake** in **NDDB Mirda Ltd**, a bio-gas venture by the **National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)**, with an initial investment of **₹8.84 crore**. The deal supports Suzuki's use of **Compressed Bio-Gas (CBG)** for enhancing vehicle performance and sustainability. Suzuki has the option to increase its stake to **49%** over time. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In **November 2024**, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** added **8 tonnes of gold** to its reserves, increasing India's total to **876 tonnes**, making it the **second-largest gold buyer** globally after **Poland**. The **RBI's strategy** aligns with a global trend among central banks to bolster **gold reserves** as a hedge against **inflation and foreign currency risks** amid economic uncertainties. ([Click here to read article](#))

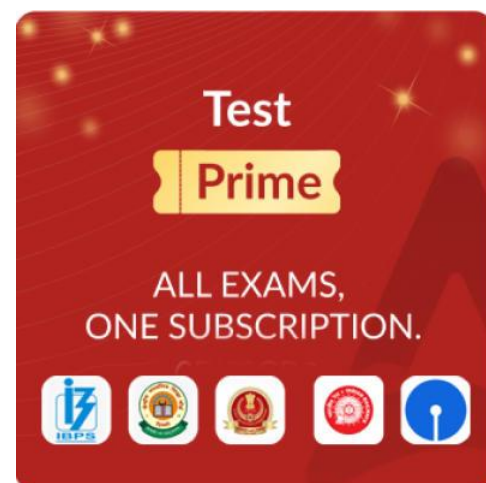
- India's GDP is projected to grow by **6.4%** in 2024-25, down from **8.2%** in 2023-24. Key sectors showing strong growth include **Agriculture (3.8%), Construction (8.6%), and Financial, Real Estate, and Professional Services (7.3%)**. **Private Final Consumption Expenditure** is expected to rise by **7.3%**, reflecting stronger consumer spending, while **Government Final Consumption Expenditure** is forecasted at **4.1%**, signaling increased government spending. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's **GDP growth forecast** for FY25 has been revised down to **9.7%**, slightly below the earlier estimate of **10.5%**. Despite this, the government's **fiscal deficit target of 4.9% of GDP** remains on track. To offset the lower growth, **capital expenditure** will be reduced by **₹1-1.5 trillion**, ensuring fiscal discipline and keeping the **deficit** within the target of **₹16.13 trillion**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **RBI** lifted restrictions on **Asirvad Micro Finance Limited** and **DMI Finance Private Limited**, allowing them to resume **loan sanctioning and disbursal**. The sanctions were imposed on **October 21, 2024**, due to non-compliance with regulatory guidelines. Both companies have since implemented **corrective actions** and submitted compliance reports to meet regulatory standards. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Bajaj Broking** has partnered with **Tamilnad Mercantile Bank (TMB)** to offer a **3-in-1 account** that integrates **banking, broking, and investment services**. TMB customers can now trade online, access a unified platform, and benefit from **easy fund transfers, reduced paperwork, and advanced trading features** supported by **research insights** for informed decisions. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **SBI** has revised its **GDP growth forecast** for FY25 to **6.3%**, slightly lower than the **NSO's** projection of **6.4%**. The adjustment reflects concerns over **slowdown in lending and manufacturing**, along with a **high base effect**. Key factors include **agriculture growth** of **3.8%**, a **slowdown in industry (6.2%)** and **services (7.2%)**, and a rise in **private consumption (7.3%)**. **Investment growth** is expected at **6.4%**, lower than the previous year. Despite these challenges, **per capita nominal GDP** is set to rise by **₹35,000**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's **microfinance sector** has grown by over **2,100%** in 12 years, expanding from **₹17,264 crore** in 2012 to **₹3.93 lakh crore** in 2024. The sector operates in **723 districts**, supporting **8 crore borrowers** and contributing **2.03% to GDP**. Despite challenges like funding issues and portfolio quality concerns, the sector is pushing for **credit guarantee schemes** and enhanced **digital infrastructure** for efficiency and wider reach. The sector plays a vital role in **financial inclusion** and **economic development** across India. ([Click here to read article](#))

