



Daily Current Affairs

6th Jan 2026



BANKING, FINANCE & BUSINESS

ICICI Bank Introduces Capital Gains Account Scheme Effective 1 January 2026

- **ICICI Bank Limited** launched the **Capital Gains Account Scheme (CGAS)**, 1988 under the **Income Tax (IT) Act, 1961**, effective from **1 January 2026**, to help taxpayers **deposit un-invested long-term capital gains** and **claim tax exemptions**.



Key Highlights :

- Under **CGAS**, **long-term capital gains or sale proceeds from specified assets** can be **deposited before the Income Tax Return (ITR) due date** to remain eligible for **capital gains tax exemption**.
- The deposited funds can be **parked for up to three years**, during which they **earn interest** at rates **similar to savings accounts or term deposits**, depending on the account type.
- The proceeds can be **reinvested in residential or commercial property, agricultural land, or new capital assets of industrial undertakings** located in **non-urban areas or Special Economic Zones (SEZs)**, as per the applicable account category.
- **Withdrawals** from the CGAS account are allowed **only with proof of utilization**, with the **first withdrawal through Form C**, subsequent withdrawals through **Form D**, and **any unutilized balance after three years becoming taxable**.
- **Type A Account** under CGAS functions as a **savings account**, allows **flexible withdrawals only for approved reinvestment purposes**, and **does not provide cheque book or debit card facilities**.
- **Type B Account** is a **fixed-tenure term deposit (FD)** available in **cumulative and non-cumulative options**, requires a **minimum deposit of ₹10,000**, and offers **interest rates comparable to regular fixed deposits**.
- The scheme is currently available to **resident individuals and Hindu Undivided Families (HUFs)**, with plans to extend access to **Non-Resident Indians (NRIs)** and **non-individual entities** in the future.
- **CGAS accounts** can be **opened at ICICI Bank branches across India, excluding rural branches**, in accordance with **CGAS guidelines**.
- Several other banks, including **HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Yes Bank**, and others, are also **authorised to offer CGAS services** at their **non-rural branches**.

About ICICI Bank Limited :

- **Incorporated : 1994**
- **Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra**
- **Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) : Sandeep Bakhshi**

Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority Approves Key Policy Reforms to Boost Governance and Growth of National Pension System

- The **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)** approved **major policy reforms** to **strengthen governance, increase competition, and ensure sustainable growth** of the **National Pension System (NPS)**.
- The **reforms** will be implemented in **phases** and aim to **expand NPS coverage** across **corporate, retail, and gig-economy workers**, while **protecting subscriber interests**.

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- **Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs)** will now be allowed to **independently sponsor and manage Pension Funds**, subject to **eligibility criteria** such as **net worth, market capitalisation, and prudential norms aligned with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) guidelines**.
- **PFRDA** appointed three new Trustees to the Board of NPS Trust:
- **Dinesh Kumar Khara**, former **Chairman of State Bank of India**, designated **Chairperson of the Board**.
- **Swati Anil Kulkarni**, former **Executive Vice President of UTI AMC**.
- **Arvind Gupta**, **Co-Founder and Head of Digital India Foundation** and **Member of the National Venture Capital Investment Committee under SIDBI's Fund of Funds Scheme**.
- A revised **Investment Management Fee (IMF)** structure will be applied from **1 April 2026**, with **slab-based rates for non-government subscribers**:
- **Up to ₹25,000 crore AUM: 0.12%**
- **₹25,000–50,000 crore AUM: 0.08%**
- **₹50,000–1,50,000 crore AUM: 0.06%**
- **Above ₹1,50,000 crore AUM: 0.04%**
- The **Annual Regulatory Fee (ARF)** remains **0.015% of AUM**, with **0.0025%** earmarked for the **Association of NPS Intermediaries (ANI)** to support outreach and financial literacy, enhancing **long-term retirement security**.
- Currently, there are **10 pension funds operating under NPS**, with assets under management (AUM) of about **Rs 16 lakh crore as of 30 November 2025**.

PFRDA allows banks to set up pension funds to manage NPS

Press Trust of India
New Delhi, January 5

A pension fund is an intermediary responsible for receiving contributions, accumulating them, and making payments to subscribers as specified by regulations.

India's home-grown Unified Payments Interface (UPI) platform registered a new all-time-high transaction volume of 21.63 billion in December 2025, according to data from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

UPI transactions amounting to ₹27.97 lakh crore were registered last month. Transaction volumes grew 29 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) in December and transaction value rose 20 per cent. On average, 698 million UPI transactions were registered on a daily basis by

only well-capitalised and systemically robust banks are permitted to sponsor Pension Funds. The detailed criteria will be notified separately and will apply to both new and existing Pension Funds. PFRDA and ANI will continue to monitor the regulatory compliance of the pension funds and will also ensure that the subscribers and stakeholders across the ecosystem are well-informed and equipped to manage their investments.

The revised slab-based IMF structure will be applied to subscribers under the Multiple Scheme Framework (MSF), with MSF corpus being created quarterly. The MSF of 0.001 per cent on the pension fund's PFRDA investment charge. To regulate the subscribers and stakeholders across a more competitive, well-governed and resilient NPS ecosystem, leading to improved long-term retirement outcomes.

About PFRDA :

- Established : **2003**
- It is a **regulatory body** under the **Government of India** tasked with promoting **old-age income security** by regulating and developing **pension funds**, including the **National Pension System (NPS)** and **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)**.
- **Chairman : Shri Sivasubramanian Ramann**

India's Unified Payments Interface Records Record 21.63 Billion Transactions in December 2025: National Payments Corporation of India

- **India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** recorded an **all-time high of 21.63 billion transactions in December 2025**, according to **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** data.
- The **total transaction value in December 2025** stood at **₹27.97 lakh crore**, compared to **20.47 billion transactions worth ₹26.32 lakh crore in November 2025**, showing **month-on-month growth**.
- On average, about **698 million UPI transactions were processed daily** during **December**, indicating **deep penetration of digital payments in India**.
- For the **calendar year 2025**, UPI handled around **228 billion transactions worth nearly ₹300 lakh crore**, up from **172 billion transactions worth ₹246.82 lakh crore in 2024**, reflecting **rapid growth in digital financial adoption**.

