



# Daily Current Affairs

9<sup>th</sup> January 2026



**BANKING, FINANCE & BUSINESS**

**Reserve Bank of India Proposes Banks to Cap Dividend Payouts at 75% of Net Profit**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed to raise the dividend payout cap for banks to 75% of net profit, up from the earlier 40%, subject to conditions.
- Bank boards are required to review asset quality, provisioning gaps, capital projections, and long-term growth plans before declaring dividends.
- The RBI has introduced a graded structure for dividend payment based on banks' Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) capital levels.
- Stronger banks with CET1 above 20% can pay 100% of adjusted net profit, which is calculated as net profit minus net non-performing assets for the dividend payment year, while adhering to the 75% payout limit.
- Systemically important banks such as State Bank of India (SBI), HDFC Bank, and ICICI Bank require CET1 ratios of 20.8%, 20.4%, and 20.2% respectively to pay 100% of adjusted profits.
- Banks with CET1 below 8% will not be permitted to declare dividends.
- These RBI directions will come into effect from the financial year 2026-27.
- The term dividend refers to the amount paid on equity shares, including interim dividend, but excludes dividends on Perpetual Non-Cumulative Preference Shares (PNCPS).
- Banks can declare dividends only if they have a positive adjusted profit after tax (PAT) in the year for which the dividend is proposed.
- For Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) and Local Area Banks, the RBI has proposed a higher dividend cap of up to 80% of PAT.

**RBI proposes to cap banks' dividend payout at 75% of their profit after tax**



**Reserve Bank of India Reports Supervisory Data Quality Index Score of Scheduled Commercial Banks Rises to 90.7 in September 2025**

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reported that the Supervisory Data Quality Index (sDQI) score of Scheduled Commercial Banks improved to 90.7 in the September 2025 quarter, up from 89.9 in April–June 2025.
- The sDQI measures the quality of supervisory data submitted by banks in terms of accuracy, timeliness, completeness, and consistency.
- Among bank groups, Small Finance Banks recorded the highest sDQI score of 91.5, followed by Public Sector Banks at 91.1 in September 2025.
- Private Sector Banks (90.6) and Foreign Banks (90.4) also showed improvement and remained in the “good” category.
- The sDQI was created to assess compliance with the RBI’s Master Direction on Filing of Supervisory Returns, 2024.

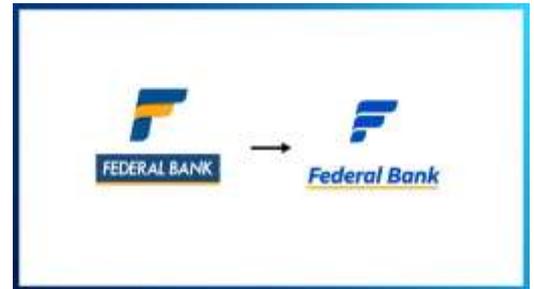
**Banks' supervisory data quality index score improves in September 2025 qtr: RBI**



- In **September 2025**, no **Scheduled Commercial Bank** scored below **80**, indicating overall improvement in data quality.
- According to **RBI classification**, a score above **90** is rated “good”, while 替 scores between **80–90** are considered “acceptable”.
- The **sDQI** currently covers **87 Scheduled Commercial Banks** and evaluates their **key returns** on **asset quality**, **liquidity**, **risk-based supervision**, and **capital adequacy**.

### Federal Bank Launches New Brand Identity ‘The Fortuna Wave’

- **Federal Bank Limited**, an **Indian private sector bank**, launched a refreshed brand identity named ‘**The Fortuna Wave**’ as part of a **strategic brand refresh** to signal **modernization** and **future-readiness**.
- The launch of ‘**The Fortuna Wave**’ took place in **Mumbai, Maharashtra**, in the presence of **Vidya Balan**, the **brand ambassador** of **Federal Bank**.
- The core element of the brand refresh is a new **visual insignia** called the ‘**Fortuna Wave**’.
- The **Fortuna Wave** insignia is built around **three wave elements** representing **authenticity**, **togetherness**, and **prosperity**.
- The new design is **more fluid and adaptable** than the earlier **boxed logo structure**, enhancing **visibility across both digital and physical platforms**.
- Key **visual features** of the refreshed identity include a **dynamic wave motif**, a **fluid and rounded typeface** for the ‘**FEDERAL BANK**’ wordmark, the **retention of the signature yellow underline**, and a **vibrant, digital-friendly colour palette**.



### About Federal Bank:

- Founded: 1931
- Headquarters: Aluva, Kerala, India
- Managing Director & CEO: KVS Manian
- Tagline: "Your Perfect Banking Partner"

### Axis Bank Introduces ‘Safety Centre’ on Mobile App to Enhance Customer Control Over Digital Banking

- **Axis Bank** has launched a new ‘**Safety Centre**’ on its **mobile banking app**, open, to help customers **protect their accounts** from **unauthorised or suspicious activities**.
- The **Safety Centre** empowers customers to **control and customise security settings independently**, without the need to **visit a branch** or **contact customer care**.
- Customers can **tailor security settings** based on their **usage patterns** and **comfort levels**, enhancing **digital banking safety**.