- India's economy is projected to grow by **6.6% to 6.8%** in **FY2025-26**, reflecting its resilience and role in regional economic growth. **Bank of Baroda** forecasts **6.8% growth**, driven by strong indicators like **increased air passenger traffic, higher PMI, GST collections, and enhanced rabi crop sowing**, supporting agricultural growth and overall economic expansion. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Ahead of the **Maha Kumbh Mela** (January 13 - February 26, 2025) in **Prayagraj**, **PhonePe** has partnered with **ICICI Lombard** to offer specialized insurance for attendees. **Coverage options** include **₹59** for train/bus travelers and **₹99** for domestic flight travelers. The insurance provides **hospitalization** up to **₹50,000**, **personal accident cover** up to **₹1 lakh**, **OPD treatment**, **trip cancellation** up to **₹5,000**, and more, including **baggage loss** and **missed flight reimbursements**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Swiggy** launched '**Snacc**' on **January 7, 2025**, in select **Bengaluru** areas, offering snacks, beverages, and meals with a **15-minute delivery** promise. The app features a menu with items like **chocolate cookies, Indian breakfast, coffee, eggs, and sandwiches**. Collaborating with brands like **Blue Tokai** and **The Whole Truth**, Snacc operates independently from **Swiggy's Bolt**. In a competitive **quick commerce** market, **Zomato** (with **Blinkit's Bistro**), **Zepto**, and **Magicpin** (with **magicNOW**) have also introduced rapid food delivery services. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India aims for **\$100 billion** in combined exports from the **Food & Beverage (F&B), agriculture, and marine sectors** over the next five years, with a targeted **14-15% annual growth**. This goal was highlighted by **Piyush Goyal** at **Indusfood 2025**. Last year, India achieved **\$50 billion** in exports, with contributions from **APEDA** and **MPEDA**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 10, 2025**, the Indian government disbursed **₹1.73 trillion** to state governments, significantly higher than the **₹89,086 crore** in December 2024. The funds aim to boost **capital expenditure** and support **development and welfare initiatives**. Major allocations include **Uttar Pradesh** (₹31,039.84 crore) and **Bihar** (₹17,403.36 crore). The **Union Budget** for 2024-25 has earmarked **₹12.2 trillion** for states, and the **15th Finance Commission** recommends **41%** of central taxes for states from 2021-26. ([Click here to read article](#))
- India's **factory output** surged by **5.2%** in **November 2024**, the highest in six months, driven by a **favorable base effect** and increased demand during the festive season. The **cumulative growth** for **April-November 2024** stands at **4.1%**, down from **6.5%** in the same period last year, reflecting a slowdown. Key contributors include **manufacturing, capital goods, and consumer durables**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- On **January 10, 2025**, the **Indian rupee** hit an all-time low of **₹86** against the **US dollar**, driven by factors such as the **strengthening US dollar, FII outflows** (₹7,170.87 crore on January 9), and **rising crude oil prices**. These factors contributed to a significant depreciation of the rupee, marking economic challenges. ([Click here to read article](#))
- In **December 2024**, **e-way bills** reached **8.8 crore**, marking a **9.3% increase** from the previous month and a **7.4% rise** from December 2023. This reflects a **strong economic recovery**, driven by increased **transportation and trade movements**. The surge aligns with seasonal trends, highlighting higher consumption during the festive season. ([Click here to read article](#))

Appointments/Resignations

- **IAS officer Azimul Haque** has been appointed as the **CEO of the Delhi Waqf Board** by **Lieutenant Governor (L-G) V.K. Saxena**. The L-G criticized the **AAP government** for procedural lapses, as the CEO post had been vacant since **November 28, 2024**, causing delays in essential functions like salary disbursements for imams and Board employees. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Dr. V. Narayanan**, a seasoned scientist with nearly 40 years in rocket and spacecraft propulsion, has been appointed **Secretary of the Department of Space and Chairman of ISRO** from January 14, 2025. Currently Director of **LPSC**, he played a key role in missions like **GSLV Mk III** and **Chandrayaan-3**. He succeeds **S. Somanath**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Bahadur Singh Sagoo**, **Asian Games gold medalist and Padma Shri** awardee, has been unanimously elected as the new **President of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI)**. He succeeds **Adille Sumariwalla**, following his three consecutive terms. Key initiatives announced include a major **javelin competition** and hosting **international events** to boost athletics in India. ([Click here to read article](#))