UPI volumes rise to a record 22 b in Dec, touch ₹28 lakh crore

GREAT LEAP. ₹300 lakh cr transactions registered in CY25 against ₹247 lakh cr in CY24

Our Bureau
New Delhi

India's home-grown Unified Payments Interface (UPI) platform registered a new all-time-high transaction volume of 21.63 billion in December 2025, according to data from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

UPI transactions amounting to ₹27.97 lakh crore were registered last month. Transaction volumes grew 29 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) in December and transaction value rose 20 per cent. On average, 698 million UPI transactions were registered on a daily basis by

Monthly volume

Month	Transaction count (bn)	y-o-y growth (%)	Transaction amount (₹ lakh cr)	y-o-y growth (%)
October	20.70	25	27.28	16
November	20.47	32	26.32	22
December	21.63	29	27.97	20

On an average, 698 million UPI transactions were registered on a daily basis in December

lakh crore, were registered by the NPCI. Overall, around 228 billion transactions, amounting to nearly ₹300 lakh crore, were registered in calendar year 2025, higher than the 172 billion transactions, amounting to 246.82 lakh crore, registered in 2024.

AGENTIC PAYMENTS
"As the ecosystem matures, the next phase of growth will

be driven by new payment behaviours such as conversational and agentic payments, biometric authentication and intelligent cross-border flows that are designed around user intent," said Akash Sinha, CEO & Co-founder of Cashfree Payments.

"Strengthening recurring payment rails is a critical part of this evolution, and as an ecosystem partner working closely with Indian businesses, we see NPCI's push to enhance UPI Autopay through a dedicated mandate management portal as a timely step in improving transparency, control and trust for users and merchants alike," he added.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Union Minister Piyush Goyal Announces Zero-Duty on All Australian Tariff Lines for Indian Exports from 1 January 2026

- Union Minister Piyush Goyal announced that **100% of Australian tariff lines** will become **zero-duty** for Indian exports from **1 January 2026**, providing a major boost to **India's export competitiveness**.
- The move is expected to create **new market opportunities** for **labour-intensive sectors**, significantly benefiting **Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs), farmers, and workers**.
- The announcement coincided with the **third anniversary of the India–Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA)**, which came into force on **29 December 2022**.
- Over the past **three years, ECTA** has contributed to **sustained export growth, enhanced market access, and stronger supply-chain resilience**, supporting **Indian exporters, MSMEs, farmers, and workers**.
- As a result of improved trade ties, **India's exports to Australia increased by 8% in 2024–25**, helping to **improve India's trade balance**, making the development important for **economy, trade, and current affairs examinations**.

Australia to remove tariffs on Indian exports from Jan. 1

The Hindu Bureau
NEW DELHI

Australia will provide duty-free access to all Indian exports from January 1, 2026 under the Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA) between the two countries, Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal said. The Minister was commenting on the third anniversary of the deal, which came into effect on December 29, 2022.



Piyush Goyal

"From 1 January 2026, 100% of Australian tariff lines will be zero-duty for Indian exports," Mr. Goyal shared on X.

"Over the past three years, the Agreement has delivered sustained export growth, deeper market access, and stronger supply-chain resilience, benefiting Indian exporters, MSMEs,

farmers, and workers alike."

The ECTA was an 'early harvest' deal, covering a few of the trade-related issues between the two countries, with both sides currently engaged in negotiations for a Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA) that will be broader and deeper in scope.

Indian Oil Corporation Sources First Crude Oil Cargo from Colombia to Reduce Dependence on Russian Supplies

- Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) purchased its **first-ever crude oil cargo from Colombia** under an **optional supply agreement with Ecopetrol**, marking a strategic move to **diversify crude oil imports away from Russia**.
- The cargo consists of **2 million barrels of Colombian Castilla crude**, with **delivery scheduled for late February**, highlighting India's efforts to **expand sourcing from South America**.
- The decision comes amid **disruptions in Russian oil supplies** caused by **United States (US) and European Union (EU) sanctions**, prompting **Indian refiners** to seek **alternative crude suppliers**.
- As a result of this shift, **India's imports of Russian crude oil** are expected to **decline to a three-year low of around 1.2 million barrels per day (bpd) in December**, compared to **1.84 million bpd in November**.
- The **IOC–Ecopetrol supply deal**, originally **signed in late 2021 and renewed annually**, has been **sparingly used**, as **South American crude** is generally **less price-competitive** than **Russian and Middle Eastern crude grades**, making this purchase significant for **energy security and diversification**.

IOC buys first Colombian oil under Ecopetrol deal

New Delhi: Indian Oil Corp purchased its first Colombian oil under an optional supply deal with State oil company Ecopetrol, two people familiar with the matter said, as India's top refiner seeks to diversify from Russian oil. Indian refiners are scouting for crude as tighter US and European Union sanctions on Moscow's producers and vessels are disrupting Russian oil imports. IOC has purchased 2 million barrels of Colombian Castilla crude for delivery in late February, the sources said. REUTERS

NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

Union Home Minister Amit Shah Inaugurates Development Projects in Andaman and Nicobar Islands

- Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah inaugurated and laid the **foundation stone of multiple development projects** of the **Andaman and Nicobar Administration** at **Sri Vijaya Puram**.

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- The event was attended by **Shri Nityanand Rai, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs; Shri Bandi Sanjay Kumar; Admiral D. K. Joshi (Retd.), Lieutenant Governor of Andaman and Nicobar Islands; Shri Govind Mohan, Union Home Secretary;** and other dignitaries.
- Shri Amit Shah also inaugurated an **exhibition on the three new criminal laws at Sri Vijaya Puram.**
- He recalled that **Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose** was the first to **hoist the Tricolour** in free India at this place and noted that **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** renamed islands as **Shaheed Dweep and Swaraj Dweep** in his honour.
- On the occasion, **nine development projects were inaugurated and foundation stones for two projects were laid**, amounting to **₹373 crore** in a single day.
- Major projects include an **Integrated Command and Control Centre worth ₹229 crore, Phase-I of a District Hospital costing ₹33 crore, a Forensic Science Laboratory, and six other schemes worth ₹50 crore.**
- Development is underway across sectors such as **tourism, environment, fisheries, agriculture, Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, and clean energy.**
- The upcoming **Great Nicobar Project** is expected to transform the region into a **global trade hub and strategic security centre**, and a major **international tourism destination** in the coming decade.
- The islands are being upgraded to **International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards for scuba diving and adventure water sports.**
- Under the **'Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam'** campaign, **2.4 million trees** have been planted, highlighting environmental commitment.
- 98% household waste collection** by the **Sri Vijaya Puram Municipal Council** was cited as a major success under the **Swachh Bharat Mission.**

