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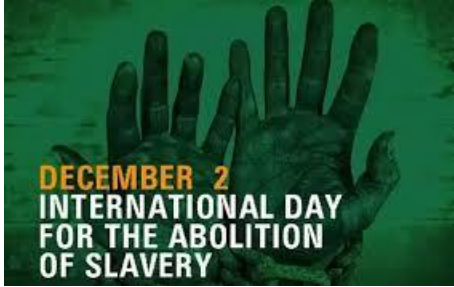

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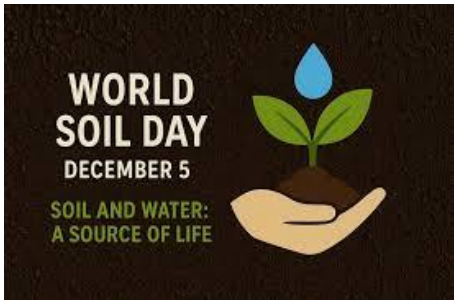
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IMPORTANT DAYS

<p>Dec 1</p>	<p>World AIDS Day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme :Overcoming disruption, transforming the AIDS response • World AIDS Day occurs on December 1 and was established by the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1988 to facilitate the exchange of information among national and local governments, international organizations, and individuals • Focusing on rebuilding HIV services disrupted by global crises, ensuring equitable access to care, strengthening community-led efforts, and maintaining momentum towards ending AIDS by 2030, despite challenges like funding gaps and stigma
<p>Dec 2</p>	<p>International Day for the abolition On slavery</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme :Acknowledge the past. Repair the present. Build a future of dignity and justice • The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) announced December 2nd as the International Day for the Abolition of Slavery in 1985, with the first observance in 1986, to raise awareness and combat modern slavery, including human trafficking and forced labor • Highlights ongoing global slavery issues (human trafficking, forced labour) and promotes freedom and human rights.
<p>Dec 2</p>	<p>National Pollution control day (India)</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme:"Sustainable Living for a Greener Future" (2025) • Emphasizing reducing plastic, saving energy, and adopting clean transport to combat pollution and promote environmental responsibility.






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Dec 3	<p>International Day of Persons with Disabilities</p>  <p>International Day of Persons with Disabilities 3 DECEMBER</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theme 2025: Usually announced later; often highlights inclusion, accessibility, rights of PWDs.• Established by the United Nations General Assembly in 1992, it is celebrated to emphasize the achievements and obstacles faced by individuals with disabilities• It aims to raise the awareness of the situations of persons with disabilities in all aspects of political, social, economic, and cultural life
Dec 4	<p>Indian Navy Day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theme : "Combat Ready, Cohesive, Self-Reliant (Aatmanirbhar)," highlighting indigenous growth and maritime security for a strong India.• This day acknowledges the achievements and role of the Indian Navy in national security• The Indian Navy was established in 1612 by the East India Company.• The Indian Navy also acts as the prime enabler and guarantor of the country's maritime sovereignty and myriad use of sea activities.
Dec 4	<p>World Wildlife Conservation Day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theme: Wildlife Conservation Finance: Investing in People and Planet• It seeks to increase awareness of the need to protect the planet's threatened wildlife and flora. This day urges individuals to take action to save endangered species and emphasises the value of wildlife protection.
Dec 5	<p>World Soil Day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theme 2025: "Healthy Soils for Healthy Cities• This day was recommended by the International Union of Soil Sciences (IUSS) in 2002. Enhances awareness of the importance of healthy soil for food security, ecosystems, and climate resilience.





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<p>Dec 6</p>	<p>Mahaparinirvan Diwas</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rather of focussing on a single new theme, 2025 observations reinforced Dr. Ambedkar's fundamental beliefs, reflecting themes such as: Justice, Equality, and Constitutionalism: Preserving democratic principles and human decency. Empowerment: Encouraging marginalised groups to thrive inclusively. "Educate, Agitate, Organise" is his well-known call to action. Creating a Viksit Bharat: Fulfilling his dream of an advanced India. • Mahaparinirvan Diwas commemorates the death anniversary of Dr Bhimrao Ramji Ambedkar.
<p>Dec 6</p>	<p>All India Civil Defence and Home Guards Day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home Guards are raised under the Home Guards Act and Rules of the states and Union Territories • The organization is spread over all states and Union Territories except in Kerala • It was observed by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Government of India, Directorate General Civil Defence, Directorate General Home Guards.
<p>Dec 7</p>	<p>International Civil Aviation Day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme 2025: Safe Skies. Sustainable Future: Together for the next 80 years • This day was established by the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). • Highlights importance of civil aviation in social/economic development and global connectivity. • India is the third-largest domestic aviation market, trailing only the United States and China.
<p>Dec 7</p>	<p>Armed Forces Flag Day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme: "One Nation, One Flag: United in Sacrifice,






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		<p>Committed to Peace"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The day seeks to raise money for the welfare of military personnel, particularly those wounded or killed in action, as well as their families. It is devoted to honouring the troops and veterans of India's armed services.• It gives people a chance to show their support and togetherness with the military forces.
Dec 9	International Anti-Corruption Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theme: Uniting with Youth Against Corruption: Shaping Tomorrow's Integrity• Established by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly in 2003 and it Promotes anti-corruption efforts globally; encourages states to implement UNCAC.
Dec 10	Human Rights day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Human Rights, Our Everyday Essentials"• United Nations General Assembly adopted, in 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights• Focusing on how fundamental rights like healthcare, education, and justice are crucial for daily life, aiming to show they are positive, attainable, and a winning proposition for humanity, moving beyond abstract ideas to practical impact.







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<p>Dec 11</p>	<p>International Mountain Day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Announced by the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) in 2003, building on the 2002 International Year of Mountains, with the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)• Highlights importance of mountains for biodiversity, water resources, indigenous cultures.
<p>Dec 11</p>	<p>79th UNICEF Foundation Day 2025</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theme :"My Day, My Rights" emphasizing child participation and rights• UNICEF was founded on December 11, 1946, by Ludwik Rajchman and the United Nations General Assembly.• It seeks to provide immediate relief to women and children affected by World War II as well as to address the needs of children in countries affected by the conflict.<ul style="list-style-type: none">• It became a permanent member of the United Nations system in 1953 after its missions were expanded in 1950 to meet the long-term needs of women and children in developing countries.
<p>Dec 14</p>	<p>National Energy Conservation Day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theme: Encouraging industries, buildings, transport, and individuals to adopt energy-saving technologies and practices for a sustainable tomorrow.• Recognised to increase awareness of energy conservation and efficiency, with activities organised by the Ministry of Power and the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE), honouring accomplishments with awards, and promoting sustainable practices.



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<p>Dec 16</p>	<p>Vijay Diwas 2025</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Themes: National pride, military self-reliance, unity, and remembrance of soldiers' sacrifices. • This day honours India's resounding victory over Pakistan in the 1971 War, which led to the creation of Bangladesh and the freedom of East Pakistan from Islamabad's rule. The Indian Armed Forces' bravery, sacrifice, and strategic acumen are honoured on this day.
<p>Dec 18</p>	<p>International Migrants Day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme: "My Great Story: Cultures and Development" • The date was designated for this celebration by the UN General Assembly in 2000. The Bible has a long history of showing compassion and care for immigrants. • International Migrants Day offers us a unique chance to highlight the priceless contributions made by millions of migrants worldwide.
<p>Dec 19</p>	<p>Good Governance Week 2025</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme: "Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore" meaning "Governance Towards the Village" or "Administration to the Village" • Shara and Phuktse communities, as part of Good Governance Week, a national celebration. A wide range of services were provided under several government initiatives by officials from numerous government agencies who actively participated in the program.
<p>Dec 20</p>	<p>International Human Solidarity Day 2025</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme, "Solidarity for Sustainable Development: Uniting Communities for a Shared Future," • This day honours our common humanity and the notion that we are all a part of the world community. • The day seeks to encourage cooperation, solidarity, and shared accountability in order to address global concerns like poverty, inequality, and social injustice.
<p>Dec 21</p>	<p>Winter Solstice 2025</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The North Pole is tilted farthest from the Sun on this





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		<p>day, which officially marks the beginning of winter in the Northern Hemisphere.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is also the shortest day and longest night of the year. In each hemisphere, the winter solstice falls on a particular date. Every year, it happens on either December 21 or December 22 in the Northern Hemisphere. The winter solstice in the Southern Hemisphere occurs on June 20 or June 21 every year.
<p>Dec 21</p>	<p>World Meditation Day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theme: "Meditation for the World – Trust & Unity" and "One World, One Heart," focusing on healing and global harmony. The United Nations General Assembly observed the inaugural World Meditation Day on 21 december 2024. To mark the occasion, the Permanent Mission of India organised an event at the UN headquarters in New York. This date was chosen for its cultural and astronomical significance of the winter solstice
<p>Dec 22</p>	<p>National mathematics day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theme: "Mathematics, Art, and Creativity" It marks the birth anniversary of Indian mathematician, Srinivasa Ramanujan. This day honours his significant contributions to mathematics and emphasises how important the field is to the development of contemporary civilisation. In 2012, on Ramanujan's 125th birthday, then-prime minister Dr. Manmohan Singh formally introduced it.
<p>Dec 23</p>	<p>National Farmers Day</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Theme: "Empowering Farmers through Innovation and Sustainability", "Empowering 'Annadatas' for a Prosperous Nation", and "Future Focus: Technology and Next-Gen Farming" To safeguard the future of agriculture, a focus on youth engagement, Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs), climate resilience, and technology adoption is necessary.



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<p>Dec 25</p>	<p>Good Governance Day</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme: Vikist Bharat: Civil Service and Digital Transformation • Every year on December 25, the anniversary of the birth of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee, who prioritised inclusive growth, accountability, and transparency in his leadership, Good Governance Day is celebrated. • The day serves as a reminder that governance is about improving everyone's quality of life, not simply about administration. The day highlights the significance of accountable, transparent, and citizen-centered governance.
<p>Dec 26</p>	<p>Veer Bal Diwas 2025</p> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme: Honouring the exemplary courage, resilience, and potential of children, who form the foundation of India's future • It was Announced by our Prime Minister Narendra Modi • The Indian government established this day in 2022 (Jan) to commemorate the bravery, commitment, and sacrifice • It commemorates the martyrdom of the two younger Sahibzadas of Guru Gobind Singh: Sahibzada Zorawar Singh and Sahibzada Fateh Singh (7 years) • They were bricked alive in Sirhind (in 1705) after refusing to Convert into Islam and refuse to abandon their faith • The day honours the Courage, sacrifice, resilience, and unwavering faith and the bravery of Sikh children who chose martyrdom over submission
<p>Dec 27</p>	<p>International day of epidemic preparedness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Theme: An opportunity to build back a more equal and sustainable world • It seeks to increase global awareness of and readiness for the pandemic. In order to consider the experiences of the health crises during the COVID-19 pandemic, the UNGA started it in 2020. Additionally, this day fosters international cooperation and solidarity. • Effective response to any potential epidemic, it is crucial to strengthen epidemic prevention by applying



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27-12-2025

December 27 International Day
Of Epidemic Preparedness



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lessons learnt on epidemic management and how to prevent the suspension of essential services.