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- The **Safety Centre** includes an **SMS Shield**, which **verifies the authenticity of SMS messages** by checking the **Sender ID** against **Axis Bank's official IDs**.
- Customers can **disable Internet Banking access completely** if not required, and **instantly restrict all fund transfer capabilities** across **Mobile Banking** and **Internet Banking** with a **single toggle**.
- The platform also allows **blocking of transactions initiated through third-party apps** (e.g., **e-commerce platforms**) that use **Net Banking** as a payment mode.
- Users can **restrict UPI transactions** via the **bank's mobile app**, **prevent the addition of new payees**, and **set limits for fund transfers and UPI transactions**.
- Overall, the **Safety Centre** strengthens **account security**, gives **customers control over key digital banking functions**, and reduces the **risk of unauthorised access or fraud**.

#### About Axis Bank:

- Founded Year: 1993
- Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
- CEO: Amitabh Chaudhry
- Slogan: "Badhti Ka Naam Zindagi" (A Life of Progress)

#### HDFC Bank Enables Digital Rupee (CBDC) Payments on SmartGateway

- **HDFC Bank** integrated the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)**, known as the **Digital Rupee (₹)**, into its **online merchant payment platform, SmartGateway**.
- The integration allows **SmartGateway** to support **Digital Rupee (CBDC) payments alongside existing options** such as **Unified Payments Interface (UPI)**, **cards**, and **net banking**.
- Under the new system, **merchants can accept Digital Rupee payments at zero transaction cost**, enabling an **intermediary-free and efficient settlement process**.
- The integration provides **customers with a seamless, instant, and secure digital payment experience**, combining **UPI-like convenience** with a **sovereign-backed digital currency**.
- The initiative strengthens **HDFC Bank's digital-first strategy** and supports **India's transition towards a cash-light and inclusive digital economy**.



#### About HDFC Bank:

- Founded: 1994
- Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra, India
- Managing Director & CEO: Sashidhar Jagdishan
- Tagline: "We understand your world"

### NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

#### India Launches e-Production Investment Business Visa (e-B-4) for Chinese Nationals

- **India introduced** a new electronic business visa category **e-B-4 Visa** for **Chinese nationals** to facilitate structured and legitimate business engagement.

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- The move aims to simplify business travel, support **production and investment-related activities**, and gradually normalise India–China people-to-people exchanges.
- The **e-B-4 Visa** can be applied entirely **online**, without visiting the embassy.
- It is specifically meant for **production, investment, technical and industrial business activities**, not for general commercial visits.
- **Processing Time:** Around **45–50 days**.
- **Maximum Stay:** Up to **6 months** in India.
- Permitted activities include **installation and commissioning of equipment, plant setup, IT and ERP systems ramp-up, staff training, quality checks, maintenance, supply chain development, vendor empanelment, and senior management visits**.
- Applications can be submitted through the **Indian e-Visa portal (Bureau of Immigration)**.
- Indian companies inviting Chinese nationals may also register through **DPIIT's National Single Window System (NSWS)** for coordinated processing and regulatory oversight.



Installation and commissioning, quality check and overall maintenance, production, and IT, sales and marketing, and financial and administrative tasks to meet their needs.

India has introduced an e-Production Investment Business Visa called e-B-4 Visa that Chinese businessmen can apply for to travel to India for specific business activities, including installation and commissioning of equipment.

## RECENT NEWS

- India and Saudi Arabia have taken another significant step to deepen their growing strategic relationship by signing a bilateral visa waiver agreement. The agreement aims to simplify and facilitate official travel between these two countries and further strengthen cooperation under the India–Saudi Arabia Strategic Partnership Council.

## Assam Governor Launches 'Sanskaar Shaala' Value-Based Education Programme

- **Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya** inaugurated the **Sanskaar Shaala** programme in **Guwahati**.
- It is a **value-based education initiative** designed for **children aged 4 to 14 years**.
- The programme focuses on **moral education, ethics, compassion, Indian cultural values, and social responsibility**.
- It aims to complement **formal education** and help build **responsible, disciplined and value-oriented citizens**.
- The Governor highlighted that **values form the foundation of personality and social harmony** and should accompany academic learning.
- He also stressed that **ancient Indian texts** provide timeless guidance on righteous living.
- The initiative is significant for **preserving India's moral and cultural heritage**, encouraging **early social responsibility**, and **balancing technological progress with ethics**.



Guwahati (Assam) [India], January 4 (ANI): Sanskaar Shaala, a programme designed for children aged 4 to 14, was inaugurated on Sunday at the Lohia Lions Auditorium in Guwahati by Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya.

Addressing the people assembled on the occasion, the Governor said that goodwill and good wishes are integral to India's cultural ethos and value system.

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- During the event, the Governor also attended the **Golden Jubilee celebrations of Guwahati Blind High School.**

### RECENT NEWS

- Assam has taken a lead in government pay reforms by becoming the first state in the country to set up its 8th State Pay Commission. This proactive decision comes just before the end of the 7th Pay Commission's term on January 1, 2026.

