

# **Current Affairs of January 2024**

**Help Line No.-**

**Khanpur : +91-9311668899**

**South Ex : +91-9311556699**

## **CONTENT**

National.....	2
International.....	12
Defence.....	17
Appointments or Resign/Retired.....	21
Honours/ Awards.....	26
Sports.....	29
Obituary.....	33
Important Days with theme.....	34

## National

### Gujarat Sets Guinness Record In Mass Surya Namaskar

- Gujarat, known for its rich cultural heritage and commitment to health and wellness, achieved a remarkable feat on New Year's morning by making an indelible mark in the **Guinness Book of World Records**.
- The state hosted the largest simultaneous Surya Namaskar performance, involving over 4,000 participants from 108 locations across 51 categories.
- The chosen number of 108 holds special significance in Indian culture, and the venues for the mega event included the iconic **Modhera Sun Temple**. In Vedic culture, esteemed mathematicians regarded 108 as a symbol of complete existence, linking it to the Sun, Moon, and Earth.



### ISRO Launches XPoSat: India's First X-Ray Polarimeter Satellite

- On January 1, ISRO successfully lifted off the **XPoSat** (X-ray Polarimeter Satellite) along with 10 other satellites from the Sriharikota spaceport, using the reliable **PSLV-C58** rocket.
- The primary objective of XPoSat is to **investigate the polarization of intense X-ray sources** in space. XPoSat is India's maiden X-Ray satellite designed for detecting X-rays emanating from exotic objects such as neutron stars and black holes.
- The PSLV-C58 Mission is pivotal in propelling the XPoSat Satellite into an eastward low inclination orbit. Following the injection of XPoSat, the PS4 stage will **undergo two re-starts to reduce the orbit into a 350 km circular orbit**.
- This adjustment aims to maintain the satellite in a 3-axis stabilized mode, facilitating Orbital Platform (OP) experiments, according to ISRO.



### Flipkart's Binny Bansal Launches OppDoor

- Binny Bansal, co-founder of **Flipkart**, has ventured into the e-commerce space once again with his latest startup, **OppDoor**. The startup aims to facilitate the global expansion of e-commerce firms by offering comprehensive end-to-end solutions.
- The timing of OppDoor's launch is noteworthy, aligning with the conclusion of the five-year non-compete clause that accompanied the sale of Flipkart to Walmart. This clause restricted Binny Bansal from participating in e-commerce ventures until 2023, and now, OppDoor emerges as the result of this awaited freedom.

### Rajasthan Seeks Integration Of Chiranjeevi Scheme With Ayushman Bharat

- The newly elected BJP government in Rajasthan is making strides to merge its state health insurance scheme, **Chiranjeevi**, with the central **Ayushman Bharat** programme.
- This move, pending approval from the union health ministry, aims to create a unified initiative called the **Ayushman Bharat Mukhyamantri Chiranjeevi Health Insurance Scheme**.
- Officials reveal that the integrated scheme will maintain Chiranjeevi's existing benefits, providing a substantial ₹25 lakh insurance cover applicable to both private and government hospitals.
- The Chiranjeevi scheme, initially introduced by former Chief Minister Ashok Gehlot of the Congress party, currently offers significantly higher coverage compared to Ayushman Bharat's ₹5 lakh.



### PM Modi Inaugurates ₹1,156 Crore Projects In Lakshadweep

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



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

### Reliance Industries Achieves India's First ISCC-Plus Certification

- Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)** achieved a significant milestone by becoming the **first in India to produce ISCC-Plus certified chemically recycled polymers**. The ISCC-Plus certification **applies to RIL's Jamnagar refinery**, situated in the state of **Gujarat**.
- On December 29, RIL proudly declared that it had successfully shipped its inaugural batch of ISCC-Plus certified circular polymers, named **CircuRepol** (polypropylene) and **CircuRelene** (polyethylene), to an undisclosed client.
- Companies obtaining ISCC Plus certification commit to ensuring that the **sustainability of their raw materials can be transparently traced from the field to the store**.

### ISRO's Satellite Set For Launch Aboard SpaceX's Falcon 9 Rocket

- NewSpace India Ltd (NSIL)**, the commercial arm of the **Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)**, has announced its collaboration with **SpaceX**, to launch the **communication satellite GSAT-20**.
- This marks India's first partnership with SpaceX, reflecting a significant stride in space exploration and satellite deployment.
- GSAT-20, now renamed **GSAT-N2**, is a **high throughput Ka-band satellite** designed to meet the growing broadband communication needs of India.
- With a weight of **4,700 kg**, GSAT-20 offers a substantial HTS capacity of nearly 48 Gbps, specifically tailored to address the service



requirements of remote and unconnected regions in the country.

### Adidas To Set Up Its First Asia GCC Outside China In Tamil Nadu

- Adidas**, the renowned athletic footwear and apparel giant, is making strategic moves to enhance its global operations by establishing its first and only **Global Capacity Centre (GCC) in Asia outside of China**.
- This significant development underscores the growing trend of multinational corporations choosing India as a prime destination for setting up their GCCs, capitalizing on the country's abundant software skills.
- The German corporation, headquartered in Herzogenaurach, Bavaria, is set to establish its Global Business Services (GBS) hub in Chennai. This move signifies a pivotal step for Adidas, as the Chennai facility becomes the first GCC outside of China in Asia. The choice of Chennai as the location for this hub reflects the city's rising prominence in the global corporate landscape.

### Ayodhya Airport Renamed As 'Maharishi Valmiki International Airport'; Gains International Status

- The Union Cabinet recently gave its approval to declare **Ayodhya Airport as an international airport**. The airport will be named **"Maharishi Valmiki International Airport, Ayodhyadham,"** reflecting the historical and cultural significance of the region.
- According to the government's press release, elevating Ayodhya Airport to international status is crucial for realizing the city's economic potential. Furthermore, it acknowledges Ayodhya's significance as a global pilgrimage site, with the international status expected to attract foreign pilgrims and tourists.
- The airport's development will occur in phases. In its initial phase, **the airport will have the capacity to handle 10 lakh (1 million) passengers annually**. After the second phase of development, Maharishi Valmiki International Airport is expected to cater to a staggering 60 lakh (6 million) commuters annually.

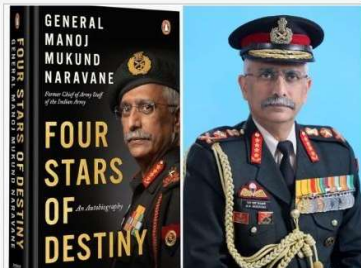


### Chennai Tops As Best City For Indian Women

- **Chennai** emerged as the **top Indian city for women in 2023** in terms of inclusivity and conduciveness to working women, as per findings from diversity, equity, and inclusivity consultant **Avtar Group's Top Cities for Women in India (TCWI) 2023**.
- **Tamil Nadu** cities topped both categories that the study covered – 49 cities in the million-plus population category and 64 cities in the less than a million-population category.
- National capital **Delhi**, notorious for crimes against women, made its debut in the top 10 by positioning itself on the **8th rank**. Delhi held a CIS rank of 14 last year.

### Indian Army Chief Gen MM Naravane's Book "Four Stars Of Destiny"

- **General Manoj Mukund Naravane**, the former Chief of Army Staff (CoAS) of the Indian Army, has penned his autobiography titled **"Four Stars of Destiny: An Autobiography."**
- Scheduled to be published in January 2024 by Penguin Veer, an imprint of Penguin Random House India, the book delves into the diverse experiences that have shaped Gen MM Naravane's character, spanning from his childhood to his illustrious years in the armed services.
- Gen MM Naravane served as the 28th Chief of Army Staff, leading the Indian Army with distinction from December 2019 to April 2022. His tenure at the helm was marked by strategic decisions and a commitment to the nation's defense.



### ONGC Begins First Oil Production In Krishna-Godavari Deep-Water Block

- **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)**, one of India's leading energy exploration and production companies, achieved a significant milestone on January 7 by commencing the **first oil production from the deep-water KG-DWN 98/2 Block**.



- Located in the Krishna Godavari (KG) basin off the Bay of Bengal on the **Kakinada coast**, this development marks a crucial step forward in India's energy landscape.
- The anticipated peak production from the 98/2 field is remarkable, with expectations set at around **45,000 barrels of oil per day and over 10 Million Metric Standard Cubic Metres per Day (MMSCMD) of gas**.
- As the project advances, ONGC is actively working towards the final phase of the 98/2 block, with efforts underway to **commence the production of the remaining oil and natural gas by mid-2024**.

### PM Modi Inaugurates Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show In Gandhinagar

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **Vibrant Gujarat Global Trade Show** in Gandhinagar, alongside esteemed guests including President Filipe Nyusi of Mozambique and Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel.
- Covering a sprawling two lakh square meters, the trade show stands as **India's largest-ever Global Trade Show**. A staggering 100 countries are actively participating, with 33 countries engaged as partners.
- The event hosts over 1,000 exhibitors in the research sector, representing 20 countries, including notable participants from **Australia, South Korea, Singapore, UAE, UK, Germany, and Norway**.
- The trade show places a strategic emphasis on emerging sectors such as electric vehicles, green hydrogen, renewable energy, semiconductors, and cybersecurity, reflecting India's commitment to innovation and sustainable practices.

### New Republic Day Pact Allows States One Tableau Every Three Years

- Official sources reveal that the Defence Ministry has proposed a rollover plan to **give every State and Union Territory (UT) an opportunity to showcase their tableaux within a three-year cycle**.
- Approximately 15 tableaux are selected for the Republic Day parade each year, making it challenging to accommodate every State annually. The proposed



plan aims at ensuring equitable distribution and fair representation for all.

- To expedite the participation process, States and UTs were approached in advance for their willingness to **participate in the Republic Day Parade for the next three years (2024, 2025, and 2026)**. Most States/UTs have expressed their willingness for all three years, demonstrating a positive response to the proposed plan.

### SwachhSurvekshan Awards 2023: Indore AndSurat Share Cleanest City Title

- In a prestigious ceremony hosted by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), the **Swachh Survekshan Awards 2023** witnessed President DroupadiMurmu conferring accolades to 13 distinguished awardees across various cleanliness categories.
- Indore, for the remarkable **seventh consecutive time**, secured the cleanest city title. However, this year, it shared the honors with Surat, marking a unique joint victory. The President, Smt. DroupadiMurmu, presented the awards at the Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.
- Here are other winners:



Category	Top Performers
Cities (Pop. under 1 Lakh)	1. Sasvad 2. Patan 3. Lonavala
Cleanest Cantonment Board	Mhow Cantonment Board, Madhya Pradesh
Cleanest Ganga Towns	1. Varanasi 2. Prayagraj
Best Performing States	1. Maharashtra 2. Madhya Pradesh 3. Chhattisgarh
SafaimitraSurakshitSheher Award	Chandigarh

### Fresh Oil Discovery In Krishna-Godavari Basin By ONGC

- The recent announcement by the Indian government regarding a fresh oil discovery in the **Krishna-Godavari Basin** signifies a major breakthrough in the country's energy sector.

- The discovery, led by the state-owned **Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC)**, is located near Kakinada's coastline in the Bay of Bengal.
- The oil has been extracted from the Krishna Godavari Deep-Water Block 98/2, approximately 30 kilometers off the coast of Kakinada in Andhra Pradesh. This new crude discovery in the Krishna-Godavari Basin is a pivotal moment in India's energy landscape.
- Union Petroleum Minister Hardeep Singh Puri announced that the production is expected to reach 45,000 barrels per day by mid-2024, which will account for about 7% of India's total crude oil production.

### International Camel Festival Kicked Off In Bikaner, Rajasthan

- The three-day **International Camel Festival** kicked off with great fervor in the culturally rich district of **Bikaner, Rajasthan**.
- On the inaugural day of the festival, the streets came alive with the **vibrant hues of decorated camels, traditional robes, and women adorned in colorful costumes**.
- The Heritage Walk, starting from **Rampuriya Haveli**, saw the enthusiastic participation of folk artists, adding a touch of authenticity to the cultural fiesta. Local folk artists mesmerized the onlookers with **traditional songs, Rammats, and captivating dances**, offering a glimpse into the rich local culture.



### Tata Consumer Products Acquires 100% Stake In Capital Foods For ₹5,100 Crore

- Tata Consumer Products Ltd (TCPL)**, on January 12, revealed its plans to acquire a 100% stake in Capital Foods, renowned for brands such as **'Ching's Secret'** and **'Smith & Jones,'** for a substantial ₹5,100 crore.
- The strategic acquisition is structured in phases, with an initial 75% equity shareholding secured upfront and the remaining 25% to be acquired over the next three years.
- Aligned with TCPL's broader vision to diversify its product offerings, this move aims to tap into rapidly growing and high-margin segments within the packaged foods sector. Capital Foods, a prominent

player in this domain, boasts robust brands and a diverse product range tailored for in-home consumption.