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APPOINTMENTS

1. Sanjay Malhotra was appointed as the RBI Governor



- Appointed as: Governor, Reserve Bank of India
- Tenure: 3-year term
- He oversees the Reserve Bank of India, the country's central bank and serves as the Monetary Policy Committee's (MPC) chair.
- He oversees and controls financial institutions, including banks.
- He serves as the Indian government's banker and debt manager.

2. Justice Surya Kant was appointed as the **53rd Chief Justice of India (CJI)**



- **Effective from:** November 25, 2025
- President Droupadi Murmu administered the oath of office, as the President makes the formal appointment.

- **Acts as head of the Indian judicial system & guardian of constitutional values.**
- Chairs the Collegium System.
- Heads the Supreme Court of India.
- Prioritises judicial reforms to improve case disposal and court efficiency.

3. Shri Vishvajit Sahay (IDAS) as the Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA)



- **Appointed as:** Controller General of Defence Accounts
- **Effective from:** November 6, 2025
- Leads financial management and auditing for Indian defence services.
- Plays a key role in fiscal discipline and budget oversight for defence expenditure.
- Heads Defence Accounts Department (DAD)



4. Raj Kumar Goyal appointed as Chief Information Commissioner (CIC)



- Heads the Central Information Commission under the Right to Information Act, 2005.
- Hears RTI appeals & complaints against Central Public Authorities.
- Ensures transparency, accountability & citizens' access to information.
- Supervises Information Commissioners & Commission proceedings.
- Issues directions & penalties for RTI violations.

5. Sanjay Garg appointed as Director General (DG), Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS)



- **Heads the Bureau of Indian Standards** — India's **National Standards Body**.
- Responsible for:
 1. **Formulation of Indian Standards (IS codes)**

2. **Product Certification & Quality Mark (ISI Mark)**
3. **Compulsory Registration Scheme (CRS)**
4. **Hallmarking of Gold & Precious Metals**
5. **Consumer safety, quality control & standardization**

6. Mithun Manha elected unopposedly as BCCI President

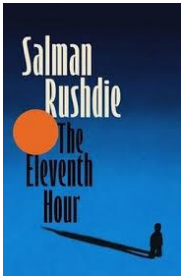


- **Heads the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** -India's apex cricket governing body.
- Oversees domestic & international cricket operations, tournaments and scheduling.
- Supervises selection policies, player pathways & cricket development structure.
- Plays a pivotal role in financial, commercial & broadcasting decisions.
- Represents BCCI in ICC meetings, bilateral relations & global cricket forums.



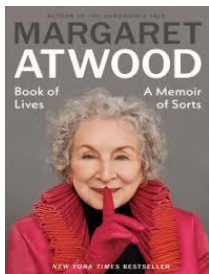
BOOKS AND AUTHOR

1. 'The Eleventh Hour: A Quintet of Stories' authored by Salman Rushdie



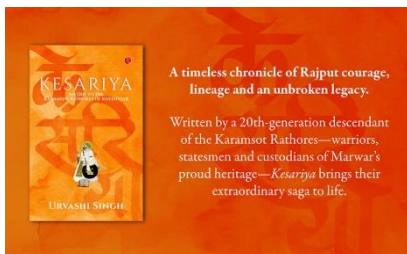
- Salman Rushdie is an Indian-origin British-American novelist.
- The book is a collection of **five short stories** written after his recovery from the 2022 knife attack.
- Rushdie is a Booker Prize winning author known for **Midnight's Children**.

2. 'Book of Lives: A Memoir of Sorts' was authored by Margaret Atwood



- Margaret Atwood is a celebrated Canadian novelist and poet.
- This memoir reflects on her **life, creative journey, and major influences**. Blends personal narrative with social and literary commentary.
- Atwood is best known for **The Handmaid's Tale**.

3. 'KESARIYA: An Ode to the Karamsot Rathores of Kheenvsar' was authored by Dr. K.S. Chauhan



- Dr. K.S. Chauhan is a historian and heritage researcher. The book documents **Rajasthani lineage and historical traditions**.
- Focuses on cultural identity, clan legacy and regional history. Relevant for **history & culture-based exam questions**.

4. 'Sanatan Sanskriti Ki Atal Drishti' — Vasudev Devnani

- Publisher / Released by: Vice-President of India Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan at Vice-President's Enclave, New Delhi
- Vasudev Devnani is an Indian politician and educationist; Speaker of Rajasthan Legislative Assembly.
- The book explores foundational perspectives on Sanatan (ancient Indian) culture and philosophy.
- Launch reflects government emphasis on cultural heritage & civilizational knowledge.

5. 'Threads of Time: Story of India's Textiles' — Coffee Table Book

- Publisher / Released by: Vice-President of India Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan at AEPC Awards Function
- Focuses on India's textile heritage, diversity & industry evolution.
- Captures fabric traditions, production history, and socio-economic impact.
- Useful for exam questions linking industry heritage and cultural exports.

6. Government E-Book: Report on Achievements of Swachhta Hi Seva Campaign 2025

- Publisher: Ministry of Information & Broadcasting .It was published as a E-book format.
- Covers government data on implementation & outcomes of national cleanliness drive.
- Useful for environment/administration notes on Swachh Bharat Mission 2.0 achievements.

7. Government E-Book: Report on Achievements Under Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam Plantation Campaign



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- Publisher: Ministry of Information & Broadcasting on a E-Book format.
- Details plantation campaign outcomes linked to environmental goals. • Relevant for environment current affairs & policy implementation tracking.

8. Books Released Under PM-YUVA 2.0 Scheme

- Launched by: Union Minister for Education Shri Dharmendra Pradhan at New Delhi World Book Fair 2025
- Includes 41 books by young Indian authors across genres and languages
- Part of PM-YUVA 2.0 scheme aimed at promoting young writers & cultural literacy. • Covers themes from freedom struggle narratives to regional histories

AWARDS IN NEWS:

1. IAS officer Supriya Sahu was honoured with the 2025 Champions of the Earth Award



Supriya Sahu, I.A.S.
Inspiration and Action

- IAS officer **Supriya Sahu** was honoured with the **2025 Champions of the Earth Award** in the **Inspiration and Action** category for her transformative environmental leadership, including sustainable cooling, ecosystem restoration, heat-adaptation initiatives and climate resilience work that benefited millions.

- It is the **highest environmental honour** conferred by the **United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)** at the UN Environment Assembly.

2. Best FIFA Football Awards 2025 — Ousmane Dembélé & Others

FIFA Football Awards 2025 took place on December 16, 2025, at the Fairmont Katara Hall in **Doha, Qatar**. The ceremony celebrated a year dominated by Paris Saint-Germain's historic Champions League triumph and Spain's continued excellence in the women's game.

Award	Winner	Team / Nationality
Men's Player	Ousmane Dembélé	PSG / France
Women's Player	Aitana Bonmatí	Barcelona / Spain
Men's Coach	Luis Enrique	PSG / Spain
Women's Coach	Sarina Wiegman	England
Men's Goalkeeper	Gianluigi Donnarumma	Man City (ex-PSG) / Italy
Women's Goalkeeper	Hannah Hampton	Chelsea / England
FIFA Puskás Award (Best Goal – Men)	Santiago Montiel	Independiente / Argentina
FIFA Marta Award (Best Goal – Women)	Lizbeth Ovalle	Tigres / Mexico
FIFA Fair Play Award	Dr. Andreas Harlass-Neuking	SSV Jahn Regensburg (Team Doctor)

3. The **BBC Sports Personality of the Year 2025** ceremony took place on **December 18, 2025**, at MediaCity in Salford. The night was a crowning moment for Northern Irish golfer **Rory McIlroy**, who topped the public vote following a historic season.

1. **Winner: Rory McIlroy (Golf)** – Became the first golfer to win the award since Sir Nick Faldo in 1989.
2. **Runner-up: Ellie Kildunne (Rugby Union)** – The Red Roses star became the first female rugby player ever nominated for the main award.



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3. **Third Place: Lando Norris (Formula 1)** – Recognized after winning his first F1 World Championship with McLaren.

4. Global Humanitarian Award (Global Humane Society): Awarded to Anant Ambani (Youngest recipient) for his contributions to animal welfare.

In December 2025, Anant Ambani, the founder of the wildlife conservation initiative Vantara, was honored with the Global Humanitarian Award for Animal Welfare. This recognition from the Global Humane Society (the international arm of American Humane) marked a historic milestone for both India and the global conservation community.

A Historic Achievement

- **The Youngest Recipient:** The youngest individual ever to receive this prestigious award.
- **The First Asian:** The first person from Asia to be recognized with this global honor.

The award ceremony took place in **Washington, D.C.**, where leaders in wildlife protection gathered to celebrate Ambani's "transformative global impact" on animal welfare.

5. **Globe Soccer Awards 2025 (Dubai):**

Held on **December 28, 2025**, at the Atlantis The Royal, the ceremony saw Paris Saint-Germain sweep the major categories following their Champions League win.

- **Best Men's Player:** Ousmane Dembélé (PSG/France)
- **Best Middle East Player: Cristiano Ronaldo** (Al-Nassr) – Secured a historic "hat-trick," winning this award for the third consecutive year at age 40.
- **Best Women's Player:** Aitana Bonmatí (Barcelona)
- **Best Coach:** Luis Enrique (PSG)
- **Maradona Award:** Lamine Yamal (Barcelona)

6. **Indian National Sports Awards (Rashtrapati Bhavan)**

Conferred in December 2025 by the President of India to honor the year's top athletic achievements:

- **Major Dhyani Chand Khel Ratna: * Manu Bhaker** (Shooting) – For her double Olympic medal haul.
 1. **D. Gukesh** (Chess) – Following his historic World Championship run.
 2. **Harmanpreet Singh** (Hockey) – Leading the team to Olympic success.
 3. **Praveen Kumar** (Para-Athletics).
- **Arjuna Award:** Notable winners included **Jyothi Yarraji** (Athletics) and shooters **Sarabjot Singh** and **Swapnil Kusale**.
- **Lifetime Achievement:** War hero **Murlikant Petkar** (India's first Paralympic gold medalist) was honored at age 80.

7. **International Ayurveda Ratna Award**

Renowned Pune-based practitioner **Dr. Harish Patankar** was conferred this honor at the Second World Ayurveda Health Summit in Bengaluru (late Dec 2025) for his global contributions to Ayurvedic medicine.

8. **Turner Prize 2025**

In a watershed moment for the art world on **December 9, 2025**, **Nnena Kalu** became the first artist with a learning disability to win the prestigious £25,000 prize. She was recognized for her "vortex-like" sculptures made from found materials like VHS tapes and fabric.