### 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

### 'SAMPANN' System Transforming Pension Administration for Department of Telecommunications Pensioners

- The Government of India announced that **SAMPANN (System for Accounting and Management of Pension)** enables pensioners to securely **access, store, and retrieve official pension documents anytime and anywhere.**
- SAMPANN is an **integrated online pension management system for Department of Telecommunications (DoT) pensioners.**
- It provides a **single platform** for processing, sanctioning, and directly disbursing pension into bank accounts.
- The system offers **online grievance redressal, digital profile management, and transaction records**, improving transparency and efficiency.
- Important pension documents including **Gratuity Payment Orders, Pension Certificates/ePPOs, Pension Commutation Orders, and Form 16** are now available through **DigiLocker**, supporting digital governance and paperless services.
- During the **15th Pension Adalat** held at IIPA on **24th December 2025**, **1,087 long-pending pension grievances** were taken up and **815 were resolved on the spot.**
- Gross enrolment under **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)** reached **8,45,17,419 (as on 30 November 2025).**
- APY aims to provide a **universal social security system**, especially for the poor and unorganised sector workers, offering **minimum guaranteed pensions of ₹1,000 to ₹5,000 per month.**



**New Delhi:** The government on Monday said that 'SAMPANN' (System for Accounting and Management of Pension) has enabled pensioners to securely access, store, and retrieve their official documents anytime and anywhere, ensuring greater convenience, authenticity and long-term digital preservation of records.

### Ministry of Corporate Affairs Introduces New Triennial KYC Requirement for Directors (Companies Act, 2013)

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- **Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA)** has revised the **Director KYC compliance** under the **Companies Act, 2013**.
- The **annual KYC filing** has been replaced with a **once in 3 years (triennial)** process.
- The change will be **effective from 31st March 2026**.
- As per the **notification dated 31st December 2025**, directors must submit an **abridged KYC form every 3 years** instead of annually.
- The new KYC form enables updates like **mobile number, email ID, residential address**, and **DIN reactivation**.
- **Digital signature verification and professional certification** are required only if contact or address details are updated.
- Directors who have already completed KYC will submit the next KYC by **30th June 2028**.
- Directors who have **not completed KYC** can continue DIN reactivation under existing rules **till 31st March 2026**.
- The amendment is based on the recommendation of the **High Level Committee on Non-Financial Regulatory Reforms (HLC-NFRR)**.
- Objective: **Reduce compliance burden**, improve **ease of doing business**, and ensure **efficient, streamlined regulation**.

The annual KYC requirement for directors in companies under rule 15A of the Companies (Appointment & Qualification of Directors) Rules, 2014 has been amended to transition to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, recommendation made by the High Level Committee on Non-Financial Regulatory Reforms (HLC-NFRR) and regulations received from stakeholders. The relevant rule in this regard has been amended by the MCA Corporate Affairs in consultation with concerned Ministries/Departments.

Pursuant to the amendment in the Rules notified on 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2025 to be effective from 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2026, annual KYC filing requirement has been replaced with a single KYC submission once in every three years. The revised single KYC form can be used for various purposes viz (i) KYC compliance, (ii) update of mobile number, (iii) update of email address, (iv) update of residential address and (v) re-activation of DIN. The verification through digital signature by DIN holders/clients and confirmation through digital signature by the professional during KYC filing process would be required only if the KYC form is submitted for update of mobile number or email address or residential address.

The amendment is aimed at providing significant ease of compliance to directors in all companies. All directors who have completed their KYC till date are exempted under the new provision and accordingly their next KYC filing would be due by 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2028. The directors who have not submitted their KYC form so far are required to perform KYC as mentioned in the existing provisions till 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2026.

The Gazette Notification no. G.S.R. 940 (2) dated 31<sup>st</sup> December, 2025 in this regard has been placed on the website of the MCA Corporate Affairs ([www.mca.gov.in](http://www.mca.gov.in))

**MOUS AND AGREEMENT**

**Memorandum of Understanding between Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare and Department of Posts for Nationwide Logistics of Agro-Input Samples**

- The **Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW)** and the **Department of Posts (DoP)** signed an **MoU** to establish a **nationwide logistics mechanism** for transporting **pesticide, seed and fertiliser samples** to designated laboratories across India.
- The MoU was signed in **New Delhi** in the presence of **Union Minister of Communications Jyotiraditya M. Scindia** and **Union Minister of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare Shivraj Singh Chouhan**.
- The collaboration is part of the **PAN-India Online Pesticide, Seed and Fertiliser Quality Management System**, being developed by **Centre for Research and Industrial Staff Performance (CRISP)**.
- **India Post** will provide **end-to-end logistics support**, ensuring **secure, traceable and time-bound movement** of samples, leveraging its network of **over 1.60 lakh post offices**, including **1.40 lakh in rural areas**.

Department of Posts Signs MoU with Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare to Strengthen PAN-India Sample Logistics

Press Note of 07 JAN 2026 11:09 AM by PIB Delhi

The Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW) and the Department of Posts (DoP) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to establish a nationwide logistics mechanism for the transportation of pesticide, seed and fertiliser samples to designated laboratories across India.