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Shri Amit Shah today inaugurated and laid the foundation stone for various development projects worth ₹373 crore of the Andaman and Nicobar UT Government in Sri Vijaya Puram

The memorial of Veer Savarkar and the eternal flame established in the Cellular Jail are sending a message to the entire world about the struggle, sacrifice, and martyrdom of the freedom fighters

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi ji honored Netaji by naming the islands of Andaman and Nicobar as 'Shaheed' and 'Swaraj'

Andaman and Nicobar, where freedom fighters transformed suffering into strength and torture into a resolve for independence, is a pilgrimage site for every Indian

Modi government is making Andaman and Nicobar an international scuba diving destination

The Great Nicobar project will make this island a global cargo hub, a tourism center and a very important pillar of India's strategic security

Andaman and Nicobar Islands are becoming a center of our sovereignty, maritime power and economic activities

RECENT NEWS

- Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah inaugurated the newly constructed Bio-CNG and Fertilizer Plant by Banas Dairy and laid the foundation stone for a 150-ton powder plant in Vav-Tharad district, Gujarat.

Vice President Inaugurates 9th Siddha Day Celebrations in Chennai

- Vice President of India Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan** inaugurated the **9th Siddha Day celebrations at Kalaivanar Arangam, Chennai, Tamil Nadu.**
- He emphasized **Siddha medicine as a comprehensive, preventive, holistic, and sustainable healthcare system**, highlighting its relevance in the **contemporary world.**
- The event was attended by **Shri Prataprao Jadhav, Minister of State (Independent Charge), Ministry of Ayush and Minister of State, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Shri Ma. Subramanian, Minister for Health, Medical Education and Family Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu,** senior officials, and heads of Siddha institutions.
- The Government reaffirmed its commitment to making Siddha **evidence-based, globally accepted, and widely accessible**, while preserving its **classical integrity.**

Vice President of India inaugurates 9th Siddha Day celebrations in Chennai

"Siddha is a holistic, preventive and sustainable healthcare system for the modern world," says Vice President of India Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan

"India's traditional systems of medicine are living traditions, not relics of the past", Vice President of India

"Siddha's holistic approach integrating body, mind and nature aligns perfectly with modern healthcare needs," says Union Ayush Minister Shri Prataprao Jadhav

Five eminent personalities honoured for extraordinary contributions to Siddha system of medicine

Theme "Siddha for Global Health" underscores India's leadership in traditional medicine

- On the occasion, **five eminent personalities** were honoured for their outstanding contributions to Siddha medicine: **Dr. B. Michael Jeyaraj, Dr. T. Kannan Rajaram, Late Dr. I. Sornamariammal, Dr. Mohana Raj, and Prof. Dr. V. Banumathi.**
- Their contributions span **research, manuscript preservation, education, leadership, and grassroots development** of Siddha medicine.
- The event was themed **“Siddha for Global Health”** and witnessed participation from Siddha practitioners, scientists, academicians, scholars, and students nationwide.
- The celebrations reaffirmed the **Ministry of Ayush’s commitment** to promoting Siddha through **research, education, innovation, and global engagement**, positioning it as an integral part of **national and international health systems.**

About Tamil Nadu:

- **Capital:** Chennai
- **Chief Minister:** M. K. Stalin
- **Governor:** R. N. Ravi
- **National Parks:** Mudumalai National Park, Mukurthi National Park, Gulf of Mannar Marine National Park, Indira Gandhi (Anamalai) National Park, Guindy National Park
- **Wildlife Sanctuaries:** Vedanthangal Bird Sanctuary, Vettangudi Bird Sanctuary, Kalakad Wildlife Sanctuary, Sathyamangalam Wildlife Sanctuary, Vallanadu Wildlife Sanctuary, Megamalai Wildlife Sanctuary, Point Calimere Wildlife Sanctuary

Prime Minister to Inaugurate 72nd National Volleyball Tournament in Varanasi

- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** will inaugurate the **72nd National Volleyball Tournament** through **video conferencing.**
- The **inaugural ceremony** will be held at **Dr. Sampooranand Sports Stadium, Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.**
- The **tournament will be conducted from 4th to 11th January 2026.**
- More than **1,000 players** will participate in the tournament.
- A total of **58 teams** representing **various States and institutions across India** will compete in the event.
- The tournament is expected to display **high standards of competition, sportsmanship, and emerging talent** in **Indian volleyball.**
- Hosting the **72nd National Volleyball Tournament** in **Varanasi** highlights the increasing focus on **sports infrastructure development** and **promotion of athletics** in the city.
- The event further strengthens **Varanasi’s position as a venue for major national-level sporting and cultural events**, in line with its growing role in hosting significant national initiatives.

PM to inaugurate 72nd National Volleyball Tournament in Varanasi on 4th January

Over 1,000 players to compete as part of 58 teams representing various states and institutions

Posted On: 03 JAN 2026 2:41PM by PIB Delhi

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 72nd National Volleyball Tournament on 4th January, 2026 at 12 noon via video conferencing. The inaugural ceremony will be held at Dr. Sampooranand Sports Stadium, Varanasi.

The tournament, being held from 4th to 11th January, will witness participation from across India, with over 1,000 players competing as part of 58 teams representing various states and institutions. The tournament is expected to showcase high standards of competition, sportsmanship, and talent in Indian volleyball.

Hosting the 72nd National Volleyball Tournament in Varanasi underscores the growing emphasis on strengthening sports infrastructure and promoting athletic development in the city. It also further enhances the city’s profile as a hub for major national events, aligning with its expanding role in hosting significant cultural and sporting initiatives.