9. **National Book Awards 2025 (USA)**

- **Fiction:** Rabih Alameddine for *The True True Story of Raja the Gullible*.
- **Nonfiction:** Omar El Akkad for *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This*.
- **Poetry:** Patricia Smith for *The Intentions of Thunder*.



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10. The Red Sea International Film Festival

At the 5th edition of the Red Sea International Film Festival in Jeddah (December 2024), **Alia Bhatt** was honored with the **Golden Globe Horizon Award**.

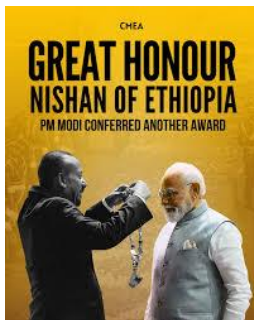
- **The Honor:** This award, presented in partnership with the Golden Globes, recognizes emerging creative forces whose rapid rise is shaping both regional and international screen culture.
- **Global Recognition:** Alongside Bhatt, Tunisian-Egyptian actor **Hend Sabry** received the Omar Sharif Award.

11. Filmfare OTT Awards 2025

The 6th annual Filmfare OTT Awards, held in Mumbai on **December 15, 2025**, celebrated the best in Indian digital content.

Category	Winner	Project / Platform
Best Series	Black Warrant	Netflix
Best Series (Critics)	Paatal Lok — Season 2	Prime Video
Best Actor (Male) — Drama	Jaideep Ahlawat	Paatal Lok — Season 2
Best Actor (Female) — Drama	Monika Panwar	Khauf
Best Actor (Female) — Comedy	Ananya Panday	Call Me Bae
Best Actor (Female) — Film	Sanya Malhotra	Mrs.
Best Actor (Male) — Film	Abhishek Banerjee	Stolen

12. The Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia presented to Prime Minister Narendra Modi



- Conferred by: Ethiopian Prime Minister **Abiy Ahmed Ali**
- PM Modi became the first world leader to receive this specific iteration of **Ethiopia's highest national award**.
- The honor was presented during his first-ever bilateral visit to Ethiopia. It recognized his "visionary leadership" and his efforts to champion the interests of the African continent on the global stage, particularly within the G20.

13. Prime Minister Narendra Modi honoured with Order of Oman (First Class)



- It was Conferred by **Sultan Haitham bin Tarik**
- This is the Sultanate's most prestigious civilian decoration, historically reserved for select global heads of state (past recipients include Queen Elizabeth II and Nelson Mandela).
- The award coincided with the 70th anniversary of diplomatic relations between India and Oman. During this visit, both nations also signed a landmark Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA) to boost bilateral trade and investment.



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14. Former Bangladesh PM Khaleda Zia

- Former Bangladesh Prime Minister **Khaleda Zia**, a key figure in South Asian politics and chairperson of the Bangladesh Nationalist Party (BNP), passed away in December 2025.
- She was the **first woman Prime Minister of Bangladesh**, serving two terms between 1991–1996 and 2001–2006.
- Played a decisive role in **Bangladesh’s transition to multi-party democracy** after military rule.
- Her political rivalry with Sheikh Hasina shaped the country’s political landscape for decades.
- She remained a major political influence despite declining health in recent years.

15. Eminent Sculptor Ram Vanji Sutar

- Renowned Indian sculptor **Ram Vanji Sutar**, creator of the **Statue of Unity**, passed away in December 2025 at the age of 100.
- Recipient of **Padma Shri** and **Padma Bhushan** for his lifetime contribution to public art.
- Designed several iconic statues across India, including national leaders and historical figures.
- His monumental bronze works played a major role in modern monumental sculpture in India.

16. Legendary Actor Dharmendra passes away



- Veteran Bollywood actor **Dharmendra**, known as the “He-Man of Indian Cinema”, passed away on 24 November 2025.
- Acted in **300+ films**, including Sholay, Chupke Chupke, Raja Jani and Phool Aur Patthar.
- Recipient of **Filmfare Lifetime Achievement Award** & multiple national honours.
- Known for versatility across action, comedy and romantic cinema.

17. Pulitzer Prize-Winning Journalist Peter Arnett

- Renowned war correspondent **Peter Arnett** passed away in December 2025 at the age of 91.
- Covered major global conflicts including **Vietnam War & Gulf War**.
- Recipient of the **Pulitzer Prize for International Reporting**.
- Considered one of the world’s most influential frontline reporters.

MILITARY EXERCISES AND DEFENCE NEWS

Exercise Name	Venue and Participating Countries	Facts
Exercise Trishul 2025	Venue :Tri-Services: Indian Army, Navy & Air Force Participated by :Andaman & Nicobar Command, India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This was led by the Western Naval Command (not A&N Command). • It took place along the western coast (Gujarat and Rajasthan desert sectors) and the North Arabian Sea
MITRA SHAKTI-2025	Venue :Foreign Training Node, Belagavi, Karnataka Participated by :India–Sri	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conducted from 10th–23rd Nov 2025. Focus on sub-conventional operations, counter-terrorism & UN peacekeeping drills;



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	Lanka (Army)	enhances bilateral defence cooperation.
DESERT CYCLONE-II 2025	Venue : Abu Dhabi, UAE Participated by : India-UAE (Army)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Held from 18th–30th December 2025. Aims to enhance desert warfare training, interoperability, urban combat coordination & joint tactical planning.
Harimau Shakti 2025	Venue : Mahajan Field Firing Range, Rajasthan Participated by : India-Malaysia (Army)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conducted from 5th–18th December 2025. Focus on jungle warfare, counter-insurgency operations & platoon-level tactical drills to strengthen military cooperation. It featured the Indian Dogra Regiment

Exercise Name	Venue /Participating Countries	Facts
Justice Mission 2025 (PLA Drills)	Venue : Taiwan Strait Region Participated by : China People's Liberation Army (PLA)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Large-scale live-fire and blockade-simulation drills conducted in late December 2025. Focus on joint naval-air operations, encirclement maneuvers, rapid mobilisation & deterrence signalling in the Indo-Pacific region.
IAF-IITM Secure Comms Exercise (Joint Tech Training)	India — Indian Air Force + IIT Madras + Pravartak Foundation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expansion of combat training simulators & virtual tactical platforms to enhance operational realism, mission readiness, resource optimisation & modern warfare adaptability. Supports cost-effective training with high-fidelity scenarios
Indian Army Simulation Expansion 2025	Indian Army (Domestic Training Establishments, India)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MoU signed to develop indigenous secure airborne military communication system. Focus on encryption capability, cyber-secure networks, EW resilience & Atmanirbhar defence tech development for future air operations.

DEFENSE NEWS ;

1. Key Facts of INSV Kaundinya

INSV means Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV). **It was Operated by** Indian Navy



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Key Highlights:

- Part of India's **offshore sail training fleet** used for long-distance oceanic voyages.
- Built to support **sail training and experiential leadership missions** for naval officers and cadets.
- Plays a role in enhancing **maritime skills, endurance, and navigation expertise**.
- Follows in the lineage of other INSVs like INSV Mhadei and INSV Tarini which completed notable circumnavigation voyages.

2. Defense Acquisition Council and its Proposal.

Defense Acquisition Council established in 2001 and It was Chaired by Union minister of Defense

Its goal is to provide coordinated decision-making throughout India's defence system by acting as the highest authority for strategic defence acquisition planning and supervision.

Features: Approve capital purchases in the long-term perspective plan "in principle." Track the development of significant initiatives. acknowledges the need for acquisition bids.

Key highlights of Proposal:

Astra Mk-II (BVRAAM)

- Indigenous Beyond-Visual-Range Air-to-Air Missile by DRDO
- Extended-range variant (>100 km), precision air-combat engagement

Long-Range Guided Rocket (Pinaka MLRS)

- Guided rocket ammunition for Pinaka system
- Extended range (approx 75 km) with INS-GPS guidance for accurate strikes

SPICE-1000 Guidance Kit

- Israeli stand-off precision guidance system (installed for Rafael)
- Converts 1000-kg bombs into long-range precision strike weapons

3. INS Vaghsheer – Indian Naval Submarine

About:

- **INS Vaghsheer** is an **Indian Navy diesel-electric attack submarine** commissioned under Project-75.
- It is the **fifth submarine** in the **Kalvari-class** of Scorpène-design submarines built in India and it was **commissioned into the Indian Navy**.

Key Facts:

- **Designed by:** French shipbuilder **Naval Group** under technology transfer to India.
- **Built by:** **Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL)**, Mumbai.
- **Class:** **Kalvari-class** (based on Scorpene design).
- **Type:** Conventional diesel-electric attack submarine with air-independent propulsion potential.

Significance:

It Enhances India's **undersea warfare capabilities** in the Indian Ocean Region and it strengthens the **naval deterrence** and maritime security along key sea routes.

4. Dhruv NG (New Generation) Helicopter -Indian Defence Aviation

India's civil aviation independence was taken when HAL successfully completed the first flight of the Dhruv NG helicopter and obtained DGCA certification for the domestic Shakti civil engine.

Merits:

- It Boosts **indigenous aerospace capability** under 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative and Offers **operational flexibility** for Army, Air Force, Navy, and civil agencies.



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- Lower lifecycle and maintenance costs compared to imported alternatives. It offers a **Multi-role capability** suited for transport, logistics, casualty evacuation, search and rescue, and disaster relief.

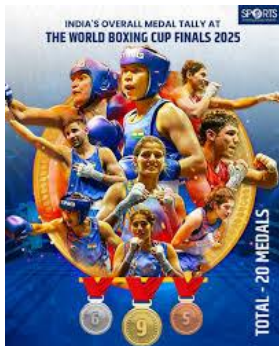
Features:

It has **More powerful engines** with improved payload and high-altitude performance and Enhanced of **avionics and mission systems** for better situational awareness and safety.

SPORTS AND GAMES

1. India Dominates World Boxing Cup Finals

Indian boxers put on a stellar performance at the World Boxing Cup Finals 2025 held in Greater Noida. Multiple gold medals were secured by stars showcasing India's rising dominance in global boxing.



Name	Category
Nikhata Zareen	51kg
Minakshi Hooda	48kg
Arundhati Choudhary	70kg

2. Women in Blue Lift Maiden ODI World Cup Title



In a historic moment for Indian cricket, the Indian Women's team clinched their first-ever ICC Women's ODI World Cup title on home soil. In the final held at the DY Patil Stadium in Navi Mumbai, India defeated South Africa by 52 runs, led by an outstanding 87 from Shafali Verma and a 5-wicket haul by Deepti Sharma.

- **Player of the match:** Safali Verma with a 87 runs from the bat.
- **Player of the Tournament:** Deepti Sharma with 22 wickets.

3. Formula 1 – Abu Dhabi Grand Prix 2025 (Car Racing / World Championship)

The **2025 Abu Dhabi Grand Prix** was held at the **Yas Marina Circuit, Abu Dhabi** on **1 December 2025** as the final round of the **F1 World Championship**.