- Services include **designated booking points, specialised handling, QR code-based digital tracking, address masking, and temperature monitoring** for select samples.
- The initiative aims to curb **fake and substandard pesticides, seeds and fertilisers**, strengthen **quality control and regulatory enforcement**, and protect **farmers from financial loss**.
- Sample transportation time will reduce from **10–15 days to 48–72 hours**, enabling **timely testing and corrective action**.
- The initiative strengthens **institutional coordination**, improves **agricultural input quality assurance**, and enhances **farmer confidence** in the quality of agricultural inputs.

### Department of Posts & Ministry of Rural Development sign Memorandum of Understanding to Boost Rural Financial & Digital Inclusion

- The **Department of Posts (DoP)** and **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen rural development, financial inclusion, digital empowerment, logistics and livelihood opportunities for **Self Help Groups (SHGs)** and rural households.
- The MoU was signed in New Delhi in the presence of **Union Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia (Communications & DoNER)** and **Union Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan (Rural Development & Agriculture)**.
- The initiative aligns with the Government vision of **“Dak Sewa, Jan Sewa”** and supports Union Budget 2025–26 focus on using India Post’s network for rural economic growth.
- India Post’s extensive network includes **1.5 lakh+ rural post offices, India Post Payments Bank (IPPB)** and **2.4 lakh Gramin Dak Sevaks**, ensuring strong last-mile connectivity.
- **IPPB** will provide **doorstep banking services** including savings, payments and remittances through its digital platform.
- SHG members will receive **electronic tablets and PoS machines** to enable cashless transactions, digital payments and better record-keeping.
- **Certificates** will be issued to SHG members to support credibility and strengthen financial and market linkages.
- DoP will enhance **market access** for SHG products through **Dak Ghar Niryat Kendras**, supporting domestic and international marketing and exports.
- The collaboration will support **Aadhaar enrolment and updation** in rural areas for easier beneficiary verification under MoRD schemes.
- Insurance penetration will increase through **Postal Life Insurance (PLI)** and **Rural Postal Life Insurance (RPLI)**, with SHG members also getting opportunities as insurance agents.

Department of Posts and Ministry of Rural Development Sign Landmark MoU to Strengthen Rural Financial Inclusion, Livelihood Promotion and Logistics Enablement

Press No. 07/2025-26/7-10/14 by PWS/1401

In a major step towards assisting rural empowerment and uplifting farmers, Agriculture and Logistics services for Self Help Groups (SHGs) and rural households across the country, the Department of Posts (DoP) and the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) today signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to deepen collaboration in support of inclusive and sustainable rural development.



- **IPPB will onboard and train SHG women as Business Correspondents**, promoting livelihoods, digital literacy and financial empowerment.
- The partnership reinforces India Post as a **technology-enabled, citizen-centric institution** contributing to **inclusive growth, women-led development and rural prosperity**.

### Tamil Nadu Government Signs Memorandum of Understanding with UN Women to Strengthen Gender Equality & Women Empowerment

- The **Government of Tamil Nadu** signed an Memorandum of Understanding with **UN Women** to strengthen cooperation in advancing **gender equality, women's safety, and women empowerment** in the State.
- The MoU was signed in the presence of **Chief Minister M.K. Stalin**.
- Tamil Nadu government will establish **technical support mechanisms** to promote gender equality and sustainable development focusing on women's welfare.
- Key implementing departments: **Social Welfare and Women Empowerment, Home and Excise, and Rural Development and Panchayat Raj**.
- A **tripartite MoU** was also signed among **UNICEF, OECD, and OPSI** to promote innovative governance services and validation mechanisms for government and quasi-government sectors.
- This MoU focuses on creating **new infrastructure facilities**, formulating **State-level innovative policies**, and strengthening **collaborative reform initiatives**.
- The State termed OECD collaboration as a **major milestone** in international institutional partnership.
- The Chief Minister also released **Tamil Nadu State Indicator Framework 2.0** with **244 indicators aligned to 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**.
- Four research reports by the **State Planning Commission** were released, including:
  - Assessment of **61 wetlands**
  - Mapping of **peri-urban areas**
  - Evaluation of **Chief Minister's Mann Uyir Kappom Scheme**
  - Report on **persistent anaemia among adolescent girls**
- The reports were presented by **State Planning Commission Vice-Chairman J. Jeyaranjan**.
- Deputy CM **Udhayanidhi Stalin**, Chief Secretary **N. Muruganandam**, and senior officials attended the event.



### APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

#### Appointments Committee of the Cabinet Approves One-Year Extension of Abhishek Dev as APEDA Chairman

- The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)**, headed by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, approved a **one-year extension** of **Abhishek Dev's** tenure as

### Chairman of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA).

- The extension will be **effective from February 8, 2026**, and was granted under the **Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I)**.
- **Abhishek Dev** is a **2007-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer** belonging to the **Arunachal Pradesh–Goa–Mizoram and Union Territories (AGMUT) cadre**.
- He previously served as **Director** in the **Department of Commerce (DoC)** under the **MoC&I** from **2021 to 2023**.
- In **July 2023**, **Abhishek Dev** was appointed as the **Chairman of APEDA**.