About Uttar Pradesh:

- **Chief Minister:** Yogi Adityanath
- **Governor:** Anandiben Patel
- **Capital:** Lucknow
- **National Parks:** Dudhwa National Park
- **Wildlife Sanctuaries:** Katarniaghat Wildlife Sanctuary, Kaimoor Wildlife Sanctuary, Nawabganj Bird Sanctuary (Shahid Chandra Shekhar Azad Bird Sanctuary), Hastinapur Wildlife Sanctuary, Sur Sarovar Bird Sanctuary, Chandraprabha Wildlife Sanctuary, Mahavir Swami Wildlife Sanctuary, Ranipur Wildlife

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Union Minister to Inaugurate Smart Green Aquaculture Farm and RAS Facility in Hyderabad

- Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh (Lalan Singh), Union Minister for the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and the Ministry of Panchayati Raj, will inaugurate the Smart Green Aquaculture Farm and Research Institute along with a state-of-the-art Recirculatory Aquaculture System (RAS) Facility.**
- The inauguration will take place in **Hyderabad, Telangana**, following the **General Body Meeting**.
- Smart Green Aquaculture Limited** has established **India's first commercial-scale tropical RAS-based Rainbow Trout Aquaculture Farm and Research Institute** at **Kandukur Mandal, Ranga Reddy District, Telangana**.
- The project demonstrates that **high-value cold-water species such as Rainbow Trout** can be farmed **year-round in tropical climates** using **precision engineering, controlled biological systems, and advanced water recirculation technologies**.
- This development challenges the traditional belief that premium aquaculture species are limited to specific climatic zones and establishes **technology rather than climate** as the key determinant of aquaculture viability.
- The facility will function as a **live training and demonstration platform**, providing **hands-on exposure** to youth in **advanced aquaculture systems, automation, and biosecurity**, thereby strengthening **human capital in the fisheries sector**.
- The **Government of India** has undertaken several initiatives for the **holistic development of the fisheries and aquaculture sector**, with a significant increase in **central government investments** since **2015**.
- Cumulative investments worth **₹38,572 crore** have been **approved or announced** across various fisheries and aquaculture schemes since 2015.
- Cold water fisheries** are emerging as a **high-growth and high-potential segment**, driven by **rising demand for premium species**, growing **domestic and export markets**, and increased adoption of **sustainable aquaculture technologies**.
- Trout farming** is a **high-value and strategically important segment** of Indian aquaculture, traditionally concentrated in **Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh, Jammu and Kashmir, Arunachal Pradesh, and Sikkim**, utilizing **cold, well-oxygenated snow-fed water resources**.
- The **Department of Fisheries** has strengthened trout production through the establishment of **rainbow trout hatcheries**, leading to enhanced production and **local employment generation**.
- With new hatcheries and advanced techniques, an **annual production of 14 lakh trout seeds** has been achieved.
- Uttarakhand** has signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** with the **Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)** under the **Vibrant Village Scheme** for the supply of trout fish.
- The **Government of India** is promoting aquaculture as a **strategic growth engine** through **technology adoption, institutional reforms, species diversification, capacity building, and infrastructure development**, including modern systems such as **RAS**.

Union Minister Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh to Inaugurate the Smart Green Aquaculture Farm and Research Institute and state-of-the-art Re-circulatory Aquaculture System (RAS) Facility in Telangana

Smart Green Aquaculture pioneers the first ever successful farming of rainbow trout, a High Value cold-water species under Hyderabad's climatic conditions

Posted On: 04 JAN 2026 10:17AM by PIB Delhi

The Union Minister, Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying and Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh alias Lalan Singh will inaugurate the Smart Green Aquaculture Farm and Research Institute and state-of-the-art Recirculatory Aquaculture System (RAS) Facility following the General body meeting on 28 January 2026 in Hyderabad, Telangana.

Smart Green Aquaculture Limited has established India's first commercial-scale tropical Recirculating Aquaculture System (RAS)-based Rainbow Trout Aquaculture Farm & Research Institute, marking a watershed moment in the evolution of Indian aquaculture. Situated at Kandukur Mandal in Ranga Reddy District, Telangana conclusively demonstrates that high-value cold-water species such as Rainbow Trout can be farmed year-round in tropical climates, using precision engineering, controlled biological systems, and advanced water recirculation technologies. This achievement overcomes long-standing assumptions that premium aquaculture species are geographically constrained to specific climatic zones, and it establishes technology not climate as the primary determinant of aquaculture viability.

- These measures aim to shift the sector from **subsistence-based practices** to a **technology-driven, market-oriented ecosystem**, enhancing **productivity, farmer incomes, and sustainability**.
- The **Department of Fisheries, Government of India**, has also notified the development of **cold water fisheries clusters** in **Jammu and Kashmir, Ladakh, Uttarakhand, and Himachal Pradesh**.

About Telangana:

- Capital: Hyderabad
- Governor: Jishnu Dev Varma
- Chief Minister: Anumula Revanth Reddy
- National Parks: Kasu Brahmananda Reddy National Park, Mrugavani National Park, Mahavir Harina Vanasthali National Park
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Kawal Wildlife Sanctuary, Pocharam Wildlife Sanctuary, Manjira Wildlife Sanctuary

Rajasthan Regional AI Impact Conference 2026 to be Held in Jaipur

- As part of India's preparatory engagements for the **India AI Impact Summit 2026**, the **Rajasthan Regional AI Impact Conference 2026** will be held in **Jaipur, Rajasthan**.
- The Conference will act as a **regional platform** to deliberate on how **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** can support **governance reforms, economic growth, innovation, and inclusive development**.
- Senior leadership from the **Government of India** and the **Government of Rajasthan** will participate, including **Shri Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India**.
- Other prominent participants include **Shri Jitin Prasada, Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology and Commerce and Industry; Shri Bhajan Lal Sharma, Chief Minister of Rajasthan; and Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore, Cabinet Minister for Information Technology and Communication, Government of Rajasthan**, among others.
- The Conference will witness **major announcements** and the signing of **Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs)** aimed at **strengthening Rajasthan's Artificial Intelligence ecosystem**, promoting **innovation**, and accelerating **AI adoption** across **priority sectors**.
- The agenda includes **high-level sessions** on **AI for Public Service Delivery and Governance, Ethical and Responsible AI, AI and the Future of Employment and Skills**, and the growth of **Rajasthan's AI startup and innovation ecosystem**.
- Discussions will also cover **advanced applications** such as **Digital Twins, AI-driven infrastructure planning**, and strategic deliberations on whether **AI can enable India to move from an outsourcing-based model to global intellectual property creation**.
- Experts will share perspectives on **Global, National, and Regional AI strategies**, with an **academic and research perspective** provided by **Indian Institute of Technology Jodhpur (IIT Jodhpur)**, highlighting the role of institutions in developing **locally grounded and globally competitive AI solutions**.
- The Conference is being held in conjunction with **Rajasthan DigiFest x TiE Global Summit 2026**, reflecting **Rajasthan's ambition to emerge as a hub for digital innovation and emerging technologies**.