- **Max Verstappen (Red Bull)** won the race, showcasing dominant performance in the finale.
- **Lando Norris (McLaren)** finished **second**, with **Charles Leclerc (Ferrari)** in **third place**.
- **Lando Norris clinched the 2025 Formula 1 Drivers' World (Constructor) Championship title**, marking his **first world championship** win and a historic success for McLaren.



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- **Max Verstappen (Red Bull) finishes second in World (Constructor) Championship .**

4. FIH Men’s Junior Hockey World Cup 2025

- The **14th FIH Hockey Men’s Junior World Cup** was held in **Tamil Nadu, India** (Chennai & Madurai) from **28 Nov to 10 Dec 2025**. A record **24 teams** participated in under-21 category in the global championship.



- The tournament was played at **Mayor Radhakrishnan Hockey Stadium (Chennai)** and **Madurai International Hockey Stadium (Madurai)**. Indian junior team’s bronze was **historic**, marking India’s first ever medal as host at the Junior Hockey World Cup.

- Winners – Gold - Germany , Runners – Silver - Spain
- India secured the bronze medal (third place).

Top performers:

Amirul Islam - top scorer;

Casper van der Veen - Best Player;

Jasper Ditzer - Best Goalkeeper.

5. Khelo India Winter Games scheduled in Jan 2026

Khelo India Winter Games scheduled in Jan 2026 in **Leh, Ladakh** for **Ice sports** (Ice Hockey & Ice Skating and **Gulmarg, Jammu & Kashmir** for **Snow sports** (Alpine Skiing, Nordic Skiing, Ski Mountaineering, Snowboard)



The mascot for the 2026 edition is **Sheen-E-She (Shan)**, symbolising the **snow leopard** — reflecting India’s winter sports spirit. The event is designed to **promote winter sports in India** and help identify talent for major events like the **2026 Winter Olympics**

6. ACC Under-19 (Men’s) Asia Cup 2025-Cricket

The **2025 ACC Under-19 Asia Cup** was held as a **50-over youth cricket tournament** from **12 to 21 December 2025** in the **United**

Arab Emirates (Dubai). **Eight teams** participated: India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Afghanistan, UAE, Malaysia and Nepal. Ayush Matre captained the Indian Under-19 men’s team.

Winners – Pakistan

Runners – India

7. Magnus Carlsen won the FIDE World Rapid & Blitz Chess Championships 2025 Doha, Qatar

- **Magnus Carlsen won the 2025 World Rapid Chess Championship**, scoring 10.5/13 to claim his **sixth Rapid title** and the 19th world crown overall.
- Vladislav Artemiev was runner-up and Indian GM
- Arjun Erigaisi finished third.
- **Bibisara Assaubayeva (Kazakhstan)** won the **Women’s World Blitz title for the third time**, beating Anna Muzychuk in the final.
- Indian GM **Arjun Erigaisi earned bronze medals in both Rapid and Blitz**, becoming only the second Indian male after Viswanathan Anand to podium at these world events.



GAMES –EVENT AND OTHER DETAILS:

Event	Host (Country / State / City)	Mascot



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National Games of India 2026	Meghalaya, India	(To be announced)
Khelo India Tribal Games 2026	Chhattisgarh, India (Bilaspur)	Morveer
Khelo India Youth / University Games 2026	Various Indian States	(To be announced)
Winter Olympics 2026	Milan & Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy	Tina (for the Olympics) and Milo (for the Paralympics)
Asian Games 2026	Nagoya & Aichi, Japan	Honohon
Commonwealth Games 2026	Glasgow, Scotland	Finnie
ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026	India & Sri Lanka	(To be announced)

NATIONAL NEWS

1. SHANTI Act, 2025

The Strategic Harnessing and Advancement of Nuclear Technology Initiative (SHANTI) Act is the most significant reform in India's nuclear sector since the 1960s. By repealing the outdated Atomic Energy Act (1962) and the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (2010), it provides a unified legal framework designed for the modern era.

- **Private Participation:** For the first time, the law allows private Indian companies and joint ventures to build and operate nuclear plants, ending the state-owned NPCIL's monopoly. Private players can now hold up to 49% equity in nuclear projects.
- **Liability Reform:** It shifts the liability focus almost entirely to the operator. Crucially, it removes the "supplier liability" clause that had long deterred foreign companies (like those from the US and France) from investing in India.
- **Capacity Goals:** The Act is the engine for India's ambitious target to jump from roughly 8 GW of nuclear capacity to 100 GW by 2047, providing a stable baseload for the Net Zero 2070 goal.

2. Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2025

It is formally known as the UMEED Act, this legislation seeks to reform the management of over 9 lakh acres of Waqf land. It aims to increase transparency but has faced intense legal challenges.

- **Contentious Clause:** A major point of friction was a requirement that a person must have practiced Islam for at least five years before they could create a Waqf (dedicate property).
- **Supreme Court Intervention:** In late 2025, the Supreme Court stayed this "five-year" provision, labeling it arbitrary because there was no objective mechanism to verify a person's religious practice. The Court also limited the powers of District Collectors to unilaterally decide if a property is government-owned or Waqf-owned, citing a violation of the "separation of powers."

3. Appropriation Bill, 2025

Passed on **December 16, 2025**, this Bill is a vital tool for the government's fiscal operations. Under **Article 114** of the Constitution, no money can be withdrawn from the **Consolidated Fund of India** without such a law.

- **Purpose:** This specific Bill was passed to authorize **Supplementary Demands for Grants**. These are additional funds required by the government beyond what was originally estimated in the February Budget.
- **Economic Impact:** In 2025, these extra funds were largely directed toward the newly launched **National Nuclear Mission** and rapid infrastructure development under the "Viksit Bharat" initiative. As a **Money Bill**, it



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was passed by the Lok Sabha and returned by the Rajya Sabha, ensuring the government could meet its year-end spending commitments without delay.

4. Governor's Assent (Article 200):

A 5-judge bench ruled that the judiciary **cannot impose fixed timelines** on Governors for granting assent to State Bills, citing the separation of powers. a **5-judge Constitution Bench** of the Supreme Court delivered a landmark advisory opinion (16th Presidential Reference) that significantly refined the power dynamics between State Governors and Legislatures.

The ruling was a direct response to a controversial April 2025 judgment (in the State of Tamil Nadu v. Governor case) that had originally imposed strict 1-month and 3-month deadlines for Governors to act on Bills.

Key Highlights of the Judgement

- **Rejection of Fixed Timelines:** The Court ruled that the judiciary **cannot impose fixed, judicially mandated timelines** on the Governor (Article 200) or the President (Article 201). It held that the phrase "as soon as possible" in the Constitution implies urgency but does not translate to a rigid deadline.
- **Separation of Powers:** Imposing such timelines would violate the **Doctrine of Separation of Powers** and the federal character of the Constitution. The Court emphasized that the Governor's office is a constitutional authority, not a subordinate body to the judiciary.
- **"Deemed Assent" is Unconstitutional:** The Bench overruled the previous April ruling which suggested that if a Governor delays a Bill, it is "deemed" to have received assent. The Court held that a Bill can **only** become law through formal assent, and the judiciary cannot use Article 142 to bypass this constitutional requirement.
- **No "Absolute Veto":** While there are no timelines, the Court clarified that a Governor **cannot withhold assent indefinitely** without action. If a Governor chooses to withhold assent, they **must** return the Bill to the Legislature for reconsideration.
- **Limited Judicial Review:** The Court maintained that while it cannot review the merits of the Governor's decision, it can intervene in cases of **"prolonged, unexplained, and indefinite inaction."** In such "glaring" cases, the Court may issue a mandamus (a legal order) directing the Governor to make a decision, though still without prescribing a specific deadline.

5. ARAVALLI PREVENTION PROTECTION:

The Aravalli range, stretching from Gujarat to Delhi, is India's most critical "natural infrastructure." However, as of late 2025 and early 2026, the range is at a tipping point due to a legal battle over its very definition and the ongoing failure of fragmented governance.

A. The Core Issue: The "100-Metre" Legal Battle

In **November 2025**, a Supreme Court ruling initially accepted a definition that recognized only landforms rising **100 metres or higher** as "Aravalli Hills".

- **What went wrong:** This technical threshold, proposed for administrative clarity, sparked a nationwide outcry. Environmentalists and Forest Survey of India (FSI) data suggested this rule could exclude **over 90% of the actual range** from legal protection, especially lower hillocks and ridges in Haryana and Delhi-NCR.
- **Current Status (Jan 2026):** On **December 29, 2025**, the Supreme Court stayed its own judgment, acknowledging that a height-based definition creates a "regulatory lacuna". A **High-Powered Expert Committee** has been proposed to create a more holistic, scientific definition.

B. Significance: The "Sponge" and "Shield" Effect

The Aravallis are not just rocks; they perform four non-negotiable functions:



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- **The Climate Shield:** They block the eastward expansion of the **Thar Desert**, preventing sand from swallowing fertile land in Punjab, Haryana, and UP.
- **The Groundwater Sponge:** Their fractured quartzite rocks allow rainwater to percolate. In districts like Gurugram and Alwar, the Aravallis are the only significant source of aquifer recharge.
- **Pollution Buffer:** They act as the "green lungs" of NCR, trapping dust and particulate matter blowing from the west.
- **Wildlife Linkages:** They serve as an essential corridor for leopards and hyenas moving between **Sariska (Rajasthan)** and the **Delhi Ridge**.

C. The Failure of Token Restoration

State narratives often lean on the **Aravalli Green Wall Project**—a 1,400 km long, 5 km wide ecological corridor plan.

- **The Critique:** While planting saplings (like the Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam campaign) is good for optics, it cannot replace a blasted hill. Once mining removes a hill, the local hydrology and soil stability are permanently destroyed. "Greenwashing" through plantations does not restore the "Sponge Effect" if the underlying geological structure is gone.

D. Structural Fixes: What is actually needed?

For the Aravallis to survive 2026 and beyond, the following reforms are being demanded by the #SaveAravalli movement and legal experts:

- **Unified Aravalli Conservation Authority:** Currently, jurisdiction is split between Mining, Forest, Revenue, and Panchayat departments. A single, multi-state authority is required to override local political-land interests.
- **Slope-Based Mapping:** Instead of height (100m), the definition should rely on **slope (>3°)** and geological continuity, as originally suggested by the FSI.
- **Freeze on Land-Use Change:** A total moratorium on real estate and resort "farmhouse" encroachments in the ridge zones, particularly in the **Dark Zones** (critically water-stressed areas) of Haryana.
- **Technology-Led Monitoring:** Using real-time GIS, drones, and "Anti-Mining Task Forces" to prevent the illegal quarrying that still persists in remote pockets of Rajasthan and Haryana.