#### About APEDA :

- Established : **1985** under the **APEDA Act, 1985**.
- Headquarters : **New Delhi**
- **APEDA** is responsible for the **promotion, development, and regulation of exports of agricultural and processed food products** from India.
- The export items regulated by **APEDA** include **fruits and vegetables, meat and poultry, dairy products, cereals, processed foods, and organic products**.

#### A.K. Balasubrahmanian Appointed as Chairman of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board

- The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)**, headed by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, appointed **distinguished scientist A. K. Balasubrahmanian** as the **Chairman of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)** for a **three-year term**.
- **A. K. Balasubrahmanian** succeeded **Dr. D. K. Shukla**, who **completed his tenure on December 31, 2025**.
- **A. K. Balasubrahmanian** has nearly **40 years of experience** in the **design, development, safety assessment, construction, and commissioning of Nuclear Power Plants (NPPs)**.
- He previously served as **Director (Technical)** on the Board of the **Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL)**.
- He held the position of **Chairman of the Project Design Safety Committee** for **Pressurized Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR)-based nuclear power plants**.
- He also served as a **member of the Safety Review Committee for Operating Plants (SARCOP)** under the **Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)**.
- He contributed to **first-of-a-kind nuclear systems with indigenous safety features**, promoting **self-reliance in nuclear reactor technology**.
- **A. K. Balasubrahmanian** represented **India at international conferences and technical forums** related to **reactor technology and nuclear safety**.



#### About AERB :

- The **Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)** is **India's apex nuclear safety regulator**.

- **AERB** was constituted on **November 15, 1983**, by former President **Giani Zail Singh** under the **Atomic Energy Act (AEA), 1962**.
- The headquarters of the **AERB** is located in **Mumbai, Maharashtra**.

### DEFENCE NEWS

#### Defence Research and Development Organisation Commemorates Its 68th Foundation Day at Headquarters in New Delhi

- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**, under the **Ministry of Defence (MoD)**, celebrated its **68th Foundation Day** at **DRDO Headquarters, New Delhi, Delhi**.
- The event was attended by **Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh**, **Minister of State Sanjay Seth (MoD)**, and **Dr. Samir V. Kamat**, **Chairman of DRDO and Secretary, Department of Defence R&D, MoD**.
- **DRDO** reaffirmed its role as a **pivotal force in Aatmanirbhar Bharat**, strengthening **India's defence manufacturing ecosystem** with future focus areas in **Cyber, Space, and Artificial Intelligence (AI)**.



#### Key Highlights :

- The **Defence Acquisition Council (DAC)** and **Strategic Policy Board (SPB)** accorded **22 Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) approvals** valued at approximately **₹1.30 lakh crore** to facilitate **indigenous production of critical defence systems**.
- As part of its **expanding operational footprint**, **11 defence contracts** worth **₹26,000 crore** were signed with **production partners**.
- Multiple **DRDO-developed systems** were inducted into the **Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs)**, **Police Forces**, and the **National Disaster Response Force (NDRF)**, extending usage beyond the **Indian Armed Forces**.
- **User Evaluation Trials (UETs)** were completed or nearing completion for **Pralay**, **Akash Next Generation (Akash NG)**, **Guided Pinaka**, **Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM)**, **Advanced Lightweight Torpedo (ALWT)**, **Battlefield Observation Surveillance System (BOSS)**, **Specialised Demolition Robot (SDR)**, and **CBRN water systems**.
- **Developmental trials** are currently underway for the **Indian Light Tank**, **Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS)**, **New Air-to-Surface Missile–Short Range (NASM-SR)**, **Rudram-2**, **Gaurav Glide Bomb**, **advanced radars**, and **Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) life support systems**.
- In **2025**, **245 Licensing Agreements for Transfer of Technology (LAToT)** were signed, raising the cumulative total to **2,201 agreements**.
- **13 new Defence Corridor Production/Production Agency (DcPP/PA) partnerships** were added, taking the total to **145**, while **over 4,000 industry tests** were conducted for the **private sector** and **Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs)**.
- **15 Industry–Academia Centres of Excellence (CoEs)** are operational, with **66 new projects** sanctioned in **2025** at a total cost of **₹228 crore**.

### About DRDO :

- **Chairman DRDO** : Dr. Samir V. Kamat
- **Headquarters** : New Delhi, Delhi
- **Established** : January 1, 1958.

### Indian Army Awards Pinaka Multiple Launch Rocket Systems Overhaul Contract to Tata Advanced Systems

- The **Indian Army (IA)** granted a **supply order** to **Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL)** for the **overhaul-cum-upgradation** of in-service **first-generation Pinaka Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS)** and **Battery Command Posts (BCPs)**.
- The order marks a significant **Public–Private Partnership (PPP)** in **defence sustainment** and was formalised at an event held in **New Delhi, Delhi** on **January 6, 2026**.