### GangaSagarMela 2024: India's Second Largest Fair

- The **Ganga SagarMela** is held annually in **Sagarwip, West Bengal**. This magnificent fair has earned the distinction of being the **second most popular mela** in the country, surpassed only by the revered **KumbhMela**.
- The Ganga SagarMela aligns with the celebration of **MakarSankranti**, observed on either the **14th or 15th of January** each year. This auspicious day adds to the festive atmosphere, amplifying the cultural and religious importance of the gathering.
- Held during the winter season, the Ganga SagarMela is a sacred gathering where pilgrims immerse themselves in the holy waters of the **Ganga River** to cleanse their souls. The Ganga, considered the holiest river in Hindu mythology, **culminates its journey in Sagarwip**, merging with the Bay of Bengal.

### Maharashtra's Pench Tiger Reserve Achieves Milestone As India's First Dark Sky Park

- **Pench Tiger Reserve** in Maharashtra has made history by securing recognition as **India's inaugural Dark Sky Park**, marking its position as the fifth in Asia.



- The **International Union for Conservation of Nature**, recognizing the intrinsic value of the night sky as a natural, cultural, and historical resource, played a pivotal role in conferring this distinction.
- **PrabhuNathShukla**, the deputy director of the reserve, highlighted the significance of preserving natural darkness for nature conservation, maintaining ecological integrity, and contributing to the well-being of communities in urban centers.

### A Book Named "Gandhi A Life In Three Campaigns" Launched By M.J. Akbar

- Renowned author **M.J. Akbar**, along with co-author **K. Natwar Singh**, launched a new book titled **"Gandhi: A Life in Three Campaigns."**

- The book delves into the life and struggles of Mahatma Gandhi, particularly focusing on three pivotal mass campaigns he led: 1) **Non-Cooperation Movement (1920)**: Highlighting Gandhi's ability to mobilize the masses against British rule.
- 2) **Salt Satyagraha (1930)**: Turning a pinch of salt into a symbol of resistance against colonial exploitation and 3) **Quit India Movement (1942)**: A decisive call for the end of British colonialism in India. These campaigns are portrayed as crucial moments that challenged and eventually led to the dismantling of the British Empire in India.

### Bull-Taming Festival 'Jallikattu' Starts In Tamil Nadu

- **Tamil Nadu**, a lively state in South India renowned for its cultural richness and traditional festivities, kicked off the **Jallikattu competition** in the village of Avaniyapuram within Madurai district.
- Jallikattu, a highlight of the Pongal harvest festival held in the second week of January, is poised to extend its excitement over a **three-day period** with Avaniyapuram hosting the first day, followed by Palamedu on the second day and Alanganallur on the third.
- Jallikattu, a bull-taming sport, traces its roots back to around **2,000 years**, showcasing a deep-seated connection to the cultural fabric of Tamil Nadu. Initially conducted as a means to select suitable bridegrooms, the event has evolved into a symbol of valor and tradition.

### LIC Overtakes SBI To Become The Most Valuable PSU

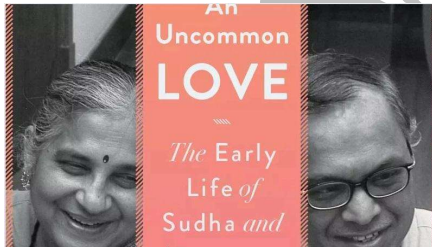
- In a significant turn of events, the **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** has not only staged an impressive comeback but has also surpassed the market capitalization of the **State Bank of India (SBI)**.
- LIC's share price gained over 2% in morning trades, propelling its market capitalization to cross the ₹5.8 Lakh Crore mark. Touching 52-week highs of ₹919.45 a piece, LIC's market cap now stands higher than that of the State Bank of India (SBI), signalling a significant milestone for the insurance giant.
- The PAR and Non-PAR business segments have been strategic focus areas for LIC. The participating life insurance plan (PAR) allows policyholders to share in the company's profits, enhancing overall margins.

### Gujarat, Kerala, Karnataka Lead InStartup Ecosystem Development: DPIIT

- The startup ecosystem in India witnessed a significant boost as **Gujarat, Kerala, Karnataka, and Tamil Nadu** emerged as the **best-performing states in the Startup Ranking for 2022**.
- **Maharashtra, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, and Telangana** were also recognized as top performers in this dynamic landscape.
- A total of **33 states and union territories** actively participated in the evaluation, categorized under **five distinct groups** – best performers, top performers, leaders, aspiring leaders, and emerging startup ecosystems.
- The much-anticipated rankings were officially unveiled by **Union Commerce Minister PiyushGoyal**. The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)**, a crucial department under the Commerce Ministry, carried out the evaluation.

### The Book “An Uncommon Love: The Early Life OfSudha And Narayana Murthy” Released

- The book “**An Uncommon Love: The Early Life of Sudha and Narayana Murthy**,” authored by Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni offers an intimate view into the lives of one of India’s most respected couples, **Sudha and Narayana Murthy**, the co-founders of Infosys.
- The Murthys are known for their philanthropic work and pivotal roles in the Indian IT industry. Their story is unique, with a deep connection to literature and reading, particularly Kannadiga writers.
- The book explores the professional challenges they faced, particularly **Narayana Murthy’s** dedication to building Infosys. The biography also touches on an incident where **Narayana Murthy** had to sleep in a storeroom during a business trip due to a demanding client, highlighting the struggles they faced in their early professional years.



### TCS Ranked Second Most Valuable IT Brand In Global List

- **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** has achieved a significant milestone by being rated the second most valuable IT services brand in the world, according to the **2024 Global 500 IT Services Ranking by Brand Finance**.
- This achievement underscores TCS’s commitment to innovation, sustainability, and global expansion, positioning it as a leader in the technology industry.
- TCS’s brand value saw an impressive surge to \$19.2 billion in 2024, up from \$17.2 billion in 2023. This 11.5% year-over-year growth is the highest absolute value growth among the top 25 leading IT firms globally.

### New Guidelines For Coaching Centres In India: Balancing Education And Welfare

- The **Ministry of Education in India** has announced new guidelines for coaching centres. These guidelines provide a legal structure for the operation of coaching centres. They define the minimum standards for the functioning of these centres.
- Only those with a minimum qualification of graduation are eligible to teach. Coaching centres are prohibited from making false claims about ranks or marks to entice students. Students below **16 years old cannot be enrolled**, and admission is allowed only for post-secondary school examinations.
- These guidelines come in response to growing concerns about student welfare, unregulated growth of private coaching, and rising cases of student suicides and other incidents linked to coaching centres.

### Farsi As India’s New Classical Language

- In a noteworthy development aimed at strengthening cultural ties, the **Government of India**, under the **New Education Policy**, has decided to include **Farsi (Persian)** as one of the **nine classical languages of India**.
- This announcement was made by External Affairs Minister **S Jaishankar** during a two-day visit to Iran, highlighting the cultural, literary, and linguistic connections between Iran and India.



- Farsi, also known as Persian, is an Indo-Iranian language belonging to the Iranian branch of the Indo-Iranian languages.
- It has a rich historical and cultural significance, not only in Iran but also in the broader Persian-speaking world. The language is known for its extensive literary heritage, with poets like Rumi and Hafez making significant contributions to Persian literature.

### Tallest Ambedkar Statue To Be Unveiled Today In Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh

- The **Andhra Pradesh government** is set to unveil the **world's tallest statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar**, the esteemed architect of the Indian Constitution, in a grand ceremony today in Vijayawada.
- The colossal structure, named the **'Statue of Social Justice,'** stands at an impressive **height of 206 feet**, making it one of the top 50 tallest statues globally, with Sardar Vallabhai Patel's 'Statue of Unity' claiming the top spot.
- The **'Statue of Social Justice' stands tall at 125 feet, mounted on an 81-foot pedestal**, making it the tallest statue of Dr. B.R. Ambedkar in the world. The sheer magnitude of the structure is a visual representation of the profound impact of Dr. Ambedkar's ideals on justice and equality.

### World's Largest Lamp To Shine On Ram Temple Opening

- In a remarkable display, the **world's largest lamp, standing at an impressive 300 feet**, will illuminate the city of Ayodhya at **5:00 p.m. on Friday, adding a dazzling touch to the festivities.**
- Jagadguru Paramhans Acharya, a key figure in the preparations, emphasized the profound symbolism behind the lighting of this colossal lamp.
- **Comprising 1.25 quintals of cotton and 21,000 litres of oil**, the lamp holds significance beyond its sheer size. The materials used, including soil and water from different regions across the country, as well as cow's ghee, create a unique blend representing unity and sacredness.

### Ram Mandir PranPratishtha: World's Largest Lock, 1265 Kg Laddoo Prasad Arrive In Ayodhya

- As the **Ram Mandir in Ayodhya** gears up for its **PranPratishtha (consecration) ceremony**, it has

received two unique offerings: the **world's largest lock, weighing 400 kg**, and a **colossal 1,265 kg laddoo Prasad.**

- Crafted by **SatyaPrakash Sharma**, a 65-year-old locksmith from Aligarh, the lock is a remarkable piece of artistry. Measuring ten feet in length and four and a half feet in width, the lock was made over six months.
- Nagabhushan Reddy, owner of Sri Ram Catering Services in Hyderabad, prepared the massive laddoo Prasad. Reddy, inspired by his faith, had pledged to prepare 1 kg of laddoo for each day of his life as a mark of devotion.
- The preparation of this gigantic laddoo involved 25 men working tirelessly for three days. The laddoo was transported to Ayodhya in a refrigerated glass box, ensuring its preservation for up to a month.

### RamMandir Inauguration, The Significance Of The 84-Second 'MoolMuhurat'

- The **Ram Mandir in Ayodhya**, a significant and much-anticipated development in India's cultural and religious landscape, is set for inauguration.
- A focal point of this grand event is the **84-second 'MoolMuhurat'**, an auspicious moment during which the idol of Ram Lalla will be consecrated.
- This 84-second period is part of the larger **'AbhijitMuhurat'**, a 48-minute window considered extremely sacred in Hindu astrology. The **'AbhijitMuhurat'** on the day of the inauguration begins at **12:16 PM and ends at 12:59 PM.**
- The **'MoolMuhurat'** is seen as a moment of profound spiritual and cultural importance in India. The choice of this specific time is believed to bring blessings and positivity, not just to the temple but to the entire nation.

### Sony Terminates \$10 Billion Merger Deal With Zee Entertainment

- On January 22, Sony issued a notice terminating the merger agreement with Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd and Culver Max Entertainment Private Limited, formerly known as Sony Pictures Networks India Pvt Ltd. The **\$10-billion deal**, signed on December 22, 2021, faced challenges in meeting closing conditions within the specified timeframe.
- The definitive agreements outlined a provision that mandated discussions for extending the merger's end date if it did not close within 24 months after the signature date. However, as closing conditions were



not met by the specified end date, termination of the agreement became an option.

### IICF To Build ‘Masjid Muhammed Bin Abdullah’ Mosque In Ayodhya

- In a significant development, the **Indo-Islamic Cultural Foundation**

(IICF) has announced the commencement of the construction of a grand mosque in Ayodhya, starting this May.



- The mosque, named “**Masjid Muhammed bin Abdullah**” after Prophet Muhammad, aims to foster unity and goodwill among people, transcending religious differences. The initiative comes on the same day as Prime Minister Narendra Modi presides over the consecration ceremony of the Ram Temple.
- To finance the construction, the IICF is considering the establishment of a crowdfunding website. This approach reflects a broader outreach strategy, enabling individuals from diverse backgrounds to contribute to the creation of a shared cultural space.

### Amit Shah Unveils ‘Assam’s Braveheart Lachit Barphukan’ Book In Delhi

- Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, **Shri Amit Shah**, released the book ‘**Assam’s Braveheart Lachit Barphukan**’ in Guwahati, Assam.
- In his address, **Shri Amit Shah** highlighted the remarkable story of **Lachit Barphukan**, who fought against bigotry and power-hungry forces in the Northeast.
- He likened **Lachit Barphukan** to **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj** of Eastern India, emphasizing the significance of his role in India’s freedom struggle.
- Shri Shah** underlined the importance of the **Battle of Saraighat**, stating that if **Lachit** had not emerged victorious, Assam might have become a part of Bangladesh. He credited **Lachit** for halting invasions from **Khilji** to **Aurangzeb**, safeguarding Assam and contributing to the region’s integration with India.

### Union Budget Of India

- In accordance with **Article 112 of the Constitution of India**, the government is mandated to present the Union Budget at the Parliament before the commencement of each financial year. This budget outlines the projected receivables and payables for the upcoming fiscal year, running from April 1st to March 31st.
- The Union Budget plays a pivotal role in shaping the economic trajectory of India, aiming for rapid and balanced growth, social justice, and equality. The following key objectives underscore its significance:
- The budget dictates changes in direct and indirect taxes, including alterations to income tax rates and tax brackets, shaping the financial landscape of the country. For instance, the income tax slab for the fiscal year 2020-21 is determined by the budget.