Rajasthan to Host Regional AI Impact Conference 2026 on January 6, 2026

Printed On: 04 JAN 2026 8:22PM by PIB Delhi

As part of India's build-up to the India AI Impact Summit 2026, the Rajasthan Regional AI Impact Conference 2026 will be held on January 6, 2026, in Jaipur. The Conference will serve as a key regional platform to explore how Artificial Intelligence can drive governance reforms, economic growth, innovation, and inclusive development.

The Conference will witness the participation of senior leadership from the Government of India and the Government of Rajasthan, including Shri. Ashwini Vaishnaw, Minister for Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, Shri. Jitin Prasada, Minister of State for Electronics and Information Technology and Commerce and Industry, Shri. Bhajan Lal Sharma, Chief Minister of Rajasthan, and Col. Rajyavardhan Rathore, Cabinet Minister for IT & Communication, Government of Rajasthan among others.

The Rajasthan Regional AI Impact Conference will feature key announcements and the signing of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) aimed at strengthening the state's AI ecosystem, fostering innovation, and accelerating the adoption of AI across priority sectors.

The Conference agenda will include high-level sessions on AI for Public Service Delivery and Governance, Ethical and Responsible AI, AI and the Future of Employment and Skills, and the emergence of Rajasthan's AI startup and innovation ecosystem. Discussions will also examine advanced applications such as Digital Twins and AI-led infrastructure planning, and strategic questions around whether AI can enable India to transition from an outsourcing-led model to world-class intellectual property creation.

In addition, experts will share perspectives on Global AI, National AI and Regional AI strategies, with a dedicated academic and research lens brought in by IIT Jodhpur, highlighting the role of institutions in shaping locally grounded yet globally relevant AI solutions.

- The **Rajasthan Regional AI Impact Conference 2026** forms part of a **series of regional consultations** feeding into the **India AI Impact Summit 2026**, reinforcing India's approach of building **global AI leadership** through **regional innovation, practical implementation, and real-world impact**.

About Rajasthan:

- Capital: Jaipur
- Governor: Haribhau Bagade
- Chief Minister: Bajan Lal Sharma
- National Parks: Ranthambhore National Park, Sariska Tiger Reserve, Keoladeo National Park (Bharatpur Bird Sanctuary), Desert National Park
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Kumbhalgarh Wildlife Sanctuary, Darrah Wildlife Sanctuary, Ranthambore Wildlife Sanctuary, Bassi Wildlife Sanctuary

IndiaAI to Convene Human Capital Working Group Meeting at IIT Guwahati

- **IndiaAI**, under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India**, in collaboration with the **Government of Assam and Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT Guwahati)**, will organize the **Human Capital Working Group Meeting** at the **IIT Guwahati campus**.
- The **Human Capital Working Group** is chaired by **Prof. T. G. Sitharam, Chair of the Human Capital Working Group and former Chairman of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE), Government of India**.
- The **two-day meeting** will bring together **senior policymakers, academic leaders, industry experts, and practitioners** to deliberate on the **future of education, skilling, and workforce readiness** in the era of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**.
- Key participants include **Shri Syedain Abbasi, IAS, Special Chief Secretary, Government of Assam; Shri K. S. Gopinath Narayan, IAAS, Principal Secretary (Information Technology), Government of Assam; and Shri Ashwani Kumar, IAS, Director, Information Technology Department, Government of Assam**.
- Academic and institutional representatives include **Prof. Jalihal, Director, IIT Guwahati; Prof. Gautam Barua, Former Director, IIT Guwahati; and Smt. Shikha Dahiya, Joint Director, IndiaAI, MeitY**, along with other **government officials, academicians, and dignitaries**.
- The **inaugural session** will feature a **Summit Address** by **Prof. T. G. Sitharam**, outlining the **Human Capital vision** under the **India AI Impact Summit framework**.
- The meeting is anchored in the objective of treating **AI as a public utility** and will focus on **inclusive, scalable, and responsible approaches to AI-led workforce transition**.
- The agenda includes **expert panel discussions** on **Gender-Responsive Strategies for the AI Transition, Redefining Education for the Cognitive Age, Architecture of the National Language Translation Mission, Building an Inclusive and Empowered India, and Reverse Engineering Approach to AI Education**.
- The **Guwahati meeting** will act as a **regional and thematic precursor** to the **India AI Impact Summit 2026**, scheduled from **15th to 20th February 2026** in **New Delhi**.

Guwahati to Host Human Capital Working Group Meeting Ahead of India AI Impact Summit 2026

Posted On: 04 JAN 2026 6:24PM by PIB Delhi

IndiaAI, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, in collaboration with the Government of Assam, and IIT Guwahati, will convene the Human Capital Working Group Meeting on January 5-6, 2026, at IIT Guwahati campus. The Working Group is chaired by Prof. T. G. Sitharam, Chair of the Human Capital Working Group and former Chairman, AICTE, Government of India. The two-day meeting will bring together senior policymakers, academic leaders, industry experts, and practitioners to deliberate on the future of education, skilling, and workforce readiness in the era of Artificial Intelligence.

The event will see participation from Shri Syedain Abbasi, IAS, Special Chief Secretary, Government of Assam, Shri K. S. Gopinath Narayan, IAAS, Principal Secretary (IT), Government of Assam, Shri Ashwani Kumar, IAS, Director IT Dept, Government of Assam, Prof. Jalihal, Director IIT Guwahati, Prof. Gautam Barua, Former Director IIT Guwahati, Smt. Shikha Dahiya, Joint Director, IndiaAI, MeitY, and other government officials, academicians and dignitaries. The inaugural session will also feature a Summit Address by Prof. T. G. Sitharam, outlining the Human Capital vision under the India AI Impact Summit framework.

- Outcomes of the **Human Capital Working Group Meeting** are expected to **directly inform the deliberations** of the **India AI Impact Summit 2026**, reinforcing India's commitment to building a **resilient, future-ready, and AI-empowered workforce**.

