



# Daily Current Affairs

23<sup>rd</sup> Jan 2026



**BANKING, FINANCE & BUSINESS**

**Cabinet Approves Extension of Atal Pension Yojana (APY) with Funding Support for Promotion, Development, and Gap Financing Until FY 2030-31**

- The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi**, approved the continuation of **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)** up to **FY 2030-31**.
- The scheme will receive **government support** for **promotional and developmental activities** to expand outreach among **unorganised workers**.
- **Gap funding** will be provided to meet **viability requirements** and ensure the **sustainability** of APY.
- APY ensures **old-age income security** for millions of **low-income** and **unorganised sector workers**.
- The scheme enhances **financial inclusion** and supports India's transition to a **pensioned society**.
- APY strengthens the vision of **Viksit Bharat @2047** by providing **sustainable social security**.

Cabinet approves continuation of Atal Pension Yojana (APY) and extension of funding support for promotional and developmental activities and gap funding till 2030-31

Posted On: 21 JAN 2026 12:22PM by PIB Delhi

The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, today approved the continuation of Atal Pension Yojana (APY) up to FY 2030-31 along with extension of funding support for promotional and developmental activities and gap funding.

**Implementation Strategy:**

The scheme will continue up to 2030-31 with Government support for:

- 1. Promotional and Developmental activities to expand outreach among unorganised workers including awareness, capacity building.
- 2. Gap funding to meet viability requirements and ensure sustainability of the scheme.

**Major Impact:**

Ensures old-age income security for millions of low-income and unorganised sector workers. Enhances financial inclusion and supports India's transition to a pensioned society.

Strengthens the vision of **Viksit Bharat @2047** by providing sustainable social security.

**Background:**

Launched in May 2015 with the objective of providing old-age income security to workers in the unorganised sector. Scheme features: APY offers a guaranteed minimum pension of ₹1,000 per month starting at age 60, based on contributions.

**About Atal Pension Yojana (APY) :**

- **Launch Date:** APY was launched on **9th May 2015** to provide old-age income security to unorganised sector workers.
- **Scheme Features:** APY offers a **guaranteed minimum pension of ₹1,000 to ₹5,000 per month** starting at **age 60**, based on contributions.
- **Progress:** As of **19th January 2026**, over **8.66 crore subscribers** have been enrolled under APY.
- **Need for Extension:** Continuous government support is essential for **awareness, capacity building, and bridging viability gaps** to ensure scheme sustainability.

**About Ministry of Finance:**

- Cabinet Minister: Smt. Nirmala Sitharaman
- Minister of State (MoS): Shri Pankaj Chaudhary

**Cabinet sanctions equity infusion in Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)**

- The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi**, approved **equity support of Rs 5,000 crore** to the **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)**.
- The **Rs 5,000 crore equity** will be infused by the **Department of Financial Services (DFS)** in **three tranches: Rs 3,000 crore in FY 2025-26** at a book value of **Rs 568.65** and **Rs 1,000 crore each in FY 2026-27 and FY 2027-28** at the book value as on 31st March of the respective previous FY.
- Post infusion, the number of **MSMEs** receiving financial assistance is expected to rise from **76.26 lakh (FY 2025)** to **102 lakh (FY 2028)**, adding approximately **25.74 lakh new MSME beneficiaries**.
- As per official data (**30.09.2025**), **6.90 crore MSMEs** generate **30.16 crore employment**, averaging **4.37 persons per MSME**. The expected addition of **25.74 lakh MSMEs** is estimated to generate **1.12 crore new jobs** by **FY 2027-28**.

Cabinet approves equity support to Small Industries Development Bank of India

Flow of credit to MSMEs will increase as SIDBI will be able to generate additional resources at competitive rates

Approximately 25.74 lakh new MSME beneficiaries will be added

Posted On: 21 JAN 2026 12:20PM by PIB Delhi

The Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi has approved the equity support of Rs.5,000 crore to Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).