### Indian Equity Market Surpasses Hong Kong, Ranks 4th Globally With \$4.33 Trillion Market Cap

- India’s equity market has outpaced **Hong Kong’s Hang Seng**, securing the fourth position globally with a market capitalization of \$4.33 trillion. This milestone, underscores the nation’s robust economic standing.
- The **US remains the largest stock market** with a staggering \$50.86 trillion market cap, followed by China at \$8.44 trillion and Japan at \$6.36 trillion.
- Factors Driving India’s Success are: 1) **Retail Investor Surge**: A growing retail investor base has contributed significantly. 2) **Global Investor Appeal**: India’s stable political environment and a consumption-driven economy make it an attractive alternative to China, drawing fresh capital from global investors.

### Nirmala Sitharaman To Become 2nd FM To Present 6 Consecutive Union Budgets

- Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** is on the brink of etching her name in history books as she gears up to **present her sixth consecutive Budget** (Five consecutive annual Budgets and one interim Budget).
- Sitharaman’s** impending presentation on **February 1, 2024**, marks the interim Budget for the fiscal year 2024-25. This interim Budget, commonly referred to as a vote-on-account, is pivotal in authorizing government expenditures until the advent of a new administration following the general elections slated for April-May.

- Prime Minister **Morarji Desai**, holds the distinction of presenting 10 Budgets—the highest by any Finance Minister—had consecutively presented six of them, including one interim Budget, in a row.

### Krutrim, Ola Founder's AI Start-Up Emerges As India's First AI Unicorn

- In a groundbreaking move for the Indian tech landscape, Bhavish Aggarwal, the visionary behind Ola, has **successfully raised \$50 million for his latest venture**, Krutrim.
- **Krutrim**, co-founded by Bhavish Aggarwal, has swiftly emerged as a prominent player in the realm of Artificial Intelligence. Aggarwal, renowned for his innovative contributions through Ola and Ola Electric, now brings his tech prowess to the AI domain with Krutrim.
- The recent funding round, led by **Matrix Partners India** and other key investors, has propelled Krutrim to unicorn status. With a **valuation of \$1 billion**, Krutrim is set to make significant strides in reshaping the landscape of artificial intelligence.

### PM Inaugurates Diamond Jubilee Celebration And Launches Technology Initiatives For Supreme Court

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the **Diamond Jubilee celebration of the Supreme Court** of India and unveiled key technology initiatives during the event held at the Supreme Court auditorium in Delhi.
- The occasion marked the beginning of the **Supreme Court's 75th year**, coinciding with the 75th year of the Indian Constitution.
- PM Modi also launched Digital Supreme Court Reports (Digi SCR), Digital Courts 2.0, and the new bilingual website of the Supreme Court.
- Acknowledging the Supreme Court's role, PM Modi emphasized its contribution to strengthening India's vibrant democracy, particularly in upholding freedom of expression, personal freedom, and social justice.

### Pradhan mantra Suryodaya Yojana

- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, on the occasion of the Ayodhya Ram Mandir consecration, announced a significant initiative, "**Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana**."

- This ambitious project is designed to boost solar energy usage in India and marks a significant step towards energy self-reliance and sustainability.
- The Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana, an initiative by the Government of India, aims to revolutionize the country's energy sector by promoting solar energy.
- The Pradhanmantri Suryodaya Yojana is a groundbreaking initiative by the Indian government, aimed at harnessing solar energy to empower 1 crore households. This scheme promises to drive India towards energy independence and opens up new market opportunities in the sustainable energy sector.

### Tableau On Theme 'India: Mother Of Democracy' Clinches First Spot At Republic Day Parade 2024

- **The Republic Day Parade 2024** witnessed a remarkable tableau that captured the essence of India as the **'Mother of Democracy.'**
- This stunning representation not only enthralled the audience but also clinched the **first spot in the parade**, symbolizing India's rich democratic heritage.
- The winning tableau was based on the theme 'India: Mother of Democracy,' showcasing the country's long-standing tradition of democratic values and practices.
- The tableau highlighted India's journey through the ages as a cradle of democratic principles, reflecting the diverse and inclusive nature of its political system.



Tableau on theme 'India: Mother of Democracy' clinches First Spot at Republic Day Parade 2024

### Bhupender Yadav Releases The Status Report Of Snow Leopards In India

- Union Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Shri **Bhupender Yadav**, released a significant report on the status of Snow leopards in India.
- This groundbreaking study, part of the **Snow Leopard Population Assessment in India (SPAI) Program**, marks the first-ever scientific exercise to assess the population of this elusive species in the country.
- The SPAI, a rigorous and systematic effort, reports the presence of 718 Snow leopards in India. This program was coordinated by the **Wildlife Institute of India**

(WII) and supported by snow leopard range states, the Nature Conservation Foundation, Mysuru, and WWF-India.

### Winners Of The Republic Day Parade Awards 2024

- The **Republic Day Parade**, a grand and patriotic event held annually in India

on **January 26**, showcases the country's cultural diversity and military strength.



- On January 30, 2024, Raksha Rajya Mantri Shri **Ajay Bhatt** honoured the best marching contingents and tableaux in a ceremony, celebrating their outstanding performances in the 2024 parade.
- Among the Three Services:** The Sikh Regiment Contingent was declared the best marching contingent, showcasing their discipline and precision.
- Among CAPF/Other Auxiliary Forces:** The Delhi Police Women Marching Contingent received the award, highlighting the increasing role of women in security forces.

### Finance Ministry's "The Indian Economy: A Decade In Review" Report

- The 74-page document titled "**The Indian Economy: A Review**" authored by Chief Economic Adviser **V AnanthaNageswaran** and his team presents a comprehensive analysis of India's economic journey over the past ten years.
- This report is distinct from the official Economic Survey prepared by the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) and aims to assess the state of the Indian economy and provide insights into its future outlook.
- The report identifies challenges, including concerns over global supply chains, **AI's impact on services trade**, and the significant energy transition challenge. It acknowledges the global struggle for recovery post-COVID, emphasizing the importance of addressing these challenges for sustained growth.

### India Placed 93rd Among 180 Nations In 2023 Corruption Index

- Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI)** offers valuable insights into India's standing in the global arena of public sector integrity.
- India's placement in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) for 2023 remained largely unchanged, securing the **93rd position out of 180 countries**.
- For the sixth consecutive year, **Denmark** has retained its top position on the index, securing a score of 90, credited to its robust "well-functioning justice systems."
- The CPI, curated by Transparency International, evaluates nations based on their perceived levels of public sector corruption, utilizing a scale from 0 to 100, where 0 signifies high corruption and 100 represents very clean governance.

## International

### BRICS Group To Double In 2024 After Saudi, Iran, UAE, Egypt, Ethiopia Join Ranks

- BRICS, the group of emerging-market nations comprising **Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa**, is poised to undergo a significant expansion on **January 1**.
- South Africa's envoy to the bloc revealed that Saudi Arabia, Iran, the United Arab Emirates, Ethiopia, and Egypt have accepted invitations to join, effectively doubling the organization's membership.
- In August, the existing BRICS members extended invitations to six nations, including the aforementioned, aiming to combine leading energy producers with major consumers among developing countries. **Argentina**, the sole decline, reversed its membership bid under the new presidency of **Javier Milei**.
- Representatives from the new invitees participated in a recent **BRICS sherpa meeting in Durban, South Africa**, indicating their acceptance of the invitation. The five countries are set to send officials to the next **sherpa meeting in Moscow on January 30**.



### Putin Kicks Off Russia's 2024 BRICS Chairmanship

- On January 1, Russian President **Vladimir Putin** officially marked the commencement of **Russia's 2024 BRICS Chairmanship**. The overarching strategy will continue to **promote BRICS partnerships** in politics and security, economy and finance, as well as cultural and humanitarian contacts.
- During this handover, President Putin emphasized the motto for the upcoming tenure, "**Strengthening Multilateralism for Equitable Global Development and Security**." This signifies Russia's commitment to fostering collaboration among the BRICS nations – Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa



- President Putin articulated Russia's priorities, which encompass a wide array of sectors. These include **cooperation in science**, high technology, healthcare, environmental protection, culture, sports, youth exchanges, and civil society.

### Francoise Bettencourt Meyers Becomes First Woman With \$100 Billion Fortune

- Francoise Bettencourt Meyers** has made history by becoming the **first woman to amass a staggering \$100 billion fortune**. Bettencourt Meyers' wealth surged to an astounding **\$100.1 billion** as reported by the **Bloomberg Billionaires Index**.
- This landmark moment coincided with a record high in the shares of L'Oréal SA, the beauty products empire founded by her grandfather. The stock is on track for its best year since 1998, solidifying her position as the **12th-richest person** globally, trailing closely behind Mexico's Carlos Slim.

### Kyrgyzstan Declares Snow Leopard As National Symbol

- Kyrgyzstan**, a country nestled in the heart of Central Asia, has **officially declared the snow leopard as its national symbol**, signifying a profound commitment to conservation and ecological balance.
- President Zhaparov has directed the Cabinet of Ministers to actively **recognize the snow leopard as a national symbol and take measures to protect its population and the ecosystems it inhabits**.
- President Sadyr Zhaparov**, through a signed decree, emphasized the snow leopard's role not only as a symbol of natural wealth and cultural prosperity but also as a vital indicator of the stability and health of the mountain ecosystems that cover a substantial portion of the global territory.



### U.S. Launches Peregrine-1 Lander To Moon In Historic Lunar Mission

- In a monumental achievement, the **Peregrine-1 lunar lander**, operated by private firm Astrobotic, successfully launched from Cape Canaveral, marking the first American lunar mission in 51 years.

- Scheduled to land on February 23, the mission, conducted under NASA's **Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) initiative**, aims to study the Moon's surface environment in preparation for upcoming human missions.
- The Peregrine lander carries five **NASA payloads and 15 other components** designed to measure radiation, surface and subsurface water ice, magnetic fields, and the exosphere. Notably, it includes the first Latin American scientific instruments destined for the lunar surface.
- Additionally, five miniature moon rovers, non-scientific payloads like a Bitcoin-loaded coin, and a "lunar dream capsule" filled with messages from children worldwide are part of the mission.

### First Cyclone Of 2024, Alvaro, Strikes Madagascar

- **Tropical Cyclone Alvaro** made landfall in southwest **Madagascar** on January 1st, 2024, marking the first significant cyclone impact on the island nation in the ongoing 2023-2024 cyclone season for the **southwest Indian Ocean region**.
- Cyclone Alvaro has particularly affected provinces like **Atsimo-Andrefana** in southwestern Madagascar, which already face immense flooding challenges during heavy rains. The cyclone has exacerbated these issues, hampering evacuation efforts and draining excess water towards the sea.
- Last February, **Cyclone Freddy** made landfall on the southeast coast, resulting in 17 fatalities and displacing 19,000 individuals. The cumulative impact of these successive cyclones has tested the country's resilience and disaster management capabilities.



### EU Scientists Confirm 2023 As Hottest Year Ever Recorded

- **The European Union's Copernicus Climate Change Service (C3S)** declared that the year gone by was the hottest on record, surpassing previous temperatures and potentially marking the **warmest period in the last 100,000 years**.
- The announcement sheds light on the alarming trajectory of global warming, with each passing month

breaking climate records and raising concerns about the consequences for the planet.

- The global average temperature in 2023 was **1.48 degrees Celsius warmer than the pre-industrial period of 1850-1900**. The rise in temperatures is a stark reminder of the challenges posed by climate change and the urgent need for global action.

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

- **France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Singapore, and Spain** share the **top spot** in the quarterly ranking of the world's most powerful passports. Enjoying visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to an impressive **194 destinations**, this marks a **historic high since the inception of the Henley Passport Index 19 years ago**.
- **Japan and Singapore**, holding the top position for the past five years, now see a triumphant rise for Europe. **Finland and Sweden, tied with South Korea**, secure the **second spot** with easy access to 193 destinations.
- Following closely, **Austria, Denmark, Ireland, and the Netherlands** claim the third position, providing access to 192 destinations.
- The **fourth position** is collectively held by **Belgium, Luxembourg, Norway, Portugal, and the United Kingdom**, with access to 193 destinations. **Greece, Malta, and Switzerland** secure the **fifth spot**.



### Scientists From Mauritius And Bangladesh Join India's 43rd Antarctic Expedition

- This December, **India's 43rd Antarctic expedition**, led by the National Centre for Polar and Ocean Research, welcomed scientists from **Mauritius and Bangladesh** onboard, marking a significant step in international polar research collaboration.



- This initiative stems from the maiden **Colombo Security Conclave (CSC) Oceanographers and Hydrographers conference** held in 2022, which laid the groundwork for scientific partnerships among member nations.
- The scientists joining the Antarctic expedition will spend 3-4 months actively engaged in collaborative research across various polar science disciplines. Their focus will lie on gaining insights into polar logistics and addressing the unique challenges posed by the harsh environment of the Antarctic.

### US And UK Launch Airstrikes On Yemen's Huthi Rebels Over Red Sea Attacks

- In response to the **Iran-backed Huthi rebels'** escalating assaults on shipping in the Red Sea, the United States and Britain carried out airstrikes using fighter jets and Tomahawk missiles.



- The **Huthis**, controlling a significant part of Yemen since 2014, had intensified attacks on the crucial international sea route, triggering global concerns.
- Shipping companies diverting around **South Africa's Cape of Good Hope** raised alarms about potential economic repercussions. British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak convened an emergency cabinet meeting, reflecting the gravity of the situation. The international community faces the challenge of managing a complex geopolitical scenario in the region.