About Assam:

- Chief Minister: Himanta Biswa Sarma
- Governor: Lakshman Prasad Acharya
- Capital: Dispur
- National Parks: Kaziranga National Park, Manas National Park, Dibru-Saikhowa National Park
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Pobitora Wildlife Sanctuary, Orang National Park, Bura-Chapori Wildlife Sanctuary, Nameri Wildlife Sanctuary

MOUS AND AGREEMENT

NTPC Signs MoA with Gujarat Cancer & Research Institute to Upgrade Radiotherapy Services

- **NTPC Limited – Western Region–I Headquarters, Mumbai** signed a **Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)** with the **Gujarat Cancer & Research Institute (GCRI)** for the **upgradation of radiotherapy services**.
- Under this **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR)** initiative, **NTPC** has sanctioned **₹23.16 crore** for upgrading radiotherapy facilities at the **Siddhpur Satellite Centre of GCRI, Ahmedabad, Gujarat**.
- The financial support will be utilized for the **procurement and installation of a high-energy Linear Accelerator (LINAC)**.
- The installation of the **LINAC** will significantly enhance **advanced cancer treatment capabilities** and improve **access to quality radiotherapy services** for patients in the region.
- The MoA was exchanged between **Dr. Shashank Pandya, Director, GCRI**, and **Shri E. Satya Phani Kumar, Regional Executive Director (West–I), NTPC**, in the presence of senior officials from both organisations.
- The signing ceremony was attended by **Shri Akhaya Kumar Patra, General Manager (Operation Services)**; **Shri A. P. Samal, Chief Executive Officer (NTPC Nuclear Power Utility Limited)** and **Chief General Manager (Nuclear)**; and **Smt. Vandana Chaturvedi, Regional Head (Human Resources), West–I**, along with other senior officials of **NTPC Western Region–I** and members of the **CSR team**.
- Senior representatives from **GCRI** were also present at the ceremony.
- The initiative reinforces NTPC's commitment to inclusive development and its continued focus on strengthening critical healthcare infrastructure through impact-driven CSR interventions.



APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Justice Mahesh Sharadchandra Sonak Named Chief Justice of Jharkhand High Court

- The **Department of Justice (DoJ)** under the **Ministry of Law and Justice (MoL&J)** announced that the **President of India, Droupadi Murmu**, approved the appointment of **Justice Mahesh Sharadchandra Sonak**, a **Judge of the Bombay High Court (HC)**, as the **Chief Justice (CJ)** of the **Jharkhand High Court**, under **Article 217(1) of the Constitution of India (CoI)**, in **consultation with the Chief Justice of India (CJI)**.

- He will **assume office after the retirement** of the incumbent **Chief Justice Justice Tarlok Singh Chauhan** on **8 January 2026**.
- **Justice Mahesh Sharadchandra Sonak** was enrolled as an **Advocate** with the **Bar Council of Maharashtra & Goa** in **October 1988**.
- He practiced at the **Panaji Bench of the High Court of Judicature at Bombay**, handling cases related to **civil and constitutional law, labour and service law, environmental law, commercial and tax laws, company law, and public interest litigations**.
- He served as **Additional Standing Counsel for the Central Government** and as **Special Counsel for the State Government**.
- He was appointed as an **Additional Judge of the Bombay High Court** in **June 2013**.
- His **retirement is scheduled for 27 November 2026**, making this appointment relevant for **current affairs and judiciary-related competitive examinations**.



Ministry of Home Affairs Assigns Rakesh Aggarwal Additional Charge as Director General of National Investigation Agency

- The **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** assigned **Rakesh Aggarwal**, a **1994-batch Indian Police Service (IPS) officer** from the **Himachal Pradesh cadre**, the **additional charge of Director General (DG) of the National Investigation Agency (NIA)** following the **early repatriation of Sadanand Vasant Date**.
- **Rakesh Aggarwal**, who is currently serving as **Special DG of the NIA**, will act as the **interim chief** to ensure **continuity and stability** in **India's premier counter-terrorism agency**, while overseeing **ongoing sensitive investigations**.
- The **MHA order** states that **Aggarwal** will hold the **additional charge of NIA DG until a regular DG is appointed or until further orders**, whichever is earlier.
- **Aggarwal** was appointed as **Special Director General of the NIA** on **29 September 2025**, on an **in-situ basis**, by **temporarily upgrading his Additional Director General (ADG) post** for a **two-year tenure or until further orders**.
- The decision followed the approval of the **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)** for the **premature repatriation of Sadanand Date**, a **1990-batch Maharashtra cadre IPS officer**, to his **parent cadre with immediate effect**.
- **Sadanand Date** is expected to assume charge as the **Director General of Police (DGP) of Maharashtra**, as the incumbent **1988-batch IPS officer Rashmi Shukla** is scheduled to **complete her two-year fixed tenure on 31 December 2025**.



About NIA :

- **Formed : 2009**
- **Headquarters : New Delhi, India**

RBL Bank Appoints Jaideep Iyer as Executive Director and Deepak Ruiya as Interim CFO

- **RBL Bank** announced **key senior management changes**, appointing **Jaideep Iyer** as **Executive Director** and **Deepak Ruiya** as **interim Chief Financial Officer (CFO)** as part of a **planned leadership transition**.
- As per a **stock exchange filing**, **Jaideep Iyer**, currently **Head of Strategy**, will assume charge as **Executive Director** for a **three-year term** starting **21 February 2026**.
- **Jaideep Iyer** will **succeed Rajeev Ahuja**, who is scheduled to **retire on 20 February 2026**.
- Earlier, **Iyer** served as **interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** of **RBL Bank** during the **2021–2022 leadership transition period**.
- His appointment highlights the **Board’s focus on internal succession planning, continuity, and stability** in top management.
- **Deepak Ruiya** has been appointed as **interim CFO with immediate effect** and will continue in the role **until a regular CFO is appointed**, ensuring **uninterrupted financial oversight**.
- These appointments come amid **broader management changes**, including the **recent resignation of RBL Bank’s digital banking head**.