The equity capital of Rs.5000 crore shall be infused into SIDBI by the Department of Financial Services (DFS) in three tranches of Rs.3,000 crore in Financial year 2025-26 at the book value of Rs.568.65; as on 31.03.2025 and Rs.1,000 crore each in Financial Year 2026-27 and Financial year 2027-28 at the book value as on 31<sup>st</sup> March of the respective previous financial year.

**Impact:**

Post equity capital infusion of Rs.5000 crore, number of MSMEs to be provided financial assistance is expected to increase from 76.26 lakh at the end of Financial Year 2025 to 102 lakhs (approximately 25.74 lakh new MSME beneficiaries will be added) by the end of Financial Year 2028. As per latest data (as on 30.09.2025) available from official website of Mo MSME, 6.90 crore employment is generated by 6.90 crore MSMEs (i.e. employment generation of 4.37 persons per MSME). Considering this average, employment generation is estimated to be 1.12 crore with the expected addition of 25.74 lakh new MSME beneficiaries by the end of Financial Year 2027-28.

**Background:**

- **SIDBI's risk-weighted assets** are expected to rise due to growth in **directed credit, digital and collateral-free credit products**, and **venture debt for start-ups**, necessitating higher capital to maintain the **Capital to Risk-weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR)**.
- Maintaining a **healthy CRAR** well above mandated levels is essential for protecting **SIDBI's credit rating**.
- The **equity infusion** will enable **SIDBI** to generate resources at **fair interest rates** and increase **credit flow to MSMEs** at a **competitive cost**.
- The **phased equity infusion** will allow **SIDBI** to maintain **CRAR above 10.50%** under **high stress** and **above 14.50%** under **Pillar 1 and Pillar 2** over the next three years.

#### About Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI):

- It is an All India Development Financial Institution (DFI) focused on financing and developing Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) in India.
- Headquarters: Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
- Founded: April 2, 1990, by the Government of India
- Chairman & Managing Director: Shri Manoj Mittal

#### Moody's Forecasts India's GDP Growth at 7.3% in FY26, Boosting Household Income

- **Global credit rating agency Moody's Ratings** projected that **India** will record a **GDP growth rate of 7.3% in FY26**, higher than **6.5% in FY25**.
- The report highlighted that **robust economic expansion** is expected to support **average household incomes** and boost **demand for insurance protection**.
- **Income Growth**: India's **GDP per capita** rose **8.2% Y-o-Y** to reach **USD 11,176 in FY25**.
- **Insurance Sector**: Moody's report highlighted that **India's insurance sector** is expected to benefit from **sustained premium growth** supported by **economic expansion, digitisation, tax reforms, and planned reforms in state-owned insurers**.
- **Insurance Sector Growth**: **Total insurance premium revenue** grew **17%**, reaching **Rs 10.9 lakh crore** during **April–November 2025-26**.
- **Health insurance premiums** increased by **14%**, while **life insurance new business premiums** surged **20%**, compared to **7% growth in FY25**, when total premiums were **Rs 11.9 lakh crore**.
- **Reforms in Insurance Sector**: Government initiatives include **minority stake sale in LIC, recapitalization of state-owned insurers, and increasing foreign investment limit from 74% to 100%** in Indian insurance companies.
- **Objective of Reforms**: **Enhance profitability, provide financial flexibility, and strengthen the insurance sector**.



#### Recent News :

- In Jan 2026, The **International Monetary Fund (IMF)** released the **World Economic Outlook (WEO)** titled "**Global Economy: Steady amid Divergent Forces**", revising **India's GDP growth for FY26 to 7.3%**, up from **6.6% (October 2025 estimate)**.