### Switzerland To Host Ukraine Peace Summit On Zelenskiy's Request

- Ukrainian President **Volodymyr Zelenskiy** has secured Switzerland's agreement to host a **global peace summit** aimed at resolving the conflict sparked by Russia's incursion into Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022. Switzerland, known for its neutrality and past mediation roles, will facilitate talks to find a resolution.
- Zelenskiy, during a press conference in Bern alongside Swiss counterpart Viola Amherd, revealed that the peace summit's participants are yet to be finalized. However, he emphasized the invitation to countries respecting Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, hinting at inclusivity.

### Oxford Scientists Initiates First Human Trials For Deadly Nipah Virus Vaccine

- In a groundbreaking initiative, researchers at the **University of Oxford in the United Kingdom** have commenced the **first-in-human vaccine trials for the deadly Nipah virus**.
- This initiative is a significant step forward in addressing the severe impact of the virus on various Asian countries, including India. The trials will be conducted on 51 individuals aged 18 to 55 and are led by the Oxford Vaccine Group.
- The experimental vaccine, named **ChAdOx1 NipahB**, aims to combat the Nipah virus, a highly lethal disease with a fatality rate of approximately 75%.

### Disease X: Unveiling The Unknown Health Threat At WEF 2024

- The **World Economic Forum (WEF) 2024** kicked off on January 15 in Davos, Switzerland, where global leaders are slated to address a peculiar concern known as **Disease X**.
- This enigmatic term refers to an illness triggered by an unidentified yet potent microbial threat. A panel of the World Health Organization (WHO) is set to collaborate with other health officials to deliberate on this mysterious health menace.
- Disease X, designated by the WHO in 2017, holds a place alongside pathogens like **Ebola and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)** as a top priority for research. Essentially, it represents an illness arising from an unknown but serious microbial threat, with COVID-19 serving as a tangible example.



### The Houthis' Escalation In The Red Sea: Causes And Consequences

- **Yemen's Iran-backed Houthi rebels** have intensified their attacks on ships in the **Red Sea**, citing revenge against Israel for its actions in Gaza.
- This has prompted the **US**



and UK to launch strikes against Houthi targets in Yemen, leading to concerns about a broader regional conflict.

- The war has resulted in one of the world's worst humanitarian crises, with millions in need of aid, widespread displacement, and significant casualties. A 2022 ceasefire lapsed after six months, and efforts to bring a permanent end to the conflict have proven challenging.

### Apple Surpasses Samsung As Top Smartphone Maker For The First Time Since 2010

- In a significant industry shift, **Apple Inc.'s iPhone** has outpaced **Samsung Electronics Co. devices**, securing the title of the best-selling smartphone series in 2023. This marks the first time since 2010 that Samsung has conceded the top spot in the smartphone market.
- According to research firm IDC, the iPhone claimed a substantial 20% share of the global market, with nearly 235 million shipments in the previous year. Samsung, facing a double-digit slump in shipments to 226.6 million, secured the second position, surpassing Chinese competitors like Xiaomi Corp.

### Japan Becomes Fifth Country To Land On The Moon Successfully

- **Japan** has marked a significant achievement in space exploration by becoming the **fifth country to successfully soft-land a spacecraft on the Moon**.
- The Smart Lander for Investigating Moon (SLIM) touched down near the Shioli crater, south of the lunar equator, utilizing precision technology that allowed it to land closer to its target site than any previous mission.
- SLIM's primary goal was to **achieve an unprecedented landing accuracy of 100 meters**, a significant improvement from previous missions.
- Telemetry data confirmed that SLIM landed in its designated area after a four-month journey from the **Tanegashima Space Centre**.

### Saudi Arabia To Open First Alcohol Store For Diplomats

- In a groundbreaking move, **Saudi Arabia** is preparing to open its first alcohol store, exclusively for diplomats. This significant development represents a notable shift in the Kingdom's approach to alcohol, which has traditionally been banned under its strict interpretation of Islamic law.

- Historically, Saudi Arabia has enforced a strict prohibition on the sale and consumption of alcohol. This policy aligns with the conservative religious principles that govern many aspects of life in the Kingdom.
- This initiative is seen as a step towards accommodating the lifestyles of foreign diplomats living in the Kingdom, making it a more hospitable environment for international relations.

### World's First 'Black Tiger Safari': Odisha's CM Naveen Patnaik Announces

- In a groundbreaking move, Odisha Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik has unveiled plans for the establishment of the **world's first 'black tiger safari'** near the Similipal Tiger Reserve (STR) in Mayurbhanj.
- This visionary project aims to provide tourists and visitors with a rare glimpse of the melanistic tigers, commonly known as black tigers, recently spotted at the **Similipal National Park**.
- The proposed safari site, near Baripada and spanning 200 hectares, will be strategically located adjacent to National Highway 18. Out of this area, 100 hectares will be dedicated to the display zone, while the remaining space will be utilized for essential infrastructure, including veterinary care facilities, a rescue center, staff amenities, and visitor services.

### Maersk Reveals World's Largest Ship Fueled By Methanol

- In a monumental stride towards sustainability, maritime titan **Maersk** unveils its latest marvel: **the Ane Maersk**, a revolutionary container vessel powered by green methanol derived from green hydrogen.
- The Ane Maersk represents a bold leap into a greener future, boasting the title of the **world's largest container vessel fueled by green methanol**, a derivative of green hydrogen.
- With an unprecedented capacity to carry **16,000 20ft shipping containers (TEU)**, the Ane Maersk eclipses its predecessor, the Laura Maersk, by nearly eightfold. This innovative propulsion system heralds a new era of eco-friendly maritime transportation.

### Alabama Conducts First Nitrogen Gas Execution In US

- In a groundbreaking turn of events, **Kenneth Smith**, a convicted murderer, has become the **first person in the United States to be executed by nitrogen gas**.
- The execution, which took place in Alabama, introduces a new method intended to be the most painless and humane alternative to the previously predominant lethal injection.
- This move has positioned Alabama as a trailblazer in adopting nitrogen gas for capital punishment, joining the ranks of only a few states to approve this controversial method.

### French President Macron's India Visit: Key Deals And Announcements

- French President **Emmanuel Macron** concluded his two-day visit to India, participating as the chief guest in the 75th Republic Day celebrations.
- The visit aimed at strengthening strategic ties between India and France, featuring a 40-member delegation and significant diplomatic engagements.
- In Science & Technology Department, Framework Cooperation Arrangement was signed between Department of Science and Technology (DST), India, and Institut National de Recherche pour l'Agriculture, l'Alimentation et l'Environnement (INRAE), France
- Moreover, Framework Arrangement on Cooperation in Funding Research Projects was signed between DST, India, and Agence Nationale de la Recherche (ANR), France.

### Bhutan's Tshering Tobgay Embarks On Second Term As Prime Minister After Fourth Free Election

- Bhutan's liberal leader, **Tshering Tobgay**, from the People's Democratic Party (PDP), has commenced his second term as prime minister, following recent elections in the nation.
- Bhutan, with a population of less than 800,000, has embraced democracy for 15 years and is renowned for its unique Gross National Happiness (GNH) index, measuring factors like recreation and emotional well-being.
- Tobgay, 58, now serving his second non-consecutive term, was previously prime minister from 2013 to 2018 and led the opposition in the first free vote in 2008. A former bureaucrat and advocate for Bhutan's Buddhist culture, he faces the task of revitalizing the

\$3 billion economy post-COVID-19 and addressing youth migration abroad.

### Toyota Retains Its Position As The World's Top-Selling Automaker In 2023

- **Toyota**, the renowned Japanese automaker, has once again secured its position as the **world's top-selling automaker in 2023**. This achievement underscores Toyota's continued dominance in the global automotive market and its commitment to innovation, quality, and customer satisfaction.
- A key factor in Toyota's success has been its pioneering work in hybrid and electric vehicle technology. The company's investment in eco-friendly vehicles, such as the Prius and its expanding lineup of hybrid models, demonstrates its commitment to sustainable transportation solutions.

### Elon Musk's Neuralink Implants Brain Chip In First Human

- In a groundbreaking development, **Neuralink**, the neurotechnology company co-founded by **Elon Musk**, has successfully implanted its first brain chip into a human being.
- This marks a significant step forward in the field of **brain-computer interfaces (BCIs)** and opens up a myriad of possibilities for the future of medical treatment and human enhancement.
- The primary goal of Neuralink's brain chip is to address various neurological conditions, such as epilepsy, Parkinson's disease, and spinal cord injuries. By recording and stimulating brain activity, the Link could offer new treatment options for patients suffering from these conditions.



## Defence

### India-UAE Joint Exercise 'Desert Cyclone 2024' Kicks Off In Rajasthan

- The collaborative military exercise 'Desert Cyclone 2024' between India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) is scheduled to take place in Rajasthan from January 2 to January 15. This joint manoeuvre aims to enhance interoperability through the exchange of knowledge and best practices, particularly in urban operations.
- The robust friendship between India and the UAE is deeply rooted in enduring cultural, religious, and economic interactions that span millennia. In recent times, the collaboration in defence between India and the UAE has witnessed significant enhancement.
- The cooperation extends to various aspects, including defence training, the supply of defence inventory, and the implementation of regular exchange programs. One notable milestone in this collaboration was the inaugural India-UAE Joint Air Forces exercise held in September 2008 at the Al-Dhafra base in Abu Dhabi.



### Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh Assumes Command Of Western Naval Command

- In a ceremony held at INS Shikra, the naval air station in Colaba, Mumbai, Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh took charge as the Flag Officer Commanding in Chief (FOC-in-C) of the Indian Navy's Western Naval Command.
- Before assuming the prestigious position as the FOC-in-C of the Western Naval Command, Vice Admiral Sanjay Jasjit Singh held the position of Vice Chief of the Naval Staff at the Naval Headquarters in New Delhi.
- The ceremony marked the transition of leadership from Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi, who had been



serving as the FOC-in-C. The change in command also sees Vice Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi taking on the role of Vice Chief of Naval Staff at the Naval Headquarters.

### Indian Navy's P-8I Aircraft Reaches Guam For Exercise Sea Dragon 24

- The Indian Navy marked its presence in the Pacific, on January 9th, 2024, with the arrival of a P-8I aircraft at Guam, USA.
- This deployment signals the navy's participation in the fourth edition of Ex Sea Dragon 24, an Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) exercise spearheaded by the US Navy.
- Ex Sea Dragon 24 fosters collaboration and interoperability among the navies of the US, Australia, South Korea, Japan, and India. The exercise aims to refine coordination and communication through professional interactions both on the ground and in the air, as per the Indian Navy's official statement.

### DRDO Launches Assault Rifle 'Ugram' For Indian Army

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) of India, in a significant advancement, introduced 'Ugram,' an advanced 7.62 x 51 mm calibre assault rifle.
- 'Ugram,' meaning 'ferocious' in Sanskrit, aligns with the operational needs of India's armed forces, paramilitary, and state police units.
- The rifle, notable for its effective range of 500 meters and lightweight design of under four kilograms, was developed at the DRDO's Pune-based Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE).
- With a 20-round magazine capacity, Ugram offers versatility through its single and full-auto firing modes. Its design parallels the modern AK and AR type rifles, yet stands out with a distinctive rivet-free construction, enhancing its robustness and reliability in various combat scenarios.



### DRDO Achieves Success In Akash-NG Missile Flight Test

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) achieved a significant milestone with the successful flight test of the New Generation AKASH (AKASH-NG) missile.



- The test, conducted at the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha, showcased the system's capability to intercept high-speed unmanned aerial targets at very low altitudes.
- The flight test targeted a high-speed unmanned aerial vehicle flying at a low altitude. The AKASH-NG missile system, comprising the missile with an **indigenously developed** Radio Frequency Seeker, Launcher, Multi-Function Radar, and Command, Control, and Communication system, successfully intercepted and destroyed the designated target.

### Indian Army To Observe 2024 As The Year Of Technology Absorption

- In a significant step towards modernization and operational efficiency, the Indian Army has declared 2024 as the "Year of Technology Absorption."



- The primary objective of this initiative is to use technology as a driving force for transformative change, focusing on operational and logistic requirements and collaborating with the domestic defence industry for project development.
- A notable aspect of this initiative is Project SAMBHAV, an end-to-end secure, network-agnostic mobile ecosystem that operates on state-of-the-art 5G technology. It is designed to provide secure communication with instant connectivity on the move.
- The Army has identified 355 posts where it has requested 4G connectivity from the telecom ministry. The focus is also on infrastructure improvements at forward airfields, villages, helipads, and underground storage facilities.

### Joint Exercise 'SahyogKaijin' Between Indian And Japanese Coast Guards

- The Indian and Japanese Coast Guards have recently conducted a successful joint exercise named 'SahyogKaijin' off the coast of Chennai.
- This exercise is a part of the ongoing collaboration between the two countries under the Memorandum of Cooperation (MoC) signed in 2006.
- The joint exercise, which commenced on January 8, focused on enhancing interoperability and sharing best practices in maritime law enforcement, search and rescue operations, and pollution response at sea.
- The exercise underscores the strong maritime cooperation between India and Japan and aids in further strengthening their ties and mutual understanding.