About RBL Bank (Ratnakar Bank Limited):

- Founded: 1943
- Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
- MD & CEO: R Subramaniakumar
- Tagline: "Apno Ka Bank"

DEFENCE NEWS

Indian Army Inaugurates ‘Radio Sangam’ Community Radio Station in Rajouri, Jammu & Kashmir

- The **Indian Army (IA)**, in collaboration with the **civil administration** and **local residents**, launched “**Radio Sangam**”, a **Community Radio Station**, at **Keri village** in **Doongi block, Rajouri district, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K)**, located near the **Line of Control (LoC)**.
- **Radio Sangam** is the **first community radio station established along the LoC**, aimed at **enhancing communication and information outreach for border-area communities**.
- The radio station broadcasts on **88.8 Frequency Modulation (FM)** from **Keri Village**, strengthening **local-level connectivity and awareness**.
- **Radio Sangam** functions as a **trusted source of verified information**, promotes **local culture, music, and entertainment**, and helps **build trust and cooperation** among the **Indian Army, civil administration, and villagers**.
- The station will air **diverse programmes**, including **public awareness campaigns, agriculture and livelihood guidance, local news and updates, cultural shows, and interactive community programs**, making it important for **security, governance, and social development**.



Indian Army Designates 2026 as the Year of Networking and Data Centricity

- The **Indian Army (IA)**, under the leadership of **Chief of the Army Staff (COAS) General Upendra Dwivedi**, declared **2026 as the 'Year of Networking & Data Centricity'**, aligning with the **Indian Army's 2026 vision** to build a **future-ready and technology-driven force**.
- The initiative focuses on **digital integration and enhanced connectivity** to support **real-time decision-making, faster response, and greater combat effectiveness** across the force.
- The **core objective** is to treat **data as a critical operational asset**, improving **situational awareness, speed of command, and battlefield efficiency**.
- It forms part of the **Indian Army's decade-long transformation**, driven by **military reforms, jointness among services, innovation, and self-reliance**.
- Under the **networking component**, seamless **digital connectivity** is being created among **soldiers, command and control centres, sensors, weapon systems, intelligence units, and logistics networks**.
- The **data-centric approach** enables **real-time collection, processing, and sharing of battlefield data**, allowing **simultaneous and precise coordinated actions** across multiple platforms.
- **Indigenisation** is a key pillar, with **indigenous communication systems, battlefield management systems, and secure defence networks** forming the technological backbone of the initiative.
- The declaration builds upon the **2024–25 theme of the 'Year of Technology Absorption'**, by **operationalising and fully integrating previously absorbed technologies** into active military operations, making it highly relevant for **defence and national security examinations**.



SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

SpaceX Successfully Launches Italy's COSMO-SkyMed Second-Generation Earth Observation Satellite

- **SpaceX** launched the **COSMO-SkyMed Second Generation–Flight Model 3 (CSG-FM3)**, an **Earth Observation Satellite (EOS)**, for the **Italian Space Agency (ASI)** and the **Italian Ministry of Defence**, aboard a **Falcon 9** rocket from **Vandenberg Space Force Base, California, USA**.
- The launch marked the **third satellite in the COSMO-SkyMed Second Generation series**, the **first SpaceX mission of 2026**, and the **first orbital rocket launch globally in 2026**.



Key Highlights :

- The **Falcon 9** is a **reusable first-stage launch vehicle** capable of carrying payloads to **Low Earth Orbit (LEO)** and beyond, supporting **commercial, scientific, and government missions**.
- The satellite was **successfully deployed into a sun-synchronous Low Earth Orbit** at an altitude of about **620 kilometres (km)**.
- **CSG-FM3** is part of the **COSMO-SkyMed Second Generation constellation**, developed by **Italy** to enhance **global radar imaging and Earth observation capabilities**.

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- The **COSMO-SkyMed Second Generation system** is a **dual-use constellation**, designed to support **both civilian and defence applications**, operating **24x7 in all weather conditions**.
- Each **Second-Generation COSMO-SkyMed satellite**, weighing about **2,205 kilograms (kg)**, is an **upgraded version** equipped with **advanced Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR)** and **improved imaging performance**.
- The satellite enables **real-time monitoring of natural disasters** such as **floods, earthquakes, landslides, and wildfires**, tracks **glacier movement**, and assesses **forest health, crop conditions, and soil moisture**.
- It provides **high-resolution radar maps** for **cartography, urban planning, land-use analysis, and infrastructure monitoring**, and supports **national security, maritime surveillance, border monitoring, and strategic planning**.
- **COSMO-SkyMed**, managed by the **Italian Space Agency (ASI)** and **Italy's Ministry of Defence**, and **operated by Telespazio**, can capture **high-resolution images day and night, in all weather conditions**.
- The **first-generation COSMO-SkyMed constellation**, consisting of **four satellites launched between 2007 and 2010**, provided **all-weather, day-and-night imaging** for **disaster management, environmental monitoring, agriculture, and defence**, especially over the **Mediterranean region**.

About SpaceX :

- Established : **2002**
- Headquarters : **Texas, USA**
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) : **Elon Musk**

External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar Launches IITM Global to Position IIT Madras as World's First Multinational University

- **Union Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar**, from the **Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)**, launched the **IITM Global Research Foundation** at the **Indian Institute of Technology–Madras (IIT-M)** campus in **Chennai, Tamil Nadu**, highlighting IIT-M's vision to become the **world's first multinational university**.
- The **IITM Global initiative** is designed as a **plug-and-play global framework** to enable **deep-tech innovators, researchers, startups, and industry partners** to access **international markets, capital, and advanced research opportunities**.
- **IITM Global** is structured around **four core pillars**, namely **technology transfer to global markets, joint international research projects, overseas business opportunities for IIT-M startups, and attracting foreign investment into IIT-M's innovation ecosystem**.
- As part of the rollout, **IIT-Madras signed multiple Memoranda of Understandings (MoUs)** with global partners, including **3 MoUs in the United States of America (USA)**, **1 in the United Kingdom (UK)**, **3 in Germany**, **3 in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE)**, **3 in the Asia-Pacific region**, and **6 under the 'India-for-Global' initiative**.
- In the initial phase, **IITM Global centres** will be established in the **USA, Dubai (UAE), Malaysia, and Germany**, with plans for **further global expansion**, making it a key topic for **higher education, innovation, and international collaboration-related examinations**.