- On **January 8, 2025**, the **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet** approved key changes in top positions within the **Ministry of Finance** ahead of the **Union Budget 2025**. **Tuhin Kanta Pandey** is reassigned as **Secretary, Department of Revenue**, while continuing as **Finance Secretary**. **Arunish Chawla** is appointed as **Secretary, Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM)**, with additional charges for **DPE** and **Ministry of Culture**. These appointments strengthen the finance ministry's leadership ahead of critical budget decisions. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 6, 2025**, **Ashish Naithani** was appointed as a **judge** of the **Uttarakhand High Court** by the **Central Government** to address the court's shortage of judges. The court, with a sanctioned strength of **11 judges**, had been operating with only **6 judges**, leaving **5 vacancies**. The **President of India** approved the appointment under **Article 224** of the **Constitution of India**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Tata Mumbai Marathon**, set for **January 19, 2025**, will celebrate its 20th edition with a record 60,000 participants. **Sir Mo Farah**, the legendary British long-distance runner, has been appointed as the **International Event Ambassador**, highlighting the marathon's global appeal. Farah's legacy includes **four Olympic golds**, **six World Championship golds**, and a **Chicago Marathon victory** in 2018. His involvement emphasizes the marathon's commitment to promoting **health and fitness**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Defence News

- India and the U.S. have partnered to co-produce **sonobuoys** for the **Indian Navy** to enhance **undersea domain awareness (UDA)**. The collaboration between **Ultra Marine (UM)** and **Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)** aims to manufacture sonobuoys to **U.S. Navy standards** under the **'Make in India'** initiative. These sonobuoys will improve submarine detection in the **Indian Ocean Region (IOR)**, strengthening maritime security and interoperability with allied nations like **Australia** and **Japan**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Abdali Missile** (Hatf 2) is a **short-range, road-mobile ballistic missile** developed by **Pakistan Space Research Commission (SUPARCO)**. It has a **range of 180-200 km**, a **payload** of high explosives or submunitions, and uses an **inertial guidance system**. The missile is transported on a **Transporter-Erector-Launcher (TEL)** vehicle, which elevates and launches the missile. Its **destructive power** is moderate, suitable for targeting **military bases, airfields, and critical infrastructure**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Summits and Conferences News

- **Indusfood 2025**, Asia's premier food and beverage trade exhibition, will be held from **January 8-10, 2025**, in **Greater Noida, India**. Organized by **TPCI** with the **Department of Commerce**, it will feature over **2,300 exhibitors** and attract **7,500 international buyers** from 30+ countries, along with **15,000 Indian visitors**. The event aims to enhance trade, market access, and farmer incomes. Additional events, **Indusfood Manufacturing** and **Indusfood Agritech**, will be held at **Yashobhoomi, New Delhi**, from **January 9-11, 2025**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Indonesia** has officially joined **BRICS** as its **10th member**, strengthening the group's presence in **Southeast Asia**. This move, endorsed by BRICS leaders at the **Johannesburg summit** in 2023, aligns with efforts to reform global governance and deepen cooperation within the **Global South**, priorities for **Brazil's BRICS presidency** in 2025. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2025**, organized by the **Department of Youth Affairs** under **Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**, began on **January 10, 2025**, at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi**. This reimagined version of the **National Youth Festival** aims to celebrate youth leadership, with over **3,000 participants** selected from **30 lakh applicants**. The event focuses on empowering young leaders to contribute to **India's vision of becoming a developed nation by 2047**, through **thematic discussions, creative competitions, and cultural experiences**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will attend the **AI Action Summit in Paris** on **February 10-11, 2025**, hosted by **French President Emmanuel Macron**. The summit will focus on **Public Interest AI, Future of Work, Innovation, Trust in AI, and Global AI Governance**, with a special emphasis on combating **misinformation** and **misuse of AI**. The event will bring together global leaders, including **heads of state, CEOs, academia, and NGOs**. India's participation highlights its role in shaping global AI discussions. ([Click here to read article](#))