### Ex-Ayutthaya: India-Thailand First Naval Exercise Connects To Ayodhya

- In a historic move, the Indian Navy and Royal Thai Navy (RTN) joined forces for the maiden bilateral exercise named 'Ex-Ayutthaya' in December 2023.
- 'Ex-Ayutthaya' translates to 'The Invincible One,' emphasizing the historical and cultural links between Ayodhya and Ayutthaya.
- This maritime collaboration, symbolizing the invincible spirit, holds profound significance as it connects the ancient cities of Ayodhya in India and Ayutthaya in Thailand.
- The Indian Naval ships Kulish and IN LCU 56 engaged in the inaugural edition, while His Thai Majesty's Ship (HTMS) PrachuapKhiri Khan represented the Royal Thai Navy.



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

- The **Global Firepower's Military Strength Rankings for 2024** offer a comprehensive assessment of military capabilities worldwide.
- The rankings, encompassing 145 countries, take into account more than 60 factors, including troop numbers, military equipment, financial stability, geographic location, and available resources.
- The top 10 countries with the most powerful militaries in the world, according to Global Firepower's rankings for 2024, are as follows:



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

### India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise KHANJAR Begins In Himachal Pradesh

- The **11th edition** of the **India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise KHANJAR** has kicked off at the Special Forces Training School in Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh.
- Scheduled to take place from 22nd January to 3rd February 2024, this annual event has become a crucial platform for fostering collaboration and enhancing the capabilities of both nations' special forces.
- The primary aim of the exercise is to **facilitate the exchange of experiences and best practices in Counter-Terrorism and Special Forces Operations**.
- Focusing on Built-up Area and Mountainous Terrain operations under **Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter**, the exercise aims to refine and strengthen the skills of the participating special forces units. Emphasis will be placed on developing advanced

techniques of insertion and extraction, critical for success in diverse and challenging terrains.

### India And Egypt Armies Unite For Exercise Cyclone's Special Operations

- The **Indian Army contingent**, comprised of 25 highly skilled personnel from **The Parachute Regiment (Special Forces)**, has arrived in Egypt to participate in the eagerly awaited 2nd edition of the **India-Egypt Joint Special Forces Exercise CYCLONE**.
- The Indian contingent will be joined by counterparts from the **Egyptian Commando Squadron and the Egyptian Airborne Platoon**, totaling another 25 personnel.
- The primary objective of Exercise CYCLONE is to **familiarize both the Indian and Egyptian special forces with each other's operating procedures** in the context of Special Operations in desert and semi-desert terrain.



### India, France, UAE Conduct Joint Air Exercise Over Arabian Sea

- **India, France, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE)** conducted a major air exercise, named **'Desert Knight', over the Arabian Sea**. This joint exercise, held on January 23, 2024, comes against the backdrop of rising global concerns over Houthi militants targeting commercial vessels in strategic waterways.
- The main focus of 'Desert Knight' was to enhance synergy and interoperability among the air forces of the participating countries. The exercise aimed to foster a shared understanding of operational tactics and enhance coordination in complex air scenarios.
- The exercise featured an impressive array of frontline aerial assets and combat jets. The Indian Air Force (IAF) participated with Su-30 MKI, MiG-29, and Jaguar fighter jets, along with AWACS, C-130-J transport planes, and air-to-air refuelling aircraft.

### **India, Saudi Arabia To Start Military Exercise SADA TANSEEQ From Jan 29-Feb 10**

- The inaugural joint military exercise, **Sada Tanseeq**, between the armies of **India and Saudi Arabia**, is poised to commence in **Rajasthan**, showcasing a significant leap in bilateral relations between India and Saudi Arabia.
- Scheduled from **January 29th to February 10th, 2024**, SadaTanseeq signifies a landmark collaboration, epitomizing the growing strategic partnership between India and Saudi Arabia.
- The Saudi Arabian contingent, comprising 45 personnel, is being represented by the esteemed **Royal Saudi Land Forces**. Simultaneously, the **Indian Army contingent, also consisting of 45 personnel**, proudly represents a Battalion from the Brigade of the Guards (Mechanised Infantry).

## Appointments or Resign/Retired

### Vivek Srivastava Named DG Of Fire Service, Civil Defence & Home Guards

- The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** has recently approved the appointment of **Vivek Srivastava**, a seasoned 1989-batch IPS officer of Gujarat cadre, as the **Director General of Fire Service, Civil Defence & Home Guards under the Ministry of Home Affairs**.
- Vivek Srivastava has a distinguished career as an Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, with extensive **experience spanning over three decades**. Having entered the service in the year 1989, he has served in various capacities, showcasing leadership skills and dedication to public service.
- Srivastava's roots lie in the **Gujarat cadre**, where he began his career. Over the years, he has navigated the complexities of law enforcement, tackling challenges with strategic acumen. His service in the IPS has been marked by a relentless pursuit of justice, earning him a reputation as a principled and effective officer.

### Arvind Panagariya Appointed Head Of Sixteenth Finance Commission By Government

- The government has appointed **Arvind Panagariya**, former Niti Aayog vice chairman and Columbia University professor, as the **chairman of the Sixteenth Finance Commission**.
- The Commission is entrusted with the crucial task of recommending the tax revenue sharing formula between the Centre and the States for the upcoming five-year period starting from April 2026.
- Arvind Panagariya, a distinguished trade economist, had previously served as the **first vice chairman of the Niti Aayog from 2015 to 2017**. The Niti Aayog, established to replace the Planning Commission, plays a pivotal role in formulating economic policies and strategies for the Indian government.



### Randhir Jaiswal Takes Over As MEA Spokesperson From Arindam Bagchi

- In a significant transition at the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), **Arindam Bagchi**, the official spokesperson, has passed on the baton to **Randhir Jaiswal**.
- This move comes after Arindam Bagchi's appointment as India's next Permanent Representative to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva in October 2023.
- Mr. Bagchi, a seasoned 1995-batch **Indian Foreign Service (IFS)** officer holding the position of Additional Secretary in the MEA, had taken over as the spokesperson in March 2021.
- His term witnessed the India-China standoff in eastern Ladakh, India's successful hosting of the G20 Summit in September, and an intensified pace of diplomatic engagements with various global partners.

### Adani Ports Elevates Karan Adani To MD, Appoints Ashwani Gupta As CEO

- **Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Ltd (APSEZ)**, recently declared that **CEO Karan Adani would be stepping into the role of Managing Director**, succeeding **Gautam Adani**.
- In parallel, the company welcomed **Ashwani Gupta**, former global **Chief Operating Officer at Nissan Motors**, as its new **CEO**. Ashwani Gupta's appointment strengthens APSEZ's global port sector leadership. With nearly three decades of diverse industry experience.
- Karan Adani's journey within APSEZ is notable. He began his career with the **Adani Group in 2009 at Mundra Port and assumed the role of CEO in 2016**. With Karan Adani assuming the position of Managing Director, **Gautam Adani is now re-designated as the 'Executive Chairman' of APSEZ**.



### Justice Sanjiv Khanna Appointed As NALSA Executive Chairperson

- The President of India has appointed **Justice Sanjiv Khanna** as the **Executive Chairperson of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA)**.
- Justice Khanna, the senior-most judge of the Supreme Court, has taken over from Justice S. K. Kaul, who retired on December 25.
- The National Legal Services Authority (NALSA) is a statutory body established under the **Legal Services Authorities Act of 1987**. This organization plays a pivotal role in providing free legal services to the weaker sections of society and **aims to organize Lok Adalats for the amicable settlement of disputes**.



### Senior IAS Officer Vikas Sheel Appointed Executive Director, Asian Development Bank

- India has appointed seven accomplished civil servants to crucial positions abroad, showcasing the country's global engagement. Notably, **Mr. Vikas Sheel**, a seasoned bureaucrat, is now the Executive Director of the **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** in **Manila**, emphasizing India's commitment to international development.
- **Vikas Sheel**, a 1994-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer, is now the Executive Director at ADB. He brings valuable experience from his current role as Additional Secretary and Mission Director of Jal Jeevan Mission, contributing to India's representation at this prestigious institution.
- **Smita Sarangi** has been appointed as Adviser to the Executive Director at ADB in Manila, Philippines. Her expertise will play a vital role in India's collaboration with ADB on important development initiatives.



### Raghuram Iyer Appointed As CEO Of Indian Olympic Association

- The **Indian Olympic Association (IOA)** has welcomed a seasoned professional, **Raghuram**

**Iyer**, as its new CEO, marking a significant development after a meticulous selection process conducted by the nomination committee.

- The appointment, long-awaited and in response to reminders from the International Olympic Committee (IOC), brings a wealth of experience to the forefront.
- **Raghuram Iyer**, the former CEO of Rajasthan Royals, brings a diverse and rich professional background to his new role. His experience extends to prominent positions with IPL teams such as Lucknow Super Giants and Rising Supergiants.
- Additionally, he has made contributions to ATK Mohun Bagan in the Indian Super League and served as the CEO of RPSG Mavericks, a table tennis team.

### Rashmi Shukla Becomes Maharashtra's First Woman Director General Of Police

- The **Maharashtra** government appointed **Rashmi Shukla**, a distinguished 1988 batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, as the **Director General of Police (DGP)**. This appointment is groundbreaking as Ms. Shukla becomes the first woman to hold this prestigious position in the state.
- Ms. Shukla takes over the reins from **Rajnish Seth**, her batchmate from the 1988 IPS cadre, who recently retired and moved on to become the chairman of the **Maharashtra Public Service Commission (MPSC)**.
- Prior to her current appointment, Ms. Shukla led the **Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)** and served as the **Additional Director-General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)**.

### Bangladesh Election 2024: Sheikh Hasina Secures Fifth Term Amid Opposition Boycott

- In a momentous turn of events, **Bangladesh's Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina** has been re-elected for a fifth term, marking a significant milestone in the country's political landscape. According to the Election Commission and reports from various TV stations, the **Awami League** secured **216 seats out of 299** in the parliamentary election.
- The ruling **Awami League**, under **Hasina's** leadership, has triumphed once again, securing more than half of the parliamentary seats. This victory reaffirms **Sheikh Hasina's** position as the world's longest-serving female head of government.

### Indra Mani Pandey Takes On BIMSTEC Secretary General Role

- **Ambassador Indra Mani Pandey**, a seasoned diplomat from India, officially assumed the role of **Secretary General (SG)** of the **Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation (BIMSTEC)**.
- This appointment marks a crucial chapter in the organization's leadership, with Ambassador Pandey succeeding **Tenzin Lekphell** of Bhutan. Ambassador Indra Mani Pandey becomes the **fourth Secretary General of BIMSTEC, succeeding Tenzin Lekphell**.
- As a career diplomat, Ambassador Indra Mani Pandey has been a part of the **Indian Foreign Service since 1990**. Before assuming the role of Secretary General at BIMSTEC, he served as the **Permanent Representative of India to the United Nations** and other International Organizations in Geneva.

### Denmark's Queen Margrethe II To Step Down After 52 Years On Throne

- **Queen Margrethe II of Denmark**, in her **New Year's speech**, revealed her decision to abdicate the **throne after 52 years of rule**. The announcement, made on the **14th of January**, marks the anniversary of her own accession to the **throne at the age of 31**, following the death of her **father, King Frederik IX**.
- **Queen Margrethe II's** legacy is one of resilience, adventure, and unwavering dedication to her role as a monarch. Her decision to abdicate the throne adds a new chapter to Denmark's royal history, making way for her son, **Crown Prince Frederik**, to assume the responsibilities of the monarchy.

### Senthil Pandian C Appointed As India's WTO Ambassador

- The Indian government has named IAS officer **SenthilPandian C** as the **ambassador to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in Geneva**.
- This appointment follows the conclusion of **BrajendraNavnit's** term as **India's ambassador to the WTO on March 31, 2024**.
- **SenthilPandian C** is **currently serving as the commissioner of excise in Uttar Pradesh**. His extensive experience in administrative roles within the Indian bureaucracy positions him well to represent the country's interests on the global trade stage

### Tshering Tobgay Re-Elected As Bhutan's Prime Minister

- Bhutanese voters have overwhelmingly chosen **Tshering Tobgay as their Prime Minister for a second term**. The **People's Democratic Party (PDP)**, led by Mr. Tobgay, secured a landslide victory, winning nearly two-thirds of the seats in the recent election, as announced by the election commission on January 10.
- **Tshering Tobgay, a former Prime Minister who previously held office from 2013 to 2018**, has promised to strengthen ties with India, Bhutan's key trading partner.
- A 58-year-old former civil servant, **TsheringTobgay** is a passionate conservation **advocate** holding degrees in mechanical engineering from the University of Pittsburgh and public administration from Harvard. He played a pivotal role as the leader of the Opposition when **Bhutan's first parliament was established in 2008**.