6. The VB-G RAM G Bill, 2025: A New Era for Rural Employment

The **Viksit Bharat—Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin)** Act, 2025, represents the most significant legislative overhaul of rural employment in two decades, effectively replacing the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA).

From Welfare to Development

While MGNREGA was primarily a demand-driven safety net, the VB-G RAM G Act transitions the scheme into an "integrated development tool." The bill increases the guaranteed employment from 100 to **125 days** per household annually, providing a 25% boost in income security for rural laborers.

Key Structural Changes

- **Revised Funding Pattern:** In a major shift from the "Central-heavy" model, the funding for unskilled wages—previously 100% borne by the Centre—is now a **60:40 split** between the Centre and States (90:10 for North-Eastern and Himalayan states). This shifts significant fiscal responsibility to state governments, aimed at increasing local "skin in the game."
- **The Agricultural Pause:** A strategic 60-day "pause" can now be mandated during peak sowing and harvesting seasons. This ensures that the scheme does not compete with farmers for labor, thereby stabilizing agricultural productivity and managing wage inflation.



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- **National Infrastructure Stack:** All rural works are now integrated with the **PM Gati Shakti National Master Plan**. Projects are categorized into four critical verticals: Water Security, Core Rural Infrastructure, Livelihood Assets (like warehouses), and Disaster Mitigation.

Significance and Objectives

The Act aims to modernize rural governance through **AI-based fraud detection** and **biometric attendance**. By focusing on durable, climate-resilient assets, the government seeks to transition rural workers from "beneficiaries of a scheme" into "productive assets" of a developing national economy.

7. Cyclone Michaung: A Testament to Climate Extremes

In early December 2025, **Severe Cyclonic Storm Michaung** (pronounced Migjaum) tore through the Bay of Bengal, making landfall near Bapatla, Andhra Pradesh. The storm's impact served as a stark reminder of the intensifying nature of tropical cyclones in the North Indian Ocean.

A Meteorologically Intense Event

Michaung was characterized by its **rapid intensification**, fueled by Sea Surface Temperatures (SSTs) that were significantly above the 27°C threshold. This resulted in "exceptionally heavy" rainfall, with Chennai and surrounding districts receiving over **20–30 cm of rain in a single day**, bringing the metropolitan hub to a complete standstill.

Economic and Ecological Impact

- **Agriculture:** The storm caused catastrophic damage to approximately **6 lakh acres** of standing crops, including paddy, cotton, and chili, particularly in the fertile Godavari and Krishna delta regions.
- **Infrastructure:** Chennai's airport and power grids were submerged, and the city's flat terrain exacerbated the flooding. The event highlighted the "urban heat island" effect and the urgent need for **"sponge city"** infrastructure—natural drainage systems capable of absorbing such extreme runoff.

Response and Recovery

The state and central response prioritized a **"Zero Casualty Mission."** Over 60,000 people were evacuated by the NDRF and local agencies. Post-storm, the focus shifted rapidly to restoring critical infrastructure, with Chennai's airport resuming operations within 48 hours. However, the estimated economic loss—exceeding **\$1.3 billion**—reaffirmed that climate adaptation must be at the core of India's urban planning.

8. Ho or Kolha people are an Austroasiatic Munda ethnic group of India

About Ho:

They have been called in different names like Ho, Hodoko, and Horo, which mean 'human' in their own language. Ho people are an **indigenous tribal community** primarily found in **Jharkhand and Odisha** and found in nearby regions of Bihar and West Bengal. They also reside in Nepal and Bangladesh.

They are recognized under the **Part-I of the Constitution (Scheduled Tribes)**.

Language: The Ho language, which is Austroasiatic and closely related to Mundari, is spoken by the Ho people.

Occupation: While some members of the Ho tribe work in mining, the majority of them are employed in agriculture as workers or landowners.

This community's men and women dress quite simply. Tribal jewellery is preferred by the women.

Status of women: Compared to most tribes, the Ho have a greater position for women..

Dance: In Ho culture, dance is very important. The majority of villages have an akhra, or designated dancing area, which is typically a cleared area of hard ground beneath a spreading tree.

Music: Native instruments including the rutu (flute), dholak, dumeng (mandar), and dama (drum) are used in



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traditional Ho music.

Religion: The majority of the Ho practise Sarnaism, a nature-based religion that is incompatible with Hinduism. They have a deuri (means a village priest)

9. BOMB CYCLONE:

A **Bomb Cyclone** is a **rapidly intensifying low-pressure system** where atmospheric pressure drops sharply (by 24+ mb in 24 hours). This process is called **explosive cyclogenesis**, leading to powerful storms.

Causes:

- It was marked as a strong wind, with a lot of precipitation (rain and snow), and a quick drop in pressure. It causes blizzard-like conditions in impacted areas, huge waves, storm surges, and coastal flooding.
- The cyclone's centre pressure rapidly and intensely deepened, earning it the nickname "bomb."
- Occurs when only **cold polar air meets warm, moist air** from lower latitudes and enhanced by **strong upper-air jet streams** and temperature gradients.

Relevance to India:

While Bomb Cyclones are common in **North Atlantic / North Pacific**, **similar rapid cyclogenesis processes** can influence monsoon depressions and Western Disturbances

10. 'Green to Gold' Initiative — Environment & Wildlife Conservation

'Green to Gold' is a flagship biodiversity conservation programme launched by the **Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC)**. It aims to incentivise **protection of wildlife habitats on private and community lands**. Under the "Green to Gold" project, Himachal Pradesh has legalised industrial hemp farming to promote the expansion of the bioeconomy.

Objectives:

- To extend vital habitats and biodiversity corridors outside of protected areas and also involve local stakeholders, farmers, and landowners in conservation efforts.
- Encourage cooperation between ecological restoration and livelihood security.
- The **Eastern Imperial Eagle** (*Aquila heliaca*) is a **large bird of prey** found across parts of **Eastern Europe and Central to South Asia**. It is listed as '**Vulnerable**' on the IUCN Red List due to **habitat loss, human disturbance, and reduction in prey base**. It was protected under **Indian Wildlife Protection Act, 1972 (Schedule I)** and **CITES Appendix I**

Key Facts:

- **Appearance:** Dark brown eagle with a **golden-brown head and neck**; strong hooked beak and broad wings.
- **Habitat:** Prefers **open woodlands, grasslands, and steppe regions**; nests on large trees or cliffs.
- **Range:** Breeds in **Southeastern Europe, Central Asia**, and winters in **South Asia including India (e.g., Rajasthan, Gujarat, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh)**.

About IUCN:

- **IUCN** is a global environmental organisation founded in **1948**, headquartered in **Gland, Switzerland**. It acts as a key body for **biodiversity conservation, species assessment and policy advocacy**. It maintains the **IUCN Red List of Threatened Species** — world's most authoritative database on species extinction risk.

11. Scheme to Promote Manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM)

A Government of India initiative to **boost domestic manufacturing of Sintered Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM)** — critical components used in advanced technologies. It aligned with India's focus on **Atmanirbhar Bharat and technology self-reliance**.



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Strategic Importance:

- REPMs are essential for **electric vehicles (EVs), renewable energy systems, aerospace, defence, robotics, and advanced electronics**.
- Strengthens India's **manufacturing ecosystem** in cutting-edge sectors.
- Supports **industrial competitiveness** and value-addition in mineral resources.

Facts of Rare Earth Permanent Magnets (REPM) :

- Among the **strongest permanent magnets**, crucial for **EVs, renewable energy systems, electronics, aerospace and defence applications**.
- Manufactured mainly from **rare-earth alloy systems** such as **Neodymium-Iron-Boron (Nd-Fe-B)** (and in some applications Samarium-Cobalt).
- Produced through **sintering**, where alloy powders are heated at high temperatures **without melting** to increase density, strength, corrosion resistance and magnetic performance.
- India has around **6.9 million tonnes of Rare Earth Element (REE) reserves (5th largest globally)** — but contributes **~1% of global production**; REPM demand remains **largely import-dependent, particularly on China**.
- To secure critical mineral supply chains, the **Ministry of Mines** has signed **bilateral cooperation agreements** with resource-rich countries including **Australia, Argentina and Zambia**.

12. Cyclone Ditwah: Impact and Relief

Cyclone Ditwah was a catastrophic tropical cyclone that formed in the Bay of Bengal in late November 2025. It is recorded as the deadliest natural disaster to hit Sri Lanka since the 2004 Tsunami.

- **Formation:** It originated from a low-pressure system in the North Indian Ocean around November 26, 2025.
- **Landfall:** It made a devastating landfall on the **Eastern Coast of Sri Lanka** on November 28, 2024, moving across the island before heading toward the southern coast of India.

Significance & Impact:

- **Casualties:** In Sri Lanka, the death toll reached approximately **643 fatalities**, with over 180 people reported missing.
- **Displacement:** Over **2 million people** were affected across all 25 districts of Sri Lanka, with hundreds of thousands seeking refuge in safety centers.
- **Economic Loss:** Estimated direct physical damage reached **\$4.1 billion** (approx. 4% of Sri Lanka's GDP), primarily affecting infrastructure, agriculture (paddy and vegetable crops), and residential buildings.
- **Regional Impact:** In India, it caused heavy rainfall in **Tamil Nadu and Andhra Pradesh**, resulting in at least 4 deaths and significant agricultural losses across 2 lakh acres.

Objectives of Relief:

- Immediate search and rescue (SAR) in landslide-prone central highlands (Kandy, Nuwara Eliya).
- Restoration of critical power grids and telecommunication towers (over 4,000 went offline).

13. Operation Sagar Bandhu: India's Humanitarian Response

In the immediate aftermath of the cyclone, India launched **Operation Sagar Bandhu** (meaning "Friend of the Ocean") on November 28, 2025, acting as the "First Responder" in the region. It was a massive **Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR)** mission involving the Indian Navy, Indian Air Force (IAF), and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF).

Key Operations:



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- **Naval Support:** **INS Vikrant** (India's indigenous aircraft carrier) and **INS Udayagiri** were redeployed from their scheduled International Fleet Review to deliver over **1,100 tonnes** of relief material.
- **Air Support:** IAF deployed C-130J and IL-76 aircraft to transport emergency medical supplies, tents, water purification kits, and ready-to-eat meals.
- **On-Ground Rescue:** Two specialized **NDRF teams** (80 personnel) with canine squads were sent to assist in urban search and rescue.

Significance:

- **Neighbourhood First Policy:** Reaffirmed India's commitment to its immediate neighbors during times of crisis.
- **Vision SAGAR:** Aligned with the doctrine of "Security and Growth for All in the Region," positioning India as a net security and stability provider.
- **Long-term Support:** In late December 2025, India announced a **\$450 million reconstruction package** (credit lines and grants) specifically for post-cyclone recovery.

Objectives:

- To provide life-saving aid and stabilize the humanitarian situation in Sri Lanka.
- To strengthen maritime cooperation and bilateral ties between India and Sri Lanka.