Ranks and Reports

- In **2024**, India became the **second most targeted nation** for cyberattacks, with **95 entities** affected by data theft. The **finance** and **banking sectors** were hit hardest, followed by **government, telecommunications, healthcare, and education** sectors. Major breaches included the leak of **850 million records** from Hi-Tek Group and **2TB of data** from Telecommunications Consultants India. The report also identified **108 ransomware incidents**, with **Lockbit** being the most active group. ([Click here to read article](#))

Sports News

- The **Santosh Trophy 2024** final witnessed **West Bengal** clinching their record **33rd title** with a **1-0 victory** over **Kerala** at **Gachibowli Stadium**, thanks to **Robi Hansda's** decisive goal in **added time**, making him the **tournament's top scorer** with **12 goals**. Established in **1941** and organized by the **AIFF**, the trophy is named after **Sir Manmatha Nath Roy Chowdhury**. Notable trophies include the **Kamla Gupta Trophy** for runners-up and the **Sampangi Cup** for third place. West Bengal remains the **most successful team**, followed by **Punjab** with **8 titles**, while **Kerala** and **Services** have **7 titles each**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Devajit Saikia**, former **Assam cricketer**, will become the new **BCCI secretary**, while **Prabhtej Singh Bhatia** from **CSCS** will take over as **treasurer**. Both are set to be **elected unopposed** at the **BCCI Special General Meeting (SGM)** on **January 12, 2025**, in **Mumbai**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Lionel Messi**, captain of **Argentina's football team**, was awarded the **United States Presidential Medal of Freedom**, the highest civilian honor. Messi is the second footballer ever to receive this recognition, after **Megan Rapinoe** in 2022. He could not attend the White House ceremony due to prior commitments. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Martin Guptill**, New Zealand's prolific opener, retired after a **14-year career**. He scored **14,877 runs** across formats, including **7,346 runs** in ODIs, ranking third on New Zealand's all-time list. His record **237*** in the 2015 **World Cup** remains the highest individual score. Guptill also led New Zealand in **T20Is** with **3,531 runs** and scored **2,586 runs** in **Test matches**, with three centuries. ([Click here to read article](#))