### Denmark's King Frederik X Ascends As Queen Margrethe II Steps Down After 52 Years

- **Denmark** witnessed a historic moment on January 14 as **King Frederik X ascended the throne**, succeeding his mother, **Queen Margrethe II**, who formally abdicated after an impressive 52 years as the monarch.
- **Queen Margrethe**, who had previously expressed her intention to remain on the throne for life, **did not provide a specific reason for her decision to step down**. However, she mentioned a significant back surgery in February of the previous year, which prompted her to contemplate her future.
- **King Frederik X and Queen Mary** assume their roles at a time of immense public support and enthusiasm for the Danish monarchy.



### Gabriel Attal Becomes France's Youngest-Ever Prime Minister At 34

- French President Emmanuel Macron has made a significant political move by appointing **Gabriel Attal as the new prime minister of France**.
- At 34 years old, Attal not only becomes the youngest prime minister in the country's history but also the **first openly gay official to hold this prestigious position**.
- Attal's appointment comes in the midst of a cabinet reshuffle initiated by Macron to breathe new life into his government. With the departure of outgoing **Prime Minister Elisabeth Borne**, Attal is expected to play a crucial role in shaping the direction of the administration.

### Senior IPS Officer Daljit Singh Chaudhary Appointed Director General Of Sashastra Seema Bal

- Senior IPS officer **Daljit Singh Chaudhary** has been appointed as the **Director General of Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)**. Daljit Singh Chaudhary, an officer of the Indian Police Service (IPS), has had a distinguished career with various critical responsibilities in the past.
- His experience and skills are deemed crucial for the role of Director General of SSB, where he will be leading the force in maintaining the security and integrity of India's borders.
- Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB) is one of the five Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) under the administrative control of the Ministry of Home Affairs, Government of India. Established in 1963, the SSB was originally set up to counter the activities of Chinese troops along the Indo-Nepal border following the Sino-Indian War.

### Justice Prasanna B Varale Appointed Supreme Court Judge

- Justice **Prasanna B Varale**, currently serving as the Chief Justice of the Karnataka High Court, will now become the **third sitting judge from the Dalit community in the Supreme Court**.
- One of the notable aspects of Justice Varale's appointment is that he is the senior-most High Court Judge belonging to a Scheduled Caste.
- Furthermore, he holds the distinction of being the only Chief Justice belonging to a Scheduled Caste among the Chief Justices of High Courts across the country.

### Nitish Kumar Sworn In As Bihar CM For Record 9th Time With BJP Support

- In a significant turn of events ahead of the upcoming Lok Sabha polls, Janata Dal-United (JDU) chief **Nitish Kumar** was sworn in as Bihar Chief Minister for the ninth time, breaking ties with the 'Mahagathbandhan' and securing support from the BJP.
- The swearing-in ceremony, held at Raj Bhavan in Patna, saw Bihar Governor **Rajendra Arlekar** administering the oath of office. Nitish Kumar, after dissolving his Cabinet and severing ties with the 'Mahagathbandhan,' secured the support of the BJP.

### Sultan Ibrahim Of Johor State Installed As Malaysia's 17th King

- **Sultan Ibrahim of Johor state** has been installed as **Malaysia's 17th king**. This event marks a significant moment in the nation's constitutional monarchy system, where the throne rotates among the rulers of the nine Malay states.
- The installation ceremony of Sultan Ibrahim as the 17th King of Malaysia was a grand and culturally rich event, attended by high-ranking officials, dignitaries, and members of the royal families from across the country.
- Sultan Ibrahim is a respected figure in Malaysia, known for his commitment to the welfare of his people and his efforts in developing Johor state. Prior to his installation as the King of Malaysia, he served as the Sultan of Johor, a position he has held since 2010.



Sultan Ibrahim of Johor state installed as Malaysia's 17th king

### President Nominates Shri Satnam Singh Sandhu As Rajya Sabha Member

- In a significant move, the President of India nominated **Shri Satnam Singh Sandhu** as a member of the Rajya Sabha. This decision recognizes Sandhu's remarkable contributions to education, philanthropy, and community development.
- Satnam Singh Sandhu, son of a farmer, rose to become one of India's prominent educationists. Overcoming personal struggles, he founded Chandigarh Group of Colleges (CGC) in 2001 and established Chandigarh University in 2012.



- He champions social causes through his NGOs, “Indian Minorities Foundation” and “New India Development (NID) Foundation,” focusing on health, wellness, and communal harmony.

TARA INSTITUTE

## Honours/ Awards

### Prof B R Kamboj Honoured With M S Swaminathan Award

- Prof. B.R. Kamboj, the Vice Chancellor of Chaudhary Charan Singh Haryana Agricultural University, has been bestowed with the prestigious M.S. Swaminathan Award. This recognition comes in appreciation of his significant contributions as a scientist and extension specialist in the field of agronomy.
- Prof. B.R. Kamboj, in his role as Vice Chancellor, possesses an in-depth understanding of the common problems, needs, and socio-economic conditions faced by farmers. His agricultural recommendations, stemming from collaborative research work and extension activities with university scientists, have consistently proven highly advantageous for farmers.

### Bengali Writer Shirshendu Mukhopadhyaya Receives 2023 Kuvempu Award

- In a prestigious recognition of his literary contributions, renowned Bengali writer Shirshendu Mukhopadhyaya has been awarded the 2023 Kuvempu Rashtriya Puraskar.
- The national award, named in honour of the late Kannada poet Kuvempu, celebrates writers who have made significant contributions to any Indian language.
- Shirshendu Mukhopadhyaya, an accomplished author with a prolific literary career, has penned over 90 books, encompassing a diverse range of genres, including travelogues and fiction for children. The esteemed award comes with a cash prize of Rs 5 lakh, a silver medal, and a citation.
- The previous year's recipient was Tamil writer Imayam, adding to the prestigious list of literary luminaries acknowledged by this esteemed award.



### Prof. Adrian Cruise Receives 'Order Of The British Empire' For Space Science Leadership

- The New Year Honours list for 2024 has acknowledged the outstanding contributions of Professor Adrian Michael Cruise, a leading figure

in space science research, particularly known for his role in the Gravitational Wave Research Group at the University of Birmingham.

- Professor Cruise, as Professor Emeritus at the University of Birmingham, led the **Gravitational Wave Research Group** to affirm the university's leadership in space science. His groundbreaking **2015 detection of gravitational waves** validated Einstein's prediction, propelling the institution into the forefront of unraveling space-time mysteries.

### Singapore's Changi Airport Earns The Title Of World's Best Airport For 2023

- Singapore's Changi Airport has once again been crowned the **World's Best Airport for the year 2023**, according to the prestigious awards presented by the air transport research firm, Skytrax.
- After losing the title in the past two years to Qatar's Hamad International Airport, Changi Airport reclaimed its status as the best in the world, marking the **twelfth time** it has received this coveted accolade.
- The annual **Skytrax awards** are a significant benchmark in the aviation industry, recognizing excellence in airport services and facilities. These accolades are based on **customer satisfaction surveys from international air travelers**, making them a true reflection of the passenger experience.



### Savita Kanswal Posthumously Honored With Tenzing Norgay Award

- In a heart-touching ceremony, **President Draupadi Murmu** posthumously conferred the prestigious **Tenzing Norgay National Adventure Award** upon Savita Kanswal.
- Savita Kanswal made history by becoming the **first Indian woman mountaineer to conquer both Mount Everest (8848 m) and Mount Makalu (8485 m) within an astonishing span of 16 days**. This remarkable feat



showcased not only her physical prowess but also her unwavering determination to achieve greatness at the young age of 25.

- The promising journey of Savita took a tragic turn when she met an untimely demise on October 4, 2022. While attempting to climb **DraupadiKaDanda peak** as a member of the team sent by the **Nehru Institute of Mountaineering**, Savita was struck by an avalanche.

### US Air Force Officer Madison Marsh Becomes First Active-Duty Winner Of Miss America 2024

- Second Lt. **Madison Marsh**, an officer in the U.S. Air Force, was crowned **Miss America**, marking the **first time an active-duty service member has clinched this prestigious title**, as confirmed by the Air Force.



- Hailing from **Colorado**, the home of the U.S. Air Force Academy, Marsh proudly represented her state in the pageant. Her academic background is just as impressive, **having graduated from the academy with a degree in physics**.
- Since 2018, Marsh has been actively involved in raising awareness and funds for pancreatic cancer research. She **co-founded the Whitney Marsh Foundation** with her father and sister in honor of her mother, who succumbed to the disease.

### Emmys Awards 2024 Winners

- The **Emmy Awards 2024** ceremony showcased the best and brightest in television. With many shows vying for the top honours, the event was a testament to contemporary television's diverse and dynamic nature.
- HBO's "Succession" led the nominations, indicating the show's significant impact on audiences and critics alike. **This is the 75th Primetime Emmy Awards**.
- **Anthony Anderson**, the veteran actor who spent several years as the star of ABC's "black-ish," scored several laughs and appreciative applause as he started his hosting gig at the 75th Emmy Awards.

### Assam Govt To Honor Ex-CJI Ranjan Gogoi With 'Assam Baibhav' Award

- Former Chief Justice of India and current Rajya Sabha MP, **Ranjan Gogoi**, is set to be honored with the prestigious '**Assam Baibhav**' award, the highest civilian award in Assam. The award ceremony is scheduled to take place on February 10.
- This marks the **third year** of the Assam Baibhav awards, with the inaugural award presented to business magnate Ratan Tata in the first year, followed by journalist Tapan Saikia in the second year. The decision to confer this year's award upon Ranjan Gogoi reflects the state government's acknowledgment of his exceptional service and achievements.
- **The recipients of the awards are:**

Serial No	Name	Year	Field
1	Ratan Tata	2021	Social Service
2	Dr. Tapan Saikia	2022	Healthcare & Public
3	Sri Ranjan Gogoi	2023	Law & Justice

### Gianni Infantino Honored With Sports Personality Award In Dubai

- In a glittering ceremony at the Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Creative Sports Awards, **FIFA President Gianni Infantino** was bestowed with the prestigious **International Sports Personality of the Year award**.
- **Established in 2009**, the **Mohammed Bin Rashid Al Maktoum Creative Sports Awards** have evolved over the past decade. Initially focused on domestic achievements, the awards opened up to international recipients in **2012**.
- Today, the International Sports Personality of the Year stands as the pinnacle of recognition for global figures who contribute significantly to the development and fairness of sports.



### Bengaluru, Delhi Airports Get Best Airport Award At Wings India

- At the prestigious Wings India Awards 2024, both the **Kempegowda International Airport in Bengaluru** and the **Indira Gandhi International**

### Airport in Delhi were jointly awarded the 'Best Airport of the Year'.

- This accolade celebrates world-class operators and individuals who have significantly contributed to the aviation industry, especially during challenging times. The award ceremony was held in Hyderabad.
- Bengaluru's Kempegowda International Airport was specifically recognized with the '25 MPPA Traffic Award' in the Airports category for handling more than 25 million passengers annually.

### BCCI Awards 2023, Shubman Gill & Ravi Shastri To Be Honoured

- The **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)** is set to honour the exemplary performances in Indian cricket at the **NAMAN Awards ceremony in Hyderabad**.
- This prestigious event, held for the first time since 2019, celebrates the achievements of Indian cricketers in the preceding year.
- **Shubman Gill** is slated to receive the Cricketer of the Year award, acknowledging his extraordinary performance in 2023. Gill played 48 matches during the year, amassing an impressive **2,154 runs**.
- **Ravi Shastri**, a former all-rounder and head coach of the Indian cricket team, will be honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award. Shastri's illustrious career includes representing India in 80 Tests and 150 One Day Internationals (ODIs), scoring over 3,000 runs in both formats and taking 280 wickets.

### Former Bihar CM Karpoori Thakur Awarded Bharat Ratna Posthumously

- The Government of India has announced that former Bihar Chief Minister, **Karpoori Thakur**, will be posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna, the nation's highest civilian award.
- Karpoori Thakur (1924-1988) left an indelible mark on Bihar's political scene, championing social justice and connecting deeply with the backward classes.
- He served as **Bihar's Chief Minister twice, first from December 1970 to June 1971 and again from December 1977 to April 1979**.

### Ravi Shastri, Farokh Engineer Receive Col CK Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Awards

- Former India captain and head coach **Ravi Shastri** expressed his gratitude on January 21, 2024 for being awarded the prestigious **Col CK Nayudu**

**Lifetime Achievement Award** at a glittering ceremony organized by the BCCI.

- The ceremony also saw other cricketing stalwarts, such as **Farokh Engineer**, being honored for their contributions to the sport.
- **Jasprit Bumrah**, one of the key players in India's recent cricket success, was awarded the **Polly Umrigar Award for Best International Cricketer – Men**.
- **Shubman Gill** received the Polly Umrigar Best Men's International Cricketer of the Year award for his outstanding performance in the 2022-23 season. The awards ceremony also recognized **Mohammed Shami** for his excellence in international cricket.