External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar launches IITM Global, aimed at making IIT Madras the world's first Multinational University

Posted On: 02 JAN 2026 6:27PM by PIB Chennai



Hon'ble External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar launched 'IITM Global Research Foundation', a landmark international initiative of Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras), in the campus on 02.01.2026. The launch marks a significant milestone in IIT Madras' journey to become the world's first multinational university, positioning the institute as a globally networked hub for education, research, innovation and entrepreneurship. Dr. S. Jaishankar also inaugurated IITM Festival ForRights, which includes the Open House, through which the public is given access to IITM's labs and innovation centres, Showers, the annual Technical Festival and Startup, the annual cultural festival. While Showers 2026 is being held from 2nd to 6th January 2026, Startup 2026 is from 8th to 12th January 2026.

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Abu Dhabi Becomes World's First to Administer ITVISMA Gene Therapy for Spinal Muscular Atrophy

- Yas Clinic – Khalifa City, in collaboration with the **Abu Dhabi Stem Cells Centre (ADSCC)** and **Vertex Pharmaceuticals**, and under the **support and oversight of the Department of Health – Abu Dhabi**, successfully administered the **first gene-therapy injection for hemoglobinopathies in the UAE** using **CASGEVY**, a **CRISPR-Cas9–based gene-editing therapy**.
- **CRISPR/Cas9 gene-editing technology** allows **highly precise modification of disease-causing genes** by targeting and correcting **specific DNA sequences**, marking a major advancement in **genomic medicine**.
- The **CRISPR-Cas9 mechanism** uses **guide RNA** to identify the defective gene, while the **Cas9 enzyme acts as molecular scissors**, cutting DNA at the targeted site to enable **correction of genetic mutations**.



Key Highlights :

- **CASGEVY** is approved for patients aged **12 years and above** suffering from **sickle cell disease with recurrent vaso-occlusive crises** or **transfusion-dependent beta thalassemia**.
- **Sheikh Khalifa Medical City (SKMC), Abu Dhabi**, became the **first hospital in the world** to administer **ITVISMA**, a **one-time gene therapy for spinal muscular atrophy (SMA)**, marking a landmark in **precision medicine and genomics-led healthcare**.
- The administration of **ITVISMA** raises important considerations related to **environmental clearances, ex-post facto approvals, and environmental impact assessments** for advanced medical facilities.
- **SKMC successfully delivered ITVISMA**, potentially setting **global benchmarks for integrating environmental safeguards with advanced healthcare infrastructure**.
- The **ITVISMA treatment** was administered on **28 December 2025**, under strict **medical and environmental protocols**, supervised by the **Department of Health – Abu Dhabi**.
- The **UAE approved ITVISMA on 25 November 2025**, becoming the **second country after the United States** to authorise its **clinical use**, reflecting a balance between **medical innovation and environmental jurisprudence**.
- **ITVISMA**, developed by **Novartis**, directly addresses the **genetic root cause of spinal muscular atrophy (SMA)**, aligning **cutting-edge medical science** with principles of **environmental democracy**.
- The therapy works by **replacing the defective SMN1 gene**, enabling sustained production of the **survival motor neuron (SMN) protein**, while complying with **strict environmental impact assessment guidelines**.
- Unlike earlier SMA treatments, **ITVISMA is a single-dose gene therapy**, approved for patients aged **2 years and above**, including **adults**, expanding access and potentially **reducing long-term environmental and treatment burdens**.

India and Pakistan Conduct Annual Exchange of Nuclear Installations List to Strengthen Strategic Transparency

- **Vice President of India Shri C. P. Radhakrishnan** inaugurated the **9th Siddha Day celebrations** at **Kalaivanar Arangam, Chennai, Tamil Nadu**.
- **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi** will inaugurate the **72nd National Volleyball Tournament** through **video conferencing**
- **Shri Rajiv Ranjan Singh (Lalan Singh), Union Minister** for the **Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying** and the **Ministry of Panchayati Raj**, will inaugurate the **Smart Green Aquaculture Farm and Research Institute** along with a **state-of-the-art Recirculatory Aquaculture System (RAS) Facility**
- As part of India's preparatory engagements for the **India AI Impact Summit 2026**, the **Rajasthan Regional AI Impact Conference 2026** will held in **Jaipur, Rajasthan**
- **IndiaAI**, under the **Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India**, in collaboration with the **Government of Assam** and **Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT Guwahati)**, will organize the **Human Capital Working Group Meeting** at the **IIT Guwahati campus**
- **NTPC Limited – Western Region–I Headquarters, Mumbai** signed a **Memorandum of Agreement (MoA)** with the **Gujarat Cancer & Research Institute (GCRI)** for the **upgradation of radiotherapy services**
- **ICICI Bank Limited** launched the **Capital Gains Account Scheme (CGAS), 1988** under the **Income Tax (IT) Act, 1961**, effective from **1 January 2026**, to help taxpayers **deposit un-invested long-term capital gains** and **claim tax exemptions**.
- The **Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)** approved **major policy reforms** to **strengthen governance, increase competition, and ensure sustainable growth** of the **National Pension System (NPS)**.
- **India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI)** recorded an **all-time high of 21.63 billion transactions** in **December 2025**, according to **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** data.
- **Union Minister Piyush Goyal** announced that **100% of Australian tariff lines** will become **zero-duty for Indian exports** from **1 January 2026**, providing a major boost to **India's export competitiveness**.
- **Indian Oil Corporation (IOC)** purchased its **first-ever crude oil cargo from Colombia** under an **optional supply agreement with Ecopetrol**, marking a strategic move to **diversify crude oil imports away from Russia**.
- The **Department of Justice (DoJ)** under the **Ministry of Law and Justice (MoL&J)** announced that the **President of India, Droupadi Murmu**, approved the appointment of **Justice Mahesh Sharadchandra Sonak**, a **Judge of the Bombay High Court (HC)**, as the **Chief Justice (CJ) of the Jharkhand High Court**, under **Article 217(1) of the Constitution of India (CoI)**, in consultation with the **Chief Justice of India (CJI)**.
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- **India and Pakistan** exchanged the **list of nuclear installations and facilities** through **diplomatic channels** to maintain **strategic transparency and confidence-building**.
- **World Day of War Orphans 2026** is observed annually on **6th January** to highlight the **hardships faced by children orphaned due to wars and conflicts**