Schemes and Committees News

- On **January 4, 2025**, PM **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **Grameen Bharat Mahotsav 2025** at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi**, organized by **DFS** and **NABARD**. Themed **"Building a Resilient Rural India for a Viksit Bharat 2047,"** with the motto **"गांव बढ़े, तो देश बढ़े,"** the event aims to enhance **rural infrastructure**, promote **self-reliance**, and foster **innovation**. Key focus areas include **women's entrepreneurship**, **financial inclusion**, and **sustainable agriculture** in **North-East India**. The festival runs from **January 4 to 9, 2025**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Mira Bhayandar Municipal Corporation (MBMC)**, in partnership with **NITI Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP)**, launched the **'Faral Sakhī'** initiative to empower **women entrepreneurs** in **traditional snack production**. It provides **training**, a **central kitchen**, and **sales support** for **SHGs**. During **Diwali**, the initiative sold **over 3 tons of snacks**, highlighting its **success** through **quality and promotion**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- The **National Commission for Women (NCW)**, in partnership with the **Lok Sabha Secretariat** and **Ministry of Tribal Affairs**, launched **'Panchayat Se Parliament 2.0'** at **Samvidhan Sadan** to mark **Bhagwan Birsa Munda's 150th birth anniversary**. The event gathered **502 elected women representatives from STs** across **22 states/UTs**. It aims to **empower women leaders** by enhancing their knowledge of **constitutional provisions**, **parliamentary procedures**, and **governance** through **workshops**, **sessions**, and **guided tours** of key government sites. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **e-Shram portal** has been upgraded to support all **22 scheduled languages**, enhancing accessibility for unorganised workers across India. Launched by **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**, this expansion, facilitated by the **Bhashini project**, allows workers to register and access schemes in their native languages. The portal has seen over **30,000 daily registrations**, reflecting growing engagement and trust. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Nitin Gadkari**, Union Minister of Road Transport and Highways, announced a **cashless treatment scheme** for road accident survivors, covering up to **₹1.5 lakh** for seven days. The pilot, active in states like **Assam**, **Chandigarh**, and others, has benefitted **6,840 people** and will be expanded nationwide by **March 2025**. The scheme aims to save **50,000 lives** by ensuring timely treatment. Gadkari also discussed **tech interventions** for heavy vehicle safety, **skilled driver shortages**, and updates on **emission norms** and **vehicle safety standards**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 7, 2025**, Odisha CM **Mohan Charan Majhi** launched the **Shahid Madho Singh Haath Kharcha Scheme** to reduce dropout rates among **Scheduled Tribe (ST)** students. The scheme offers **₹5,000** financial assistance to students enrolling in **Class IX** and **Class XI**, with an annual family income limit of **₹2,50,000**. It aims to promote educational continuity and reduce dropouts during key transitions. Eligible students from **government** or **aided schools** can apply through the **Odisha State Scholarship Portal**, with recommendations from school heads. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Jharkhand Mukhyamantri Maiya Samman Yojana**, launched in **August 2024** by Chief Minister **Hemant Soren**, provides **financial assistance** to women aged **21-49 years**. The scheme, aimed at empowering women, initially offered **₹1,000/month**, which was increased to **₹2,500** in **December 2024**. In **January 2025**, **₹1,415.44 crore** was transferred to **56.61 lakh women beneficiaries**, with **₹5,000** credited for **December 2024** and **January 2025** due to delays. The payments are made **directly into beneficiaries' bank accounts**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- On January 7, 2025, **Goa CM Dr. Pramod Sawant** launched the **Bima Sakhi Yojana** under **Swayampurna Goa 2.0** to empower women by training them as **LIC agents**. **Eligibility:** Women aged 18-70 with at least **Class X** education. **Training:** Participants receive a stipend of ₹7,000 in the first year, decreasing to ₹5,000 by the third year. **Career Growth:** Successful participants can advance to **development officer** roles in LIC. ([Click here to read article](#))
- PARTH Yojana** is a scheme launched in **Madhya Pradesh** to provide pre-recruitment training for youth aiming to join the **Indian Army, Police, and Para-Military forces**. The program focuses on **physical fitness, mental agility, and personality development**, with training on physical tests, written exams, and general knowledge. Training centers will operate at **divisional levels**, overseen by **District Sports and Youth Welfare Officers** and supported by local coordinators. The scheme aims to instill **patriotism, discipline, and fitness** among participants. ([Click here to read article](#))

Science and Technology News

- Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV)**, discovered in **2001**, causes respiratory infections similar to **RSV**. It affects **children, the elderly, and immunocompromised individuals**. Symptoms include **cough, fever, runny nose, and shortness of breath**. HMPV spreads via **respiratory droplets** and can cause **bronchitis or pneumonia** in severe cases. **No specific antiviral treatment or vaccine** is available. Recently, **India** reported cases in **Bengaluru**, and **China** saw a rise in cases. **Preventive measures** include **handwashing, wearing masks, and avoiding close contact**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- The **Banded Royal butterfly (Rachana jalindra indra)** was discovered in **Sepahijala Wildlife Sanctuary, Tripura**, on **May 5, 2021**, marking a key addition to the state's biodiversity. This rare species, now documented in the **Munis Entomology & Zoology journal**, is protected under the **Indian Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972**, listed in **Schedule II**. The discovery highlights the importance of **ecological research and wildlife protection** in the region. ([Click here to read article](#))
- A fragment of the **original Wright Flyer fabric** from the **1903 Kitty Hawk flight** will be unveiled at the **Frontiers of Flight Museum, Dallas**, on **October 2, 2025**. Donated by **Neil Armstrong's family**, this piece was carried by Armstrong during the **Apollo 11 mission** in 1969, symbolizing the link between early aviation and space exploration. The exhibit will also feature an authentic **Apollo 11 patch**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- Microsoft**, under **CEO Satya Nadella**, has partnered with the **Indian government** and businesses to boost **AI development** in India. Collaborating with the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY)** under the **IndiaAI Mission**, the focus is on fostering an inclusive AI ecosystem, promoting **ethical AI**, and investing **\$3 billion** in **cloud and AI infrastructure** over two years. This initiative aims to accelerate AI adoption, skilling, and innovation across the country. ([Click here to read article](#))
- IIT-Madras has commissioned **Asia's largest shallow wave basin** at its **Discovery campus** in **Thaiyur, Chennai**, developed using **indigenous technology**. The facility, in collaboration with **NTCPWC** and the **Ministry of Shipping**, simulates complex wave and current interactions. It supports **coastal engineering, port research, and climate change studies**, enabling testing of **coastal structures, floating solar plants, and post-impact analyses**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Human Metapneumovirus (HMPV)** primarily affects **children, older adults, and immunocompromised individuals**, causing illnesses from mild respiratory infections to severe conditions like **pneumonia**. The **Union Ministry of Health** has advised states to enhance surveillance for **SARI and ILI**, with specific **testing protocols** for HMPV. The virus is most contagious during the first 3-6 days of infection. Preventive measures include **physical distancing, hand hygiene, masking, and surface sanitization**. **Isolation** is recommended until symptoms like **fever and cough** subside, with recovery marked by the absence of **fever and improved energy levels**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- Blue Origin** is set to launch its **New Glenn rocket** on **January 10, 2025**, from **Cape Canaveral**, marking a key milestone in space exploration. The rocket, standing at **320 feet** tall, can carry up to **45 metric tons** to **low Earth orbit (LEO)**. Powered by **seven BE-4 engines**, the mission will deploy a **Blue Ring payload tug** and a **hoisting platform**. Key objectives include **design validation, payload deployment, and earning NSSL certification**. Notably, the rocket's **reusable first stage** will land on the **marine vessel "Jacklyn"**, promoting **sustainability**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Important Days News