### Filmfare Awards 2024

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

### Naorem Roshibina Devi Crowned Female Wushu Athlete Of The Year

- **Naorem Roshibina Devi**, the pride of Manipur, has clinched the prestigious title of **International Wushu Federation Female Athlete of the Year**, solidifying her place as a powerhouse in the world of wushu.
- Roshibina's triumphs at the Asian Games in 2018 and 2022 have been pivotal moments in her career, showcasing her dominance in the sport. **Her silver and bronze medals in the sanda category** have earned her widespread recognition and admiration.
- Roshibina's journey to sporting excellence began with a bronze medal at the **World Junior Wushu Championships in 2016**. Since then, she has continued to rise through the ranks, culminating in the prestigious Arjuna Award, a testament to her dedication and success in wushu.

## Sports

### David Warner Retires From One-Day Cricket Ahead Of Test Farewell

- On New Year's Day, Australian cricket stalwart **David Warner** officially announced his retirement from ODI cricket. This announcement came just before his final Test match against **Pakistan at the Sydney Cricket Ground**.
- In his illustrious ODI journey, Warner amassed **6,932 runs across 161 matches**, boasting an average of 45.30 and an impressive strike rate of 97.26. His career highlights include 22 centuries and 33 fifties, with a personal best of 179 runs in a single match.
- Warner's impact in the **ICC Cricket World Cup** is notable. He scored **1,527 runs in World Cup matches**, averaging 56.55 and maintaining a strike rate exceeding 100. Among male cricketers, only five have scored more runs in World Cup history, with fellow Australian Ricky Ponting at the top.



### Beatrice Chebet Breaks 5 Km World Record In Barcelona Event

- In a spectacular display of athletic prowess, **Kenya's Beatrice Chebet** concluded her remarkable year by smashing the **world record for the women's 5 km marathon at the CursadelsNassos in Barcelona**.
- Clocking an astounding 14:13**, Chebet outpaced her competitors and bettered the previous record by six seconds, setting the stage for a memorable achievement.
- The final showdown was between Beatrice Chebet and EjegayehuTaye, the former record holder. In a thrilling sprint, Chebet surged ahead in the last 500m, securing her victory with a clear lead.



### ICC Rule Changes In Cricket: Stumping Replays Limited; Concussion Substitute And BCCI's Decision

- In a significant alteration to cricket playing conditions, the International Cricket Council (ICC) has restricted the **Decision Review System (DRS) for stumping incidents**.
- Effective from December 12, 2023, teams can now only challenge caught-behind decisions with a separate DRS option, preventing misuse observed in the 2020 series against India.
- The amended rule mandates umpires to rely solely on side-on camera images for stumping reviews, eliminating the examination of potential snicks. This ensures a focused review for stumped incidents without allowing teams a free review for other modes of dismissal.

### Ministry Of Youth Affairs & Sports Announced The National Sports Awards 2023

- The **Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports** announced the **National Sports Awards 2023**, honouring individuals and institutions that have excelled in their respective fields.
- Several athletes across various sports were selected for the National Sports and Adventure Awards 2023, including World Cup star Mohammed Shami, Asian Games heroes OjasPravinDeotale, shooter AishwaryaPratap Singh Tomar and ParulChaudhary.
- The Sports Ministry in December had declared nominees for the annual sports awards, confirming the prestigious KhelRatna honour for badminton players SatwikSairajRankireddy and ChiragShetty and the Arjuna award for 26 sports persons.

### Divyakriti Singh Becomes 1st Indian Woman Arjuna Awardee For Equestrian Sports

- In a historic moment for Indian sports, the accomplished equestrian athlete, **Divyakriti Singh**, has been conferred with the prestigious **Arjuna Award**, making her the first woman from Rajasthan to achieve this honour.
- Her dedication and prowess were on full display when she played a pivotal role in securing the Gold Medal



for the Indian Dressage team at the Asian Games in Hangzhou, China, last September.

- The Arjuna Award for Divyakriti Singh holds special significance for her home state of Rajasthan, ending a five-year hiatus for the region in receiving this prestigious honour. As the sole representative from Rajasthan to be honoured this year, she not only brings glory to herself but also puts Rajasthan back on the map of sporting achievements.

### Unveiling The Essence Of The 9th Asian Winter Games: Slogan, Emblem, And Mascots

- The **9th Asian Winter Games**, set to illuminate the winter sports landscape in 2025, have officially entered an exciting phase with the unveiling of its core symbols – the slogan, emblem, and mascots.
- Embracing the spirit of unity and sportsmanship, the official slogan “Dream of Winter, Love among Asia” resonates deeply with the ethos of the Games. This slogan encapsulates the aspirations and passion for winter sports among Asian countries, highlighting the essence of dreams, love, and camaraderie that the Games aim to foster.
- The heart and soul of the Games are personified in its mascots, “Binbin” and “Nini”, two charming Siberian tiger cubs. Inspired by actual tiger cubs born in the Heilongjiang Siberian Tiger Park, these mascots embody the vitality and spirit of the Games.

### Rhythm Sangwan Clinches 16th Olympic Quota For 2024 Paris Games

- In a remarkable feat at the **Asian Shooting Championships 2024** in Jakarta, Indonesia, **Rhythm Sangwan** secured a **bronze medal in the women’s 25m pistol event**, obtaining a Paris 2024 Olympic quota for India.
- This accomplishment marked **India’s 16th shooting quota** for the upcoming Olympics, surpassing the previous record tally of 15 set for the Tokyo 2020 Games.
- During the intense **25m pistol final**, Rhythm Sangwan showcased her skills, **scoring 28 out of 45** to claim the bronze. The gold and silver medals were secured



by **Jiin Yang** and **Yeji Kim** from the Republic of Korea, who shot 41/50 and 32/50, respectively.

### Tim Southee Achieves Historic Milestone In T20 Internationals

- **New Zealand’s** veteran pace bowler **Tim Southee** has created history by becoming the first bowler to take **150 wickets in T20 Internationals**.
- In the match held in Auckland on January 12, 2024, Southee’s impressive bowling figures were 4-25. His performance was instrumental in New Zealand’s 46-run win over Pakistan.
- Tim Southee, aged 35, has had a remarkable career in T20 Internationals. He is the most successful bowler in this format with 151 wickets, surpassing other prominent cricketers like Bangladesh’s Shakib Al Hasan (140 wickets) and Afghanistan’s Rashid Khan (130 wickets).

### Shaun Marsh Announces Retirement From Professional Cricket

- **Australia’s Shaun Marsh**, a renowned name in international and domestic cricket, has announced his retirement from all forms of the sport.
- Shaun Marsh started his career in Western Australia and gained recognition for his skill and dedication. Marsh’s international career with the Australian cricket team was marked by notable performances in Test matches, One Day Internationals (ODIs), and Twenty20 Internationals (T20Is).
- He played 38 Test matches, 73 ODIs, and 15 T20Is for Australia. In ODIs, he particularly excelled with a batting average of 40.78 and an 81.42 strike rate. His Test career also boasts a noteworthy average of 43.32 in 68 innings. Marsh’s contributions in T20s, though less prominent, still included 15 games for Australia with a top score of 47.

### Rohit Sharma Becomes The First Men’s Player To Play 150 T20Is

- In a historic moment for Indian cricket, **Rohit Sharma**, the captain of Team India, etched his name in the record books by becoming the **first men’s player to**



### feature in 150 T20 International matches.

- This milestone was achieved during the second T20I against Afghanistan at the Holkar Cricket Stadium, marking a remarkable feat in Rohit's illustrious career.
- During the first T20I against Afghanistan, Rohit Sharma not only captained his side to victory but also secured another milestone by **becoming the first player to win 100 T20Is**. This accomplishment underlines his leadership prowess and the team's success under his captaincy.

### ICC Players Of The Month For December 2023, Pat Cummins And Deepti Sharma

- The cricketing world witnessed outstanding performances in December 2023, and the International Cricket Council (ICC) duly recognized the brilliance of **Australia's Pat Cummins and India's Deepti Sharma**.
- Australia's skipper, Pat Cummins, capped off a stellar year with the ICC Men's Player of the Month award for December. Cummins played a pivotal role in Australia's Test series triumph against Pakistan, displaying exceptional leadership and bowling prowess.
- India's Deepti Sharma made history by winning her maiden ICC Women's Player of the Month award for December. Sharma's exceptional performances across all three formats, especially against England and Australia, earned her this well-deserved recognition.

### Praggnanandhaa Surpasses Viswanathan Anand To Become India's No.1 Chess Player

- **Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa**, an 18-year-old chess prodigy from Chennai, achieved a historic milestone in his career by defeating World Champion **Ding Liren from China**.
- The win against Ding Liren not only marked a personal victory for Praggnanandhaa but also led him to surpass the legendary **Viswanathan Anand** as the top-rated Indian player.
- With a FIDE live rating of 2748.3, Praggnanandhaa marginally edged past Anand's rating of 2748. This achievement places Praggnanandhaa as the second Indian, following Anand, to defeat a reigning world champion in classical chess. He had previously defeated Ding Liren at the Tata Steel tournament in 2023 as well.

### Rohit Sharma Tops List Of Batters With Most Hundreds In T20

- Indian cricket team captain **Rohit Sharma** has created history by becoming the first batsman to score five centuries in T20 Internationals (T20Is). This milestone was achieved during the third T20I match against Afghanistan in Bengaluru on January 17, 2024.
- Rohit Sharma scored an unbeaten **121 runs off 69 balls**, which included 11 fours and eight sixes, showcasing his exceptional batting skills.
- The partnership between Rohit and Rinku Singh was crucial, amounting to 190 runs for the fifth wicket, setting a record for the highest T20I partnership for India.

### Sue Redfern: ICC's First Female Neutral Umpire In Bilateral Series

- In a groundbreaking development for women's cricket, **Sue Redfern** from England is set to become the **first ICC-appointed female neutral umpire** to officiate in a bilateral series.
- Redfern's appointment is a result of the International Cricket Council's (ICC) decision to have **one neutral umpire for all ICC Women's Championship series and T20I matches** associated with them.
- This move is aimed at ensuring a degree of neutrality in match officiating while also contributing to the long-term development of female umpires in the sport. **Seven female neutral umpires**, including Sue Redfern, will officiate across ICC Women's Championship series.

### Tata Group Secures IPL Title Sponsorship For Next 5 Years

- **Tata Sons Private Limited** has successfully utilized its Right to Match card, retaining the prestigious title sponsorship of the **Indian Premier League (IPL)** for the upcoming five seasons, spanning **2024 to 2028**.
- This development follows the Board of Control for Cricket in India's (BCCI) release of an Invitation to Tender (ITT) for Title Sponsor Rights in late December 2023.
- In 2022, **Tata Group** had initially replaced Chinese mobile manufacturer Vivo as the IPL title sponsor for the 2022 and 2023 seasons, contributing INR 365 crore per season. With their current decision to retain the title sponsorship, the group is poised for an extended and prominent association with the world's most lucrative cricket league.

### ICC Awards 2023: Rohit Sharma Named Captain Of ICC ODI Team Of The Year

- The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** announced five ICC Teams of the Year across formats for men and women as part of the **ICC Awards 2023**. Six Indians were featured in the ICC Men's ODI team of the year with Rohit Sharma named as the captain of the 11-member team.
- The announcement of the five teams – the ICC Men's and Women's T20I Teams of the Year, the ICC Men's and Women's ODI Teams of the Year and the ICC Men's Test Team of the Year – were made in a staggered manner over Monday and Tuesday and feature players from 11 teams selected based on international performances through the calendar year.

### ICC Awards 2023

- The **ICC Awards 2023**, organized by the **International Cricket Council**, represents the pinnacle of recognition for international cricket players.
- **Bas de Leede** was named as the **ICC Men's Associate Cricketer of the Year 2023** for his remarkable all-round run in the year. He was the standout player for the Netherlands at the ICC Men's Cricket World Cup 2023 Qualifier and the World Cup in India.
- **Queentor Abel** made **Kenya** proud by winning the ICC Women's Associate Cricketer of the Year for 2023. She picked 30 T20I wickets at an unreal average of 7.36, and scored 476 T20I runs at 34.

### Rohan Bopanna: A New Milestone At 43 As The Oldest World No. 1 In Men's Doubles

- Indian tennis star **Rohan Bopanna** has etched his name in the history books by becoming the oldest player to claim the **No. 1 spot in the men's doubles rankings at the age of 43**.
- This remarkable achievement was secured following his quarter-final victory at the 2024 Australian Open, alongside Australia's Matthew Ebden.
- Bopanna's accomplishment surpasses the previous record held by American tennis player Mike Bryan, who was 41 years and 76 days old when he was ranked World No. 1 in men's doubles in 2019.

### Netherlands Won FIH Hockey5s Women's World Cup

- **India** finished as runner-up at the inaugural edition of the FIH Hockey 5s Women's World Cup after a 7-2 loss to the **Netherlands** in the final in Muscat.
- India tried to make a comeback and scored twice – **Jyoti Chhatri (20th minute)** and



**Rutaja Dadaso Pisal (23rd minute)** – but could not catch the Dutch team which added one more goal courtesy of Kalse before the full-time hooter.