14. Seven states and UTs urged the Centre to include breakfast in the PM-POSHAN midday meal scheme

About PM POSHAN:

- **PM POSHAN (Prime Minister's Programme for Poshan — formerly Mid Day Meal Scheme)** is India's flagship school meal programme, recently revamped as **PM POSHAN 2.0**.
- It aims to provide **hot cooked meals** to children in Government and Government-aided schools to improve **nutrition, health, attendance and learning outcomes**.

The goals were to address undernutrition, anaemia, and malnutrition in school-age children.

- By making schools more appealing, absenteeism and dropout rates can be decreased.
- Purchase ingredients to support small farms and local agriculture.

Significance:

- Largest school meal programme globally — covering **crores of children** across the country.
- Directly contributes to **SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)** and **SDG 3 (Good Health & Well-Being)**.
- Strengthens **human capital formation** in early school years.

In December 2025, India witnessed three major updates that highlighted the intersection of environmental sustainability, social equity, and cultural heritage.

15. Virtual Water Export Crisis

In late 2025, a critical report brought national attention to the "Virtual Water" crisis. While India celebrated its position as the world's largest rice exporter—accounting for nearly **40% of the global trade** and exporting over **20 million metric tonnes**—the environmental cost has reached a breaking point.

- **The Concept:** "Virtual water" is the volume of water used to produce a commodity. Exporting rice effectively means exporting the billions of cubic meters of water used to grow it.
- **The Scale:** It is estimated that India "exports" around **24,000 to 50,000 million cubic meters** of water annually through rice.
- **Groundwater Depletion:** This crisis is most acute in **Punjab and Haryana**, where extraction rates are roughly **156%** of the annual recharge. Borewell depths in these regions have plummeted from **30 feet** to nearly **200 feet** in some areas.



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- **Policy Paradox:** Experts argue that by providing free electricity and high Minimum Support Prices (MSP) for water-intensive crops in semi-arid zones, the government is inadvertently subsidizing the depletion of its own life-critical aquifers for foreign markets.

16. State of Marginal Farmers Report, 2025

Released on **Kisan Diwas (December 23)** by the Forum of Enterprises for Equitable Development (FEED), this report shed light on the structural vulnerabilities of India's smallest food producers.

- **Demographic Dominance:** Marginal farmers (those with less than 1 hectare of land) make up **68.5%** of all agricultural holdings in India, yet they control only **24%** of the total cultivable land.
- **The Cooperative Gap:** The most startling revelation was that **less than 25%** of these farmers are active members of agricultural cooperatives or Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS).
- **Consequences of Exclusion:**
 1. **Debt Traps:** Without cooperative access, marginal farmers remain **2.5 times more vulnerable** to moneylenders who charge exorbitant interest.
 2. **Climate Shocks:** In regions like Bihar and Tripura, where cooperative penetration is lowest, farmers have little to no "cushion" against the unseasonal rains and droughts of 2025.
 3. **Digital Divide:** The report found a massive digital gap; for instance, **77.8%** of cooperatives in Tripura use no digital tools, preventing farmers from accessing modern insurance or market platforms.

17. UNESCO Recognition of Deepavali

On December 10, 2025, UNESCO officially inscribed Deepavali (Diwali) on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. This occurred during the 20th session of the Intergovernmental Committee held at the Red Fort in New Delhi.

- **Significance:** Deepavali is now the **16th Indian element** on this prestigious list, joining others like Durga Puja, Yoga, and Vedic Chanting.
- **Cultural Universalism:** The recognition validates Deepavali not just as a religious event, but as a "Social Practice and Festive Event" that transcends borders, celebrating the universal theme of the victory of light over darkness.
- **Global Impact:** This status is expected to boost cultural tourism and provide a framework for the international safeguarding of the diverse regional traditions—from the Kali Puja in Bengal to the Nirvana Day of Jains—that fall under the umbrella of the festival.

18. CHALLENGES IN ECONOMY:

- **GST revenues continued to grow**, with national collections rising year-on-year and recording strong monthly figures in **December 2025** — underscoring sustained economic activity and consumption.
- **Andhra Pradesh reported a 5.78% increase** in net GST collections in December, reflecting strong compliance and economic momentum at the state level despite GST 2.0 rate rationalisations.

A. Manufacturing & Industry Performance

- **India's manufacturing PMI slowed to a two-year low in December 2025**, signalling a temporary deceleration in business orders, output and employment; however, the sector remained resilient overall.

B. Macro Stability & Central Bank Views

- RBI's macro stability reports indicate that India's financial system remains robust — with **record-low bad loans** — but also highlighted emerging vulnerabilities such as **rising unsecured debt and fintech risks**.

C. GDP Growth & Economic Size

- India ended 2025 on a **strong economic footing**, with real GDP growth hitting a six-quarter high (around **8.2%** in Q2 FY25-26) supported by robust domestic demand, low inflation and strong export performance.



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• Official data showed India's **nominal GDP at about USD 4.18 trillion**, surpassing Japan to become the **fourth-largest economy in the world**, with projections indicating potential to overtake Germany by **2030**.

D. Inflation, Unemployment & External Sector

- **Inflation remained benign in 2025**, with CPI rates falling sharply into historically low territory, giving room for accommodative monetary policy and supporting consumption growth.
- **Unemployment declined**, with rates falling to multi-year lows by late 2025 — a positive sign for labour markets and income growth.
- **Services and goods exports strengthened**, helping the external sector and contributing to **broad current account stability**.

E. Fiscal Challenges

As of late December, India had **spent nearly 62% of its full-year fiscal deficit limit in just eight months**, raising concerns about whether the government will achieve the **FY26 budget deficit target** of around 5.1% of GDP.

F. Currency & External Risks

Despite domestic strength, the **Indian rupee remained under pressure** against the dollar through 2025, reflecting global currency dynamics, external pressures and trade uncertainties.

G. Capital Markets & Regulation

SEBI announced a phased overhaul of merchant banking regulations, raising minimum net worth norms for lead managers to strengthen risk management in a rapidly growing primary equity market.

H. Consumer & Demand Trends

Consumer demand remained robust in certain segments: e.g., **Hero MotoCorp reported ~40% jump** in bike and scooter sales in December, indicating resilient rural and urban consumer spending

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

1. Russia-Ukraine War: The Push for a Ceasefire

The Russia-Ukraine conflict has entered a critical diplomatic phase under the mediation of a new US administration. While the war enters its fourth year, the focus has shifted from the battlefield to high-stakes negotiations in Florida.

US-Led Mediation: US President Donald Trump has initiated direct "28-point peace plan" talks with President Zelenskyy and Russian envoys. The talks aim for a swift negotiated settlement, potentially involving a ceasefire along the current "line of contact."

Key Points: Ukraine continues to demand "firm security guarantees" (potentially a fast-track to NATO or a bilateral defense treaty) and the restoration of territorial integrity. Russia, currently controlling parts of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson, demands the recognition of its "new territorial realities."

Significance:

- **European Security Shift:** The US approach marks a departure from previous policy by suggesting that reclaiming all lost territories might be "unrealistic," causing significant anxiety among European allies who fear a "dictated peace" favorable to Moscow.
- **Economic Recovery:** Both sides are discussing a massive reconstruction fund, with the US potentially linking aid to a successful peace framework.

Objectives:

- To achieve an immediate ceasefire to prevent further infrastructure collapse in Ukraine.
- To resolve the status of the **Zaporizhzhia Nuclear Power Plant**, currently under Russian control, to avoid a continental nuclear catastrophe.



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2. West Asia: Humanitarian Crisis and Settlement Expansion

Despite a fragile ceasefire in Gaza, the region faced new instability in January 2026 due to administrative crackdowns and the expansion of Israeli settlements in the West Bank.

NGO Ban: Israel announced a prohibition on **37 international humanitarian organizations** (including Oxfam and MSF) operating in the Occupied Palestinian Territory (oPt). Organizations were given a 60-day window to cease operations.

Settlement Advancement: The Higher Planning Council discussed plans for over **1,033 new housing units** in the West Bank, including the re-establishment of the Sa-Nur settlement.

Significance:

- **Aid Collapse:** The ban on NGOs threatens the survival of over 2 million Gazans who rely entirely on international aid for food and medicine.
- **Geopolitical Tension:** These moves have led to calls for a "two-way arms embargo" on Israel by several UN member states and have strained the newly brokered US-Israel-Iran de-escalation framework.

Objectives:

- To consolidate Israeli administrative control over the West Bank.
- To address domestic political pressure within Israel regarding the "security" of the borders.

3. China's Digital Yuan - Central Bank Digital Currency

The **Digital Yuan** (also called **e-CNY / Digital RMB**) is **China's Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)** issued by the **People's Bank of China (PBOC)**. It represents a **digital form of fiat currency** equivalent to physical Yuan (CNY), with legal tender status.

- **Key Features:**
 - Operates on a state-backed digital ledger, not dependent on decentralized cryptocurrencies. Enables peer-to-peer transactions, online/offline payments and bank transfers through mobile apps and wallets.
- Designed for programmability, traceability, and enhanced transaction security. Modernise payment infrastructure and reduce reliance on cash. Counter the dominance of private payment platforms (e.g., Alipay, WeChat Pay).
- Strengthen monetary policy control, reduce financial crime, and increase financial inclusion.

4. Yemen's Separatist Crisis: The Constitution for a South

The **Southern Transitional Council (STC)**, a major separatist faction in Yemen, declared a new constitution for an independent "Southern State," drastically escalating the decade-long civil war.

- The STC announced that South Yemen will operate under this new constitution for a two-year transition period, followed by a **referendum on self-determination**.
- This move follows the STC's military seizure of the Hadramout and Mahra provinces from Saudi-backed forces in late 2025.

Significance:

- **Regional Power Clash:** The crisis has created a rift between **Saudi Arabia** (supporting the internationally recognized government) and the **UAE** (historically aligned with the STC). Saudi warplanes recently struck STC camps in Hadramout to halt their advance.
- **Global Trade:** The instability near the **Bab-el-Mandeb Strait**—a vital maritime chokepoint—threatens global oil and cargo shipments, adding to the volatility already seen in the Red Sea.



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Objectives:

- The STC aims to restore the sovereign status that South Yemen held before the 1990 unification.
- For the global community, the objective is to prevent a "war within a war" that could allow extremist groups to regain a foothold in the power vacuum.

5. Bulgaria Joins the Eurozone

Bulgaria officially became the **21st member of the Eurozone**, adopting the Euro as its legal tender and marking a historic step in its European integration. Bulgaria has moved from its national currency (the Lev) to the Euro after meeting strict "Maastricht criteria," including price stability and fiscal discipline.

Significance:

- **Economic Stability:** Joining the Eurozone eliminates currency exchange costs and exchange rate risks, making Bulgaria more attractive for foreign direct investment (FDI).
- **Political Integration:** It reinforces the "unity" of the European Union at a time when several Eastern European nations are facing pressure from external geopolitical influences.