- National Bird Day**, celebrated annually on **January 5**, aims to raise **awareness about bird conservation** and their **ecological importance**. First observed in **2002** by the **Avian Welfare Coalition**, it highlights threats like **habitat destruction, climate change, and illegal trade**. The day also marks the birth of the **wild bird preservation movement** in the early **20th century** to protect **bird populations**. ([Click here to read article](#))

- **World Day of War Orphans** (January 6) raises awareness about children who lose their parents due to **war** and **violence**. The 2025 observance focuses on the struggles of these children, highlighting issues like **displacement**, **poverty**, and **climate change**. It calls for **global action** to provide care, **education**, and **protection** for war orphans. ([Click here to read article](#))
- On **January 6, 2025**, the **Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)** celebrated its **78th Foundation Day**, highlighting its commitment to **quality** and **innovation**. **Shri Pralhad Joshi**, Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, emphasized that quality drives **trust**, **progress**, and **innovation**. Established in **1947** as the **Indian Standards Institution (ISI)**, BIS was restructured under the **BIS Act, 1986**, to enhance its powers and scope. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Earth's Rotation Day** on **January 8** honors **Léon Foucault's 1851 experiment** proving Earth's rotation using a **pendulum**. This landmark discovery revolutionized scientific understanding. The day highlights **scientific curiosity**, especially among children. Foucault's experiment was showcased at the **Paris Observatory** and **Greece's Pantheon**, and continues to inspire at **science museums worldwide**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **World Hindi Day** is celebrated on **January 10** to promote Hindi as a widely spoken global language. Recognized for its rich history and cultural significance, Hindi has evolved over centuries, connecting millions of people worldwide. **Embassies and cultural centers** organize events like workshops and seminars to celebrate its role in linguistic and international exchanges. The **2025 theme** is "A Global Voice of Unity and Cultural Pride," emphasizing Hindi's role in **global unity** and **cultural exchange**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Shigemi Fukahori**, a **Nagasaki atomic bombing survivor**, passed away at **93** on January 3, 2025. At 14, he witnessed the bombing's devastation on August 9, 1945, which killed tens of thousands, including his family. Fukahori dedicated his life to advocating for **peace** and **nuclear disarmament**, sharing his experiences globally to prevent future nuclear tragedies. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Pritish Nandy**, poet, journalist, filmmaker, and former Rajya Sabha member, passed away on **January 8, 2025**, at 73 due to a **cardiac arrest**. Born in **1951** in **Bhagalpur**, Bihar, Nandy authored **40+ poetry books** and translated works in multiple languages. His poem "Calcutta If You Must Exile Me" is a **modern Indian literature classic**. Nandy was also a prominent journalist, serving as Publishing Director of **The Times of India** and editor of **The Illustrated Weekly, Filmfare**, and **The Independent**. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **H Lakshmanan**, former Executive Director of **Sundaram-Clayton** (now **TVS Holdings Ltd**), passed away at 91 after battling age-related ailments. A key figure in the **TVS Group** for nearly seven decades, Lakshmanan started as a typist and rose to become a trusted confidant of the **TVS family**. He was known for his **exceptional management skills**, **strategic vision**, and **dedication** to the company's growth and success. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **P. Jayachandran**, the legendary **playback singer** known as "Bhava Gayakan," passed away at 80 after a prolonged illness. With over **16,000 songs** in **Malayalam, Tamil, Telugu, Kannada, and Hindi**, his soulful voice captured emotions like **love, devotion, and longing**. His death leaves a **deep void** in the Indian music industry, and tributes have poured in from across the nation. ([Click here to read article](#))