### Key Highlights :

- In the **pilot overhaul phase**, **TASL**, in collaboration with the **Indian Army's 510 Advance Base Workshop (ABW)**, will jointly overhaul **selected Pinaka MLRS and BCPs**.
- In the **full-scale overhaul phase**, the remaining **Pinaka MLRS and BCPs** will be overhauled by **510 ABW, Meerut (Uttar Pradesh)** under the **Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME)**.
- **TASL** will provide **engineering expertise, certified spares, and quality assurance** for the **entire overhaul programme**.
- **TASL** will also ensure **close coordination with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs)** to maintain the **sustained availability of frontline artillery systems**.
- The **Pinaka Multiple Launch Rocket System (MLRS)** was **jointly developed** by the **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)** and **TASL** with a **modular and future-ready design** and **software architecture**.
- Since **1989**, **TASL and DRDO** have collaborated on the **Pinaka programme**, delivering key contracts in **2006, 2016, and 2020**, with systems in service for **over 15 years** and upgraded in later batches.
- **Pinaka MLRS** is an **all-weather, indirect-fire artillery system** capable of delivering **high-volume firepower** with **net-centric operational capability**.
- The system is mounted on an **8x8 High Mobility Vehicle (HMV)**, enabling **high mobility** and effective operations in **difficult terrain**.
- **Pinaka MLRS** is equipped with an **automated 'shoot-and-scoot' capability**, allowing **rapid deployment** and **enhanced survivability**.
- The fire control system uses a **microprocessor-based all-electric servo drive** and an **Inertial Navigation System (INS)-based digital fire control** for **precise targeting**.
- **Pinaka MLRS** fires **Pinaka Mk-I rockets** and is adaptable for **future guided variants** with extended ranges of **120 km and 300 km**.

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- The system achieves nearly **80% indigenous content**, strengthening **self-reliance** and **strategic autonomy** in defence manufacturing.

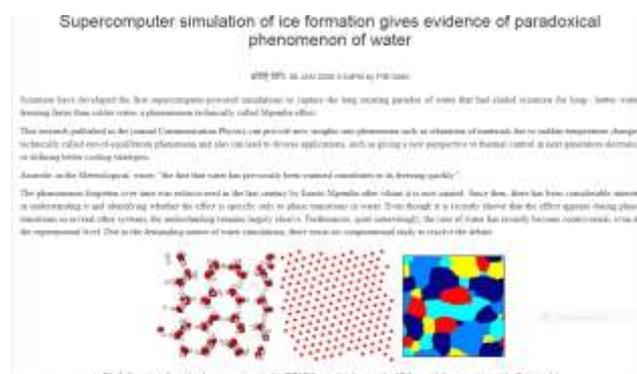
#### About Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL) :

- It is the **aerospace and defence arm** of the **Tata Group**.
- Established : **2006**.
- **Headquarters** : Hyderabad, Telangana
- **Managing Director and CEO** : Sukaran Singh.

### SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

#### Indian Scientists Use Supercomputer Simulation to Explain the Mpemba Effect

- **Indian scientists** from the **Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR), Bengaluru (Karnataka)**, under the **Ministry of Science and Technology (MoS&T)**, developed the **first-ever supercomputer-powered simulation** to explain the **Mpemba effect**.
- The **Mpemba effect** refers to the **counter-intuitive phenomenon** in which **water at a higher initial temperature freezes faster** than water at a **lower initial temperature** under **certain conditions**.
- The phenomenon is named after **Erasto Mpemba**, who **reintroduced it to scientific discussion in the 20th century**.
- Scientists at **JNCASR** used **high-performance computing (supercomputers)** to simulate **ice formation at the molecular level**, enabling a deeper understanding of the freezing process.
- The study revealed the role of **non-equilibrium thermodynamics, molecular rearrangements, and energy dissipation** in allowing **hotter water to freeze more rapidly**.
- The research demonstrates how **abrupt temperature variations** can influence **material relaxation processes** at the microscopic scale.
- The findings were published in the international journal **Communication Physics**, highlighting India's advancement in **computational physics and material science**.
- The study provides a **technical and theoretical framework** for understanding **anomalous thermal behaviors** observed in everyday and industrial processes.



#### Pakistan Successfully Tests Indigenous 'Taimoor' Air-Launched Cruise Missile

- **Pakistan Air Force (PAF)** successfully conducted a **flight test of the indigenously developed Taimoor Air-Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM)** during a live-trial exercise.
- The **Taimoor ALCM** was **launched from a Mirage IIIE fighter aircraft**, demonstrating Pakistan's operational air-launch capability.

- The missile is **developed by Pakistan's Air Weapons Complex**, reflecting indigenous defence manufacturing efforts.
- **Taimoor is a turbojet-powered, subsonic cruise missile**, capable of engaging **both land and sea targets**.
- It carries a **conventional high-explosive warhead**, optimized for **precision strikes against defended infrastructure**.
- The missile has an operational **range of approximately 600 kilometres (km)**, enabling long-distance precision attacks.
- It is equipped with a **state-of-the-art navigation and guidance system**, ensuring **high accuracy**.
- The missile can operate at **very low altitudes**, enhancing its ability to **evade enemy air defence and missile interception systems**.