- The final standings of the teams were as follows:

S.No.	Country
1	Netherlands
2	India
3	Poland

### Australian Open 2024 Winners: Sinner, Sabalenka And Bopanna Shine

- Jannik Sinner secured his first Grand Slam in men's singles, while Aryna Sabalenka claimed her second in women's singles. Rohan Bopanna, at 43, became the oldest man to win men's doubles. Hsieh Su-Wei and Elise Mertens won women's doubles, and Hsieh, with Jan Zielinski, clinched mixed doubles.
- Jannik Sinner (Italy) claimed his maiden Grand Slam title, defeating Daniil Medvedev in a thrilling five-set Australian Open final in Melbourne. He became the 27th different men's singles winner in Melbourne since the Open era began in 1969 and the first Italian to achieve this feat.
- At 22 years and 165 days, Sinner is the youngest Australian Open champion since Novak Djokovic in 2008. Novak Djokovic holds the Open era record for most Australian Open titles (10), followed by Roger Federer (6) and Andre Agassi (4).



## Obituaries

### Padma Bhushan Awardee Prof VedPrakash Nanda Passes Away

- **Professor Ved Prakash Nanda**, a luminary in the Indian diaspora, recently passed away, leaving behind a legacy of profound contributions to literature, education, and international law.
- Born in 1934 in Gujranwala, British India, his journey transcended borders as his family migrated to India after the partition in 1947.
- Prof. Nanda's remarkable career, including being awarded the Padma Bhushan in 2018, reflects his dedication to academia, international law, and fostering global understanding.

### Franz Beckenbauer, World Cup-Winning German And Bayern Munich Great, Dies Aged 78

- **Franz Beckenbauer**, one of only three men to have won the **FIFA World Cup** as a player and as a manager, has died at the age of 78.
- Born in Giesling, Munich, in September 1945, Franz Beckenbauer's journey with football began in Bayern's youth squad, making his debut as a left-winger in 1964. Despite Bayern's earlier struggles, Beckenbauer's versatility and leadership saw them rise, winning their **first Bundesliga title in 1968-69**.



### Maestro Ustad Rashid Khan Passes Away At 55

- The Indian classical music world mourns the passing of **Ustad Rashid Khan**, a towering figure who left an indelible mark on the **Rampur-Sahaswan Gharana** and beyond. At just 55, this musical prodigy succumbed to complications arising from prostate cancer, leaving a legacy that resonates with profound beauty and innovative spirit.
- Born in Uttar Pradesh's Badayun, Rashid Khan's musical lineage ran deep. His initial training came from his maternal grand-uncle, **Ustad Nissar Hussain**



Khan, laying the foundation for his exquisite vocal skills. Following his debut, Rashid Khan's ascent was meteoric.

- He graced the prestigious ITC concert in Delhi at 12 and joined the ITC Sangeet Research Academy in Calcutta at just 14, immersing himself further in the rich tapestry of Hindustani classical music. This dedication translated into mastery, with his renditions of Vilambit Khayal earning him widespread acclaim.

### Classical Singer PrabhaAtre Passes Away At 91

- The Indian classical music fraternity mourns the loss of **Dr. PrabhaAtre**, a revered classical vocalist and a luminary of the Kirana Gharana, who passed away in Pune at the age of 91.
- Born on September 13, 1932, **PrabhaAtre** was not just a classical vocalist but also an academician, researcher, composer, and author.
- Dr. Atre's contributions were recognized through several prestigious awards. She was a recipient of the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award (1991), Padma Shri (1990), Padma Bhushan (2002), and the Padma Vibhushan (2022), India's second-highest civilian honor.

### Renowned Urdu Poet Munawwar Rana Passes Away At 71

- **Munawwar Rana**, a celebrated Urdu poet, passed away at the age of 71 due to cardiac arrest in Lucknow. He had been enduring a prolonged illness, including throat cancer, kidney, and heart-related ailments.
- Born on November 26, 1952, in Uttar Pradesh's Raebareli, Rana was renowned for his significant contributions to Urdu literature and poetry. He was particularly acclaimed for his ghazals, a poetic form consisting of rhyming couplets and a refrain.
- His poetic style was marked by its accessibility, as he often included Hindi and Awadhi words, avoiding Persian and Arabic, to resonate more with Indian audiences. One of his most famous poems was 'Maa', celebrating the virtues of a mother within the traditional ghazal form.

## Important Days with theme

### World Braille Day 2024

- **World Braille Day**, annually observed on **January 4**, is a profound tribute to **Louis Braille**, the visionary mind behind the transformative braille system.
- Born in **1809 in France**, **Louis** faced the adversity of losing his sight in childhood. However, his resilience and determination led to the creation of one of history's most revolutionary systems.
- World Braille Day aims to raise awareness about the challenges faced by individuals with visual impairments, advocating for their rights and societal integration.
- It serves as a poignant reminder of the importance of empathy and compassion towards those navigating a world without sight.



### National Birds Day 2024

- **The United States of America** declares **January 5** as National Bird Day to raise awareness of the significance of birds to our ecosystem.
- The day is set apart to make all of us understand that birds are not made to be caught or had as showpieces in our homes, rather, they are nature's lovely creatures that deserve to live with complete freedom.
- The day was first observed by the Avian Welfare Coalition, which is involved in the cause of promoting awareness about birds that are caught or end up in captivity for either monetary profit or for human entertainment.



### Pravasi Bharatiya Divas 2024

- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas**, also known as **Non-Resident Indian (NRI) Day**, celebrated on **January 9**, serves as a tribute to the contributions and

achievements of the overseas Indian community to the development of India.

- The day also marks the return of Mahatma Gandhi from South Africa to India in 1915, symbolizing the leadership that fueled India's freedom struggle.
- **The inaugural celebration of Pravasi Bharatiya Divas took place in 2003.** Originally an annual event, the format underwent revision in **2015**, transforming it into a biennial celebration. This restructuring included the introduction of theme-based conferences during the intervening years, bringing together overseas diaspora experts, policy-makers, and stakeholders.

### World Hindi Day 2024

- Every year on **January 10th**, the world celebrates **World Hindi Day**, a day dedicated to recognizing the cultural significance and global influence of the Hindi language. In 2024, the theme of the World Hindi Day is "**Hindi-Bridging Traditional Knowledge and Artificial Intelligence**".
- The journey of Hindi to this global stage began in **1949** with a momentous occasion – its first address at the **United Nations General Assembly**. In 2006, under the leadership of then-Prime Minister **Dr Manmohan Singh**, the first **Vishwa Hindi Diwas** was officially observed, marking January 10th as World Hindi Day on the global calendar.
- World Hindi Day serves as a platform to celebrate and promote using Hindi in various spheres. Educational institutions hold events like essay writing competitions, poetry recitals, and plays to highlight the beauty and depth of the language.

### National Youth Day 2024

- **National Youth Day** observed every year on **January 12th in India**, commemorates the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda and recognizes his significant contributions to Indian society and the world.
- The Government of India, in 1984, declared January 12 as National Youth Day to honour Swami Vivekananda's birthday. This day is dedicated to motivating and inspiring the youth using the life and

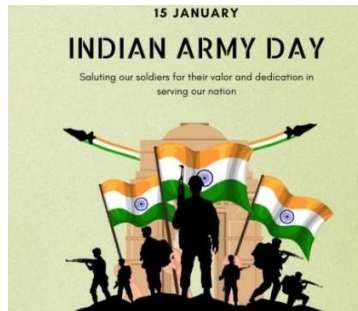


ideas of Swami Vivekananda, aiming to foster national development.

- **The theme for National Youth Day 2024 is “ViksitYuva-Viksit Bharat.”** This theme reflects a focus on youth empowerment and nation-building. It underscores the critical role of the youth in shaping a developed India, aligning with Swami Vivekananda’s vision of harnessing youth power for positive societal change.

### Indian Army Day 2024

- **Indian Army Day** is a special day celebrated on **January 15** every year. In 2024, it will be celebrated on Monday, January 15.
- This day marks the anniversary of the Indian Army getting its first Indian chief in 1949. This chief was **General K.M. Cariappa, who took over from the British.**
- The theme for Indian Army Day in 2024 is **“In Service of the Nation.”** This means that the Indian Army is always ready to serve and protect our country. Their motto is **“Service Before Self,”** showing that they always think of the country first.



### Makar Sankranti 2024

- In 2024, **Makar Sankranti**, a Hindu festival marking the Sun’s entry into Capricorn, occurs on **January 15**. Celebrated based on solar cycles, this festival is distinctive in Hindu traditions, symbolizing the end of winter and the beginning of longer days, coinciding with the month of Magha.
- MakarSankranti, a festival celebrated nationwide, holds special significance in Hinduism. According to Vedic astrology, when the sun enters the zodiac sign of Capricorn, marking the transit of Suryadev into his son Shani’s sign, MakarSankranti is celebrated. This festival is associated with rituals like Ganga snan (bathing in the Ganges) and charitable acts.

### Parakram Diwas 2024

- **Parakram Diwas**, observed on **January 23rd, 2024**, marks the birth anniversary of **NetajiSubhas Chandra Bose**, a prominent figure in India’s freedom struggle.
- This day is celebrated to honour his indomitable spirit and invaluable contribution to India’s independence. This year nation observe the **127th edition of ParakramDiwas 2024.**
- ParakramDiwas 2024 is a national event celebrated annually in India since 2021. It commemorates Netaji’s birth anniversary and is a tribute to his brave legacy. The day serves as a reminder of the courage and determination of one of India’s most revered freedom fighters.

### National Girl Child Day 2024

- **National Girl Child Day**, observed annually on **January 24th in India**, plays a pivotal role in highlighting the importance of empowering girls and addressing the challenges they face in society.
- Initiated in 2008 by the **Ministry of Women and Child Development**, this day marks a commitment to promote gender equality, empower girls, and protect their rights.
- The first NGCD was celebrated with the theme **“Saving our Girls: Educating our Girls.”** Since then, it has been observed annually with various themes, each underscoring the need to empower and address specific challenges faced by girls.

### International Day Of Education 2024

- Celebrated on **January 24th** each year, the **International Day of Education** is a pivotal occasion to underscore the importance of education for all.
- In 2024, this day will be observed under the theme **“Learning for Lasting Peace,”** emphasizing the transformative nature of education in promoting peace and understanding.
- The United Nations General Assembly declared January 24th as the International Day of Education in 2018, recognizing the fundamental role education plays in fostering peace, development, and intercultural understanding.

### National Voters' Day 2024

- **The National Voters' Day** is celebrated every year in India on **January 25** to encourage the country's voters to participate in the electoral process.
- This year, it is the **14th edition** which is being celebrated. In the vibrant democracy of India, where every vote is a testament to the aspirations and choices of its people, National Voters' Day holds a special place.
- **Initiated in 2011**, National Voters' Day was established by the **Election Commission of India (ECI)** to address a growing concern. The date, January 25, was chosen to coincide with the founding anniversary of the ECI in 1950, symbolizing a renewed commitment to democratic participation.



### National Tourism Day 2024

- **National Tourism Day**, celebrated annually in India, is a significant event that highlights the importance of tourism for the country's economy and cultural heritage.
- **National Tourism Day is observed on January 25th each year.** This day is earmarked to foster awareness among the international community about the importance of tourism and its social, cultural, political, and economic values.
- The theme for this year is **'Sustainable Journeys, Timeless Memories.'** It emphasises the concept of responsible and mindful travel. As a part of this day, seminars, cultural events, and other programmes are organised by the central government.

### International Customs Day 2024

- Every year, on **January 26**, we celebrate **International Customs Day**, a special day dedicated to recognizing and appreciating the crucial role played by customs agencies worldwide.
- **International Customs Day** is observed annually on **January 26**. This tradition dates back to **1953**, when the **Customs Cooperation Council (CCC)**, now known as the **World Customs Organization (WCO)**, designated this date to honour the work of customs officials.

- The decision was made during a session inaugurated in Brussels, Belgium, with representatives from 17 European countries. Since its renaming in **1994**, the WCO has grown to include 182 member states, each committed to international cooperation in customs matters.

### Indian Newspaper Day 2024, Date, History And Significance

- **Indian Newspaper Day**, observed on **January 28th** each year, is a tribute to the rich legacy of journalism in the country.
- It marks the inception of newspapers in India, a historic moment when James Augustus Hicky introduced the first printed newspaper, **Hicky's Bengal Gazette, in 1780.**
- Indian Newspaper Day is not just a nod to history but a celebration of the contemporary relevance of newspapers. The event emphasizes the enduring role of newspapers in fostering informed decision-making, citizen empowerment, and the sustenance of India's democracy.

### Martyrs Day Or Shaheed Diwas 2024

- India commemorates **Martyrs' Day**, also known as **Shaheed Diwas, on January 30th** each year. This day holds a dual significance as it marks the assassination of **Mahatma Gandhi, the "Father of the Nation,"** and also serves to honour all the brave souls who sacrificed their lives for the country's freedom and sovereignty.



Martyrs' Day, also referred to as Mahatma Gandhi's Punyatithi, is marked by various activities across the country. Prayer meetings and homage ceremonies are organized at Gandhi's memorials and statues of other freedom fighters. Government officials, political leaders, and citizens participate in these events to pay their respects.