Objectives:

- To lower borrowing costs for the Bulgarian government and businesses.
- To integrate Bulgaria more deeply into the European Central Bank's (ECB) unified monetary policy framework.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY:

1. Discovery of Active Hydrothermal Vents in the Indian Ocean

A milestone for India's Deep Ocean Mission (DOM), Indian oceanographers captured the first-ever high-resolution images of an active hydrothermal vent at a depth of 4,500 meters in the Central Indian Ridge.

- Hydrothermal vents are underwater "hot springs" formed near tectonic plate boundaries.
- Cold seawater (2°C) seeps into the crust, is heated by magma to over 370°C, and re-emerges as mineral-rich plumes ("black smokers").
- The discovery was made using the indigenous Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) 'Ocean Mineral Explorer 6000' (OMe 6000) launched from **the research vessel Sagar Nidhi**.

Significance:

- **Mineral Wealth:** These vents are repositories of High-Grade Massive Sulphides containing Copper, Zinc, Gold, Silver, Platinum, Cobalt, and Nickel.
- **Scientific Breakthrough:** It confirms India's capability to navigate extreme deep-sea terrains, placing it among a select group of nations (US, Russia, China, France, Japan) with such technology.
- **Biological Insight:** It hosts unique chemosynthetic life forms (microbes and organisms) that survive without sunlight, offering clues to the origin of life on Earth.

Objectives:

- To identify potential sites for multi-metal mineralization.
- To support India's Blue Economy and secure "Atmanirbhar" (self-reliant) status in critical minerals needed for green energy.

2. Samudrayaan Mission & Matsya-6000 Progress

The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) provided major updates on the **Samudrayaan Project** during the Indian International Science Festival (IISF) in December 2025.



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- India's first human-operated deep-sea mission designed to send three "aquanauts" to a depth of **6,000 meters**.
- The vehicle, **Matsya-6000**, features a **Titanium Alloy Pressure Hull** and can sustain life for 12 hours (standard) and 96 hours (emergency).



Significance:

- It parallels India's space ambitions (Gaganyaan) by exploring the "inner space" of oceans.
- It allows direct human observation of the seabed, which is more precise than remote robotic sampling.

Objectives:

- To conduct deep-sea resource exploration (polymetallic nodules).
- To validate indigenous deep-sea technologies like syntactic foam (buoyancy) and underwater acoustic communication.
- Timeline Update: Phased dives are planned, with a 500-meter dive expected by early 2026 and the full 6,000-meter mission by 2027.

3. PathGennie: Indigenous Open-Source Drug Research Tool

It was announced in late December 2025, PathGennie is a breakthrough in computational biology developed by Indian scientists to accelerate drug discovery.

- An open-source software tool that uses **Direction-Guided Adaptive Sampling** to predict how drugs unbind from proteins.
- It eliminates "artificial distortions" common in traditional simulations, making drug testing more accurate.



Objectives:

- Reduces the time and cost of the "hit-to-lead" phase in pharmaceutical R&D.
- Democratizes drug research for Indian startups and academic institutions
- To aid in the development of treatments for complex diseases and drug-resistant pathogens.
- To strengthen India's position as a global pharmaceutical innovation hub.

4. First Made-in-India MRI Scanner



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India unveiled its first indigenously developed MRI scanner in December 2025, developed with support from **Zoho Corporation** and **VoxelGrid**. A high-field MRI scanner built entirely using domestic technology, hardware, and software.

- **Significance:**

Currently, 70% of high-end medical devices in India are imported. This scanner will significantly reduce the cost of diagnostic imaging.

- **Objectives:**

1. To provide affordable healthcare under the **National Medical Device Policy**.
2. To reduce the import bill and promote medical technology exports.

5. Passenger Assistance and Control Room (PACR)

Passenger Assistance and Control Room (PACR) is a dedicated centralized support system established by the **Ministry of Railways** to assist rail passengers.



Merits of PACR:

- It serves as a 24-hour contact centre that links passengers with railway services and provides real-time assistance to passengers with complaints, questions, and travel support.

To meet passenger requirements, it makes use of control room coordination, digital interfaces, and railway helplines. It will be useful to enhance Indian Railways' customer experience, accessibility, and response by tracking and monitoring complaints, delays, disruptions, and safety issues to guarantee prompt resolution.

6. 11th India International Science Festival 2025 Begins (Dec 6–9)

The **India International Science Festival (IISF)** — a flagship science outreach and celebration event — was held in **Panchkula, Haryana** from **6–9 December 2025** under the theme “Prosperity through Science: For an Atmanirbhar Bharat”.

IISF brings together scientists, students, innovators, entrepreneurs, policy makers and the public to showcase scientific advancements, and spark youth engagement in science

Objectives/Significance:

- To foster a **science culture** and strengthen the science-society interface across India.
- To promote innovations, technology demonstrations, and scientific thinking at grassroots levels.
- Supports India's vision of a **self-reliant and innovation-driven economy**.



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Impact:

IISF helps inspire the next generation of scientists and innovators while supporting collaboration between academia, industry and government.

7. Nasscom Foundation & Applied Materials Launch STEM Labs in Karnataka

- Nasscom Foundation, in partnership with **Applied Materials India**, launched advanced **STEM laboratories** in government schools in **Malur, Kolar district** to strengthen science education for students of classes **8–12**.
- Seven high-end STEM labs are being set up to provide hands-on learning in science, technology, engineering and mathematics.

Objectives/Significance:

- To **bridge educational inequality** between urban and rural areas.
- To enhance practical science learning and inspire interest in technology careers

Impact:

Improved STEM infrastructure enables government school students to access quality science education, potentially increasing participation in future innovation ecosystems.

8. IIT Madras Expands Global Outreach for Tech & Deep-Tech

IIT Madras announced the establishment of **global offices** in the **US, UK, Germany, Dubai and Malaysia** under the **IIT-M Global Research Foundation** to support researchers and startups and promote Indian technologies internationally.

About:

The expansion will help deep-tech innovators access global markets, research collaborations, funding opportunities, and accelerate commercialization of homegrown tech. **Objectives/Significance:**

- To **internationalize Indian research and innovation**.
- To attract foreign investment and partnerships for startups emerging from Indian institutions.

Impact:

This positions Indian technology ecosystems to integrate more closely with global R&D networks and increases commercialization potential of scientific breakthroughs.

9. 'Shanti Bill' Marks Major Science Reform (Dec 2025)

The **Shanti Bill** is a proposed reform to allow **private sector participation** in India's **nuclear energy industry**, breaking a six-decade restriction.

About:

Announced by Union Minister Jitendra Singh, the bill would open nuclear energy to private industries under regulation, boosting investment and innovation in clean energy.

Objectives/Significance:

- To accelerate nuclear power deployment for **clean energy transition**.
- To attract private capital and technology into India's nuclear sector.



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Impact:

If enacted, it could transform India's energy landscape, reduce carbon emissions, and enhance energy security through diversified investment and innovation.

10. IISc Develops Brain-Like Molecular Tech (Neuro-Inspired Computing)

Researchers at the **Indian Institute of Science (IISc)** developed novel **molecular-scale technology** that mimics brain functions, marking a step towards **neuromorphic computing** — computing inspired by neural systems.

About:

The breakthrough enables devices to adapt behavior and perform multiple computing functions within the same material, a significant advancement over traditional silicon computing.

Objectives/Significance:

- To advance **next-gen computing architectures** beyond conventional silicon.
- To enable more **efficient and versatile computing systems** for AI and data-intensive applications.

Impact:

Could revolutionize AI hardware by reducing energy needs and enhancing processing power for neural network-like operation

11. MahaCrimeOS AI

MahaCrimeOS AI is an **AI-powered crime analysis and investigation support system** used by the **Maharashtra Police**.

Key Highlights:

- Designed to assist in crime pattern analysis, predictive policing, and investigative decision-making.
- Uses artificial intelligence to identify trends, hotspots, and links between criminal activities.
- Helps in resource allocation and proactive crime prevention strategies.
- Facilitates faster forensic leads and case connections through data analytics.
- Strengthens overall police efficiency and public safety outcomes in Maharashtra.

12. Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR-120) at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur, Odisha.

On December 29, 2025, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) achieved a major milestone by successfully conducting the maiden flight test of the Pinaka Long Range Guided Rocket (LRGR-120) at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur, Odisha.

Key Highlights of the Test

- **Strike Range:** The rocket was successfully tested for its maximum range of 120 km, more than doubling the reach of the original Pinaka Mk-I.
- **Precision:** Unlike earlier unguided versions, the LRGR is a precision-strike weapon. It demonstrated all planned in-flight maneuvers and hit its target with "textbook precision."
- **Indigenous Development:** The system was designed by the Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE) in Pune, with support from several other DRDO labs

Variant	Range	Type
Pinaka Mk-I	~38 km	Unguided
Pinaka Mk-I Enhanced	~45 km	Unguided



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Guided Pinaka	~75–90 km	Guided (GPS/INS)
LRGR-120 (New)	120 km	Precision Guided
Pinaka Mk-III (ER)	200–300 km	Guided / Ramjet

13. BlueBird Block-2 Mission:

BlueBird Block-2 (6100 kg) is officially the heaviest satellite ever launched from Indian soil, breaking the previous record of 5,700 kg (OneWeb).



- Orbit: Placed into Low Earth Orbit (LEO) at an altitude of approx. 520 km.
- Technology: Direct-to-Device (D2D). It allows standard 4G/5G smartphones to connect directly to the satellite without needing ground towers or modified hardware.
- LOW EARTH ORBITS (LEO) Extends typically between 160 -2000 km altitude
- LEO Satellites are mainly used for communication Networks and Broadband Internet.

14. The "Artificial Sun" Breakthrough

China's Experimental Advanced Superconducting Tokamak (EAST), widely known as the "Artificial Sun," achieved a world-record milestone in nuclear fusion research.

- **The Breakthrough:** The EAST reactor sustained a high-confinement, steady-state plasma for over **1,000 seconds** (approx. 17 minutes) at temperatures exceeding 100 million degrees Celsius.
- **Mechanism:** It uses magnetic confinement (a Tokamak) to fuse deuterium and tritium nuclei—mimicking the process that powers the Sun.

Significance:

- **Energy Sovereignty:** This is the "Holy Grail" of energy. Unlike fission (used in current nuclear plants), fusion produces no long-lived radioactive waste and carries zero risk of a meltdown.
- **ITER Support:** As a primary testbed for the **International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER)** project (where India is a key partner), this success validates the design for the world's first commercial fusion reactor.

Objectives:

- To achieve "Ignition"—where the energy produced by the fusion reaction exceeds the energy used to heat the plasma.
- To pave the way for commercial fusion power plants by 2050.

15. Space Tech: JWST Discovery of a "Hot Super-Earth"

NASA's James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) provided the clearest evidence yet of a dense atmosphere on an ultra-hot rocky exoplanet, named as **TOI-561 b**.