### About Pakistan:

- Capital: Islamabad
- Currency: Pakistani Rupee (PKR)
- President: Asif Ali Zardari
- Prime Minister: Shehbaz Sharif

### National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Hubble Telescope Identifies Starless, Dark Matter-Dominated Gas Cloud 'Cloud-9'

- The **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)**'s **Hubble Space Telescope** discovered a **starless, gas-rich, dark-matter-dominated cloud** named **'Cloud-9'**.
- The **research findings on Cloud-9** were published in ***The Astrophysical Journal Letters*** and later presented at the **247th meeting of the American Astronomical Society (AAS)** held in **Phoenix**.
- **Cloud-9** is located about **14 million light-years from Earth**, near the spiral galaxy **Messier 94 (M94)**.
- Scientists consider **Cloud-9** a **'relic' or remnant of early galaxy formation**, representing conditions from the **early universe**.
- **Cloud-9** is classified as a **Reionization-Limited HI Cloud (RELHIC)** due to its **nearly identical composition** to other RELHICs.
- Both **RELHICs and Cloud-9** are composed of **neutral hydrogen (HI)** with a mass of about **1 million times that of the Sun**, and are **dominated by dark matter**.
- The **diameter of Cloud-9** is approximately **4,900 light-years**, similar to known **RELHIC structures**.
- The **dark matter mass of Cloud-9** is estimated to be around **5 billion solar masses**, highlighting its **massive dark matter dominance**.
- **Cloud-9** is **invisible in visible light** and can only be detected through its **hydrogen emission**, making it a rare **'fossil' cloud** from the universe's **early epochs**.
- **Cloud-9** was **first discovered in 2023** using **China's Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Telescope (FAST)** radio telescope.



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- In **2025**, the presence of a **neutral hydrogen core** in **Cloud-9** was confirmed by the **Very Large Array (VLA)** and the **Green Bank Telescope (GBT)**.
- In **January 2026**, **Hubble's Advanced Camera** detected **no stars within the boundaries of Cloud-9**, confirming it as a **starless dark-matter cloud**.

### About NASA:

- Established: 1958
- Headquarters: Washington, D.C., USA

## Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited Launches World's Largest LC-Max Residue Upgradation Unit at Visakhapatnam Refinery, Andhra Pradesh

- **Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)**, under the **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG)**, successfully commissioned the **world's first and largest Liquid Conversion–Maximum (LC-Max) Residue Upgradation Facility (RUF)** at its **Visakhapatnam (Vizag) Refinery, Andhra Pradesh**.
- HPCL also introduced a **digital optimization system** for the **LC-Max unit** to enhance **operational stability and productivity**.
- The **RUF** was developed by **HPCL** as part of its **Visakh Refinery Modernization Project (VRMP)**.

HPCL commissions residue upgradation facility at Vizag refinery, boosts margins and fuel output.

By IANS | January 6, 2025

Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd. (HPCL) has launched a state-of-the-art Residue Upgradation Facility (RUF) at its Visakhapatnam refinery, a significant technological achievement for the refining industry in India. A 3.55 million tonnes per year facility, the RUF is home to India's first Residue Hydrocracking Unit and boasts the world's first over LC-Max unit. It has the potential to turn approximately 90% of low-value Bottom-of-the-Barrel into quality petroleum products. With a potential to raise distillate yields by up to 10% over pre-modernization estimates, besides re-energizing heavier oil opportunity crudes, the facility is poised to enhance gross refining margins as well as enhance flexibility for HPCL. Nelson Complexity Index for the unit has increased to 11.6, putting it at par with one of India's most advanced deep conversion plants, thus improving India's ability to domestically produce quality petroleum products.

Apart from improved product outputs, this turnaround to a betterment project will help bridge the gap between HPCL's sales of diesel and its refining output, thereby lessening its reliance on imported supplies. Better heat integration and process optimization have been utilized to make this reform a reality, and a digital optimization package that offers real-time monitoring and AI-based control will be used to improve this process. This project undertaken in collaboration with Degussa India Ltd. as its project management consultant and Larsen & Toubro as its EPC contractor, will complement the Indian government's move to achieve self-reliance through superior refinery technology, allowing HPCL to be better poised to compete.

Disclaimer: This information has been collected through secondary research and IANS is not responsible for any errors in the same.

### Key Highlights :

- With an investment of **₹31,407 crore**, **HPCL's Visakh Refinery** expanded its **crude processing capacity** from **8.33 million tonnes per annum (MMTPA)** to **15 MMTPA**.
- **Engineers India Limited (EIL)** served as the **Project Management Consultant (PMC)**, and **Larsen & Toubro (L&T)** acted as the **Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contractor**.
- The core **LC-Max technology** was licensed by **Chevron Lummus Global (CLG)**.
- The facility includes **India's first residue hydrocracking unit**, with a capacity of **3.55 million tonnes per annum (MTPA)**, capable of converting approximately **93% of low-value residues** into **high-value products** such as **diesel, jet fuel, gasoil, and middle distillates**.
- The LC-Max unit comprises **three massive reactors**, each weighing about **2,200 tonnes**, making it one of the **heaviest refinery modules globally**.
- **Diesel and kerosene yields** are expected to increase by up to **10%** compared to pre-upgrade levels.
- The facility improves the **Gross Refining Margin (GRM)** by converting more **heavy residues** into **marketable fuels**.
- The **Nelson Complexity Index** of the refinery has increased to **around 11.6**, making it one of **India's most sophisticated and complex refineries** capable of **advanced deep-conversion processes**.