Obituaries News

- **Dr. Rajagopala Chidambaram**, a key figure in **India's nuclear program**, passed away on **January 4, 2025**, at age **88**. He played a crucial role in **India's nuclear journey**, from the **1974 peaceful nuclear test** to **Operation Shakti in 1998**, establishing India as a nuclear power. A leader in **condensed matter physics, materials science, energy security**, and **advanced technologies** like **supercomputing** and **nanotechnology**, he served as **Principal Scientific Advisor** from **2002 to 2018**, shaping India's scientific development. ([Click here to read article](#))
- **Costas Simitis**, former **Greece's Prime Minister** from **1996 to 2004**, passed away on **January 5, 2025**, at age **88**. He played a key role in **Greece's integration into the eurozone** in **2001**. Leading **PASOK** from **1996**, he secured electoral wins in **1996** and **2000**, succeeding **Andreas Papandreou**. ([Click here to read article](#))

Miscellaneous News

- The **2025 Tibet Earthquake**, measuring **7.1** on the Richter scale, struck the **Tibetan Plateau** on **January 5, 2025**, causing widespread destruction and displacing thousands. The event highlighted the **seismic vulnerability** of the region, a geologically active area, and drew **international concern**. ([Click here to read article](#))

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Static Takeaways

Sr. No	Orgn./Bank/State/Country	Static Details
1	SBI	Chairman - Sree Srinivasalu Setty Head Office - Mumbai
2	RBI	MD - Sanjay Malhotra Head Office - Mumbai
3	NITI AAYOG	Chairperson - PM Modi
4	ISRO	Chairman - V Narayanan Head Office - Bengaluru
5	HDFC BANK	MD - Sashidhar Jagdishan Head Office - Mumbai
6	SUZUKI INDIA	Chairman - R. C. Bhargava Head Office - New Delhi
7	ICMR (Indian Council of Medical Research)	DG - Dr. Rajiv Bahl
8	WHO (World Health Organization)	DG - Dr. Tedros Ghebreyesus HQ - Geneva
9	Canada	President - Not Appointed (Justin Trudeau Resigned) Capital - Ottawa
10	Ukraine	President - Volodymyr Zelenskyy Capital - Kiev
11	France	President - Emmanuel Macron Capital - Paris
12	Japan	PM - Shiegru Ishiba Capital - tokyo
13	Indonesia	President - Prabowo Subianto Capital - Jakarta
14	Vietnam	President - General Luong Cuong Capital - Hanoi
15	Uttar Pradesh	Governor - Anandiben Pate; CM - Yogi Adityanath Capital - Lucknow
16	Madhya Pradesh	Governor - Mangubhai Patel CM - Mohan Yadav Capital - Bhopal
17	Tamil Nadu	Governor - Ravi CM - M K Stalin Capital - Chennai
18	Goa	Governor - P. S. Sreedharan Pillai CM - Pramod Sawant Capital - Panaji
19	Assam	Governor - Shri Lakshman Acharya CM - Hemanta Biswa Sarma Capital - Dispur
20	Jharkhand	Governor - Santosh Gangwar CM - Hemant Soren Capital - Ranchi
21	Delhi	L. Governor - Vinai Saxena CM - Atishi Capital - New Delhi
22	West Bengal	Governor - C. V. Ananda Bose CM - Mamta Banerjee Capital - Kolkata