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The Planet: TOI-561 b is an "ancient" Super-Earth, nearly 1.5 times the size of our planet, orbiting a star that is 10 billion years old. It is a world of molten lava oceans.

The Discovery: Contrary to previous theories that ultra-hot planets lose their gases, JWST detected a **thick layer of gases** and powerful winds, suggesting the planet can replenish its atmosphere from its interior.

Significance:

- **Astrobiology:** It redefines the "Habitable Zone" by showing that atmospheres can persist in extreme environments we previously thought were "dead."
- **Technological Prowess:** This marks the first time human technology has successfully characterized the weather patterns (winds) of a rocky planet outside our solar system.

Objectives:

- To understand the chemical composition (CO₂/Water vapor) of early-stage planets.
- To search for biosignatures in more temperate rocky planets in the coming years.

16. China's YJ-20 "Eagle Strike" Hypersonic Test

In a significant display of military technology, China successfully test-fired the **YJ-20 (Eagle Strike)** hypersonic anti-ship missile on January 1, 2026.

A hypersonic cruise missile launched from a **Type 055 destroyer**. It travels at speeds exceeding **Mach 5**, making it nearly impossible for current radar and missile defense systems to intercept.

Significance:

- **A2/AD Strategy:** This strengthens China's "Anti-Access/Area Denial" (A2/AD) capabilities in the South China Sea and Taiwan Strait, directly challenging US naval dominance in the Indo-Pacific.
- **Arms Race:** The test has prompted neighboring countries and the QUAD (India, US, Japan, Australia) to accelerate their own hypersonic and counter-hypersonic defense programs.

Objectives:

- To provide a credible "carrier killer" capability to deter foreign intervention in regional maritime disputes.
- To demonstrate technological parity (or superiority) in high-end naval warfare.

INDEX AND REPORTS:

1. India's S&T Year Ender – Dept of Science & Technology (DST) Report :

The Department of Science & Technology (DST) released its **year-ender report** highlighting India's performance in science, technology and innovation in 2025.

About:

India's ranking in key global S&T indices continued to improve in 2025 — including a rise to **38th in the Global Innovation Index**, substantial progress in the **Network Readiness Index**, and high output in research publications.

Objectives/Significance:

- To showcase India's growing footprint in global science and technology and innovation.
- To highlight policy outcomes, research achievements, and engagement in scientific outreach activities like National Science Day events nationwide.
- Reflects India's progress towards **technology leadership and innovation-driven development** for economic growth.

Impact:

Improved global rankings signal strengthened capabilities in innovation, ICT adoption and research output, enhancing India's appeal for science investments and global R&D partnerships.



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2. Global Innovation Index (GII) 2025

- **Released by:** World Intellectual Property Organization (**WIPO**).
- **India's Rank: 38th** (an improvement from 39th in 2024).
- India is ranked **1st** among the 37 lower-middle-income group economies.
- India has been an "**innovation overperformer**" for 15 consecutive years relative to its development level.
- **Innovation Clusters:** India has 4 clusters in the world's top 100: Bengaluru (21st), Delhi (26th), Mumbai (46th), and Chennai (84th).
- **Top Rank:** Switzerland.

3. Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2025

- **Released by:** Concern Worldwide (Ireland) and Welthungerhilfe (Germany).
- **India's Rank: 102nd** out of 123 countries.
- India's score is **25.8**, categorized as "**Serious.**"
- **Indicators:** Calculated based on 4 indicators: Undernourishment, Child Stunting, Child Wasting, and Child Mortality.
- **Specific Concern:** India has the **second-highest child wasting rate** (18.7%) in the report.

4. World Competitiveness Ranking 2025

- **Released by:** International Institute for Management Development (**IMD**).
- **India's Rank: 41st** among 69 countries (dropped 2 places from 39th in 2024).
- India showed strength in **Economic Performance** (27th) but challenges in **Infrastructure** and **Government Efficiency** (45th).
- **Top Rank:** Switzerland (1st), followed by Singapore (2nd).

5. Henley Passport Index 2025

- **Released by:** Henley & Partners (based on data from **IATA**).
- **India's Rank: 85th.**
- Indian passport holders can travel to **62 countries visa-free** or with visa-on-arrival.
- **Top Rank:** Singapore (World's most powerful passport).

6. Swachh Survekshan 2024–25 (Annual Report)

- **Released by:** Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (**MoHUA**), Government of India.
- **Cleanest City (above 10 lakh population):** Ahmedabad.
- **Dirtiest City (above 10 lakh population):** Madurai.
- This 9th edition saw participation from 4,589 Urban Local Bodies.

7. LEADS 2025 (Logistics Ease Across Different States)

- **Released by:** Ministry of Commerce and Industry (PIB Delhi).
- Launched by Union Minister Piyush Goyal to benchmark logistics performance.
- Introduced **API-enabled evaluation** of speeds on major road corridors.
- Classifies states into "Achievers," "Fast Movers," and "Aspirers."

8. Climate Change Performance Index (CCPI) 2026

- **Released by:** Germanwatch, the NewClimate Institute, and the Climate Action Network (CAN) International.
- **India's Rank: 23rd** (a significant drop of 13 places from 10th in the previous year).
- India fell from the "High Performer" to the "**Medium Performer**" category.
- **Reason for Decline:** The report cited the **absence of a national plan to phase out coal** and the continued auction of new coal blocks despite renewable energy growth.



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- **Top 3 Spots:** Remained **empty** (as no country is yet on track to meet the Paris Agreement 1.5°C goal). **Denmark** ranked highest at 4th.
- **Last Rank:** Saudi Arabia (67th).

9. QS World University Rankings: Sustainability 2026

What it is:

The QS World University Rankings: Sustainability is an annual global ranking published by **QS (Quacquarelli Symonds)**, assessing universities on their contributions to **environmental, social, and governance (ESG)** impact and sustainability outcomes

Released by:

QS Quacquarelli Symonds (London-based higher education analytics firm).

- India was one of only **four higher education systems** with **103 universities featured** in the 2026 sustainability rankings, reflecting breadth of participation. **Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi** emerged as the **top-ranked Indian institution**, placed at **205th globally** in the Sustainability rankings (with an overall score ~83.1).
- **IIT Bombay** and **IIT Kharagpur** followed closely, both ranked around **235–236**, while other Indian institutes including IIT Madras, Kanpur, Roorkee and IISc also featured. **No Indian university entered the global top 200** in the 2026 sustainability list despite strong representation
- India's universities are evaluated on **three core pillars**:
 - **Environmental Impact** – environmental sustainability, research and education.
 - **Social Impact** – equality, knowledge exchange, employability & outcomes, health & wellbeing.
 - **Governance** – ethics, transparency and institutional practices. **Significance:**
- The ranking highlights how Indian universities are focusing on sustainability research, education and institutional practices, aligning higher education with **UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
- Increased representation (103 institutions) signals a **growing sustainability culture** in Indian academia and underscores India's role in global sustainable development research.
- Rankings help universities benchmark their **ESG performance internationally** and influence policy priorities in education and research funding. (inference from QS methodology)

MISCELLANEOUS FACTS:

1. Global Affairs & Conflicts

- Severe **Pacific Northwest floods** impacted western Canada and the US from December 8 2025.
- **Greek farmers staged nationwide protests** over subsidies and costs in December 2025.
- **Bangladesh experienced major protests and violence** following political unrest in mid-December 2025.
- **Social Media Law:** Australia's **Online Safety Amendment** took effect, restricting social media access for users under the age of 16.

2. Health & Science

- **Middle East respiratory syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV)** saw global cases reported with deaths in 2025.

3. International Policy & Events

- **WHO hosted the Global Summit on traditional medicine** to advance integration and innovation in health systems. **Justice:** The International Criminal Court (ICC) sentenced Janjaweed leader **Ali Kushayb** to 20 years in prison for war crimes in Darfur.

4. Regional Instability

- **Political violence erupted across Bangladesh** after the assassination of a prominent leader, triggering riots and arson.



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5. Major Sports Events Starting in December 2025

- **2025 SEA Games** were held in Bangkok and Chonburi .
- **2025/26 PDC World Darts Championship** hosted in London.

6. **Maritime:** **INS Sindhughosh**, a Kilo-class submarine, was decommissioned from the Indian Navy after 40 years of service.

7 **Environment:** Delhi-NCR implemented **GRAP IV** measures (highest level) due to severe air pollution, shifting schools to hybrid modes

8. Science, Space & Technology

- **Interstellar Discovery:** Astronomers identified **3I/ATLAS**, the third interstellar object ever detected passing through our solar system.
- **Martian Research:** NASA's **Perseverance rover** detected significant organic compounds and "leopard spot" biosignatures in Martian rocks.
- **Cosmology:** The **Dark Energy Spectroscopic Instrument (DESI)** released findings suggesting that dark energy may not be constant, challenging current universal expansion theories.
- **Deep Space:** NASA completed the stacking of the **Space Launch System (SLS)** rocket for the **Artemis II** crewed lunar mission slated for 2026.
- **Nuclear Energy:** Russia announced plans to build a nuclear power plant on the **Moon** by the year 2035.

9. Sports:

- **Squash:** India claimed its first-ever **WSF Squash World Cup** title by defeating Hong Kong China 3-0 in Chennai.
- **Hockey:** **Harmanpreet Singh** was nominated for the Khel Ratna Award, India's highest sporting honor.
- **Indigenous Sports:** The inaugural **Kho-Kho World Cup** saw India sweep both the Men's and Women's titles.

10. Economy & Business

- **Market Milestone:** Chipmaker **Nvidia** became the first public company in history to reach a **\$4.5 trillion market valuation**.
- **Trade:** Mexico imposed significant **50% tariffs** on specific Indian exports, citing trade imbalances.
- **Currency:** The Indian Rupee hit a record low of **₹90.42** against the US Dollar in mid-December.

11. National Facts:

- India's **Parliament passed the Viksit Bharat–Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Act, 2025**, replacing MGNREGA and guaranteeing 125 days of rural employment.
- India **hosted WAVES 2025 (World Audio Visual & Entertainment Summit)** with participation from over 90 countries to promote media and creative industries.
- December 2025 saw a **major air travel disruption in India**, with widespread cancellations by IndiGo due to operational and pilot fatigue issues.
- **Andhra Pradesh recorded a ~5.8% year-on-year rise in net GST collections in December 2025**, the highest December figure since GST inception.
- **India's power demand rose nearly 7% in December 2025** compared to the previous year, driven by cold-weather consumption.
- **India's manufacturing PMI fell to a two-year low in December 2025**, signaling slowed industrial activity amid year-end pressures.
- The **Indian government cleared a ₹79,000 crore defence procurement package** for missiles, radars, drones and related systems.



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- **Commercial banks urged the RBI to extend trade relief measures beyond December 2025** to support exporters.
- **Chandigarh experienced its driest and warmest December in over a decade** in 2025.
- **A Lionel Messi's 'GOAT' tour event held in in Kolkata .**