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- The **digital optimization system** combines **advanced digital tools** with **refinery operations** to **enhance LC-Max unit performance**, including **real-time data monitoring, predictive analytics, and AI-driven optimization**.
- The system improves **operational stability, product yields, energy efficiency, and on-stream performance**, while reducing **downtime and variability**.
- **LC-Max technology** is a **next-generation residue hydrocracking technology** that upgrades **heavy refinery residues** into **high-value fuels**, using **advanced catalysts, hydrogen management, and digital optimization**.
- Key features of **LC-Max technology** include **conversion of vacuum residues and heavy fractions into lighter products**, **maximizing diesel and jet fuel output**, **processing heavy and sour crudes**, and employing **high-pressure reactors with robust hydrocracking catalysts**.

#### About Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) :

- **Established : 1974**
- **Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra**
- **Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) : Vikas Kaushal.**

#### IMPORTANT DAYS

#### Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (NRI Day) 2026 – Observed on 9th January

- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (NRI Day) 2026** is observed on **9th January** every year.
- The day marks the **return of Mahatma Gandhi to India from South Africa on 9 January 1915**, symbolising the contribution of overseas Indians in nation-building.
- The Government of India decided to observe **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas in 2000**, acknowledging the role of the Non-Resident Indian (NRI) community.
- Although conceptualised in 2000, the day was **first officially celebrated in 2003**.
- The idea of celebrating this day was proposed by **L. M. Singhvi**, an Indian lawyer, diplomat and author.
- It was **formally declared on January 9, 2002**, by the then Prime Minister **Atal Bihari Vajpayee**.
- On **9th January 2006**, the concept of **OCI – Overseas Citizen of India** was introduced during Pravasi Bharatiya Divas celebrations.
- The day recognises and celebrates the **contribution of NRIs towards India's development and global presence**.



#### Daily CA One- Liner: January 9,2026

- **India introduced** a new electronic business visa category **e-B-4 Visa** for **Chinese nationals** to facilitate structured and legitimate business engagement
- **Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya** inaugurated the **Sanskaar Shaala** programme in **Guwahati**

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** has proposed to **raise the dividend payout cap for banks to 75% of net profit**, up from the earlier **40%**, subject to conditions.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** reported that the **Supervisory Data Quality Index (sDQI) score of Scheduled Commercial Banks** improved to **90.7** in the **September 2025 quarter**, up from **89.9** in **April–June 2025**.
- **Federal Bank Limited**, an **Indian private sector bank**, launched a refreshed brand identity named **‘The Fortuna Wave’** as part of a **strategic brand refresh** to signal **modernization and future-readiness**.
- **Axis Bank** has launched a new **‘Safety Centre’** on its **mobile banking app**, open, to help customers **protect their accounts** from **unauthorised or suspicious activities**.
- **HDFC Bank** integrated the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)’s Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC)**, known as the **Digital Rupee (e₹)**, into its **online merchant payment platform, SmartGateway**.
- The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)**, headed by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, approved a **one-year extension** of **Abhishek Dev’s** tenure as **Chairman of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (APEDA)**.
- The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)**, headed by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, appointed **distinguished scientist A. K. Balasubrahmanian** as the **Chairman of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)** for a **three-year term**.
- The **Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)**, under the **Ministry of Defence (MoD)**, celebrated its **68th Foundation Day** at **DRDO Headquarters, New Delhi, Delhi**.
- The **Indian Army (IA)** granted a **supply order** to **Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL)** for the **overhaul-cum-upgradation** of **in-service first-generation Pinaka Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS)** and **Battery Command Posts (BCPs)**.
- **Indian scientists** from the **Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (JNCASR)**, **Bengaluru (Karnataka)**, under the **Ministry of Science and Technology (MoS&T)**, developed the **first-ever supercomputer-powered simulation** to explain the **Mpemba effect**.
- **Pakistan Air Force (PAF)** successfully conducted a **flight test of the indigenously developed Taimoor Air-Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM)** during a live-trial exercise.
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- **Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL)**, under the **Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG)**, successfully commissioned the **world’s first and largest Liquid Conversion–Maximum (LC-Max) Residue Upgradation Facility (RUF)** at its **Visakhapatnam (Vizag) Refinery, Andhra Pradesh**.

- The Government of India announced that **SAMPANN (System for Accounting and Management of Pension)** enables pensioners to securely **access, store, and retrieve official pension documents anytime and anywhere**
- **Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MCA)** has revised the **Director KYC compliance** under the **Companies Act, 2013**
- The **Department of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare (DA&FW)** and the **Department of Posts (DoP)** signed an **MoU** to establish a **nationwide logistics mechanism** for transporting **pesticide, seed and fertiliser samples** to designated laboratories across India
- The **Department of Posts (DoP)** and **Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to strengthen rural development, financial inclusion, digital empowerment, logistics and livelihood opportunities for **Self Help Groups (SHGs)** and rural households
- The **Government of Tamil Nadu** signed an Memorandum of Understanding with **UN Women** to strengthen cooperation in advancing **gender equality, women's safety, and women empowerment** in the State.
- **Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (NRI Day) 2026** is observed on **9th January** every year.