#### About Moody's Ratings:

- **Founded : 1909.**
- **President : Michael West**

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- Headquarters : New York, USA

### NATIONAL AND STATE NEWS

#### Punjab Inaugurates First Dog Sanctuary in Ludhiana

- Punjab has opened its first Dog Sanctuary in Ludhiana as a pilot project to manage stray dog populations humanely and reduce dog bite cases in urban areas.
- The sanctuary will house and care for stray dogs, aiming to balance public safety with animal welfare.
- The initiative was inaugurated by Sanjeev Arora, Punjab Cabinet Minister for Local Government, highlighting the government's commitment to responsible urban governance and humane treatment of animals.
- The facility will operate in strict compliance with Supreme Court guidelines and Animal Birth Control (ABC) Rules, focusing on sterilisation, vaccination, and controlled relocation.
- The pilot project will assess operational effectiveness, with plans to replicate the model across Punjab based on performance data.
- The sanctuary represents a structured, legal, and compassionate approach to stray dog management and could serve as a template for other states facing similar urban animal challenges.



Punjab has opened its first Dog Sanctuary in Ludhiana as a pilot project, which will be replicated across the state. Cabinet minister for local government, Sanjeev Arora, while inaugurating the sanctuary, said that the initiative aims to reduce dog bite cases in the city and will operate as per the guidelines issued by the Supreme Court.

#### About Punjab:

- Chief Minister: Bhagwant Mann
- Governor: Gulab Chand Kataria
- Capital: Chandigarh
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Abohar Wildlife Sanctuary, Aishvan Wildlife Sanctuary, Bir Bhadson Wildlife Sanctuary, Bir Bunerheri Wildlife Sanctuary, Bir Dosanjh Wildlife Sanctuary

#### RECENT NEWS

- In a step beyond music, Punjabi singer Kaka has launched a new mobile application called Friendo to enhance women's safety in India. The app focuses on providing quick emergency assistance and digital support tools for women and girls.

#### India AI Impact Summit 2026: Driving Inclusive and Responsible AI

- India will host the India AI Impact Summit 2026 from 16–20 February at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi, as the first global AI summit in the Global South.
- The summit is anchored on People, Planet, and Progress, focusing on responsible AI, governance, innovation, global collaboration, and AI-driven development aligned with Viksit Bharat 2047.
- It will bring together policymakers, researchers, industry leaders, startups, and civil society, positioning India as a key voice on inclusive, ethical, and people-centric AI.
- The summit is structured around seven Chakras operationalizing the three Sutras:
  - Human Capital – AI reskilling and workforce readiness.



Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a key enabler of India's development journey, strengthening governance and improving public service delivery. For India, AI supports inclusive growth at scale and aligns with the vision of Viksit Bharat by 2047. India's linguistic and cultural diversity positions it strongly for advancing multi-lingual and multi-modal AI systems tailored to diverse public needs.

Building on India's development-focused approach to AI, the India-AI Impact Summit 2026 is scheduled to be held on 16-20 February 2026 at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi. The summit will be the first global AI summit to be hosted in the Global South. It will bring together global leaders, policymakers, technology companies, innovators, and experts to showcase and deliberate on the transformative potential of AI across governance, innovation, and sustainable development.

Taking forward outcomes from major international AI forums, India's approach through the India-AI Impact Summit 2026 will focus on translating global discussions into development outcomes aligned with national priorities under the IndiaAI mission and Digital India Initiative. It will strengthen multilateral cooperation while advancing practical, people-centric AI frameworks relevant to India's governance, economy, and society.

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- **Inclusion for Social Empowerment** – Citizen-centric AI solutions.
- **Safe and Trusted AI** – Responsible AI governance frameworks.
- **Resilience, Innovation, and Efficiency** – Sustainable and equitable AI adoption.
- **Science** – Promoting research and innovation, addressing data inequities.
- **Democratizing AI Resources** – Equitable access to AI infrastructure.
- **AI for Economic Growth & Social Good** – AI applications with societal and economic impact.
- **AI Applications Across Key Sectors in India:**
  - **Healthcare:** Telemedicine, remote diagnostics, disease prediction, medical imaging.
  - **Agriculture:** AI advisories, drones, weather prediction to boost productivity.
  - **Education:** Personalized learning, language translation, 24/7 tutoring via platforms like DIKSHA.
  - **Finance and Governance:** Fraud detection, financial inclusion, smart cities, faster public services.
- Major highlights include **regional AI conferences**, the **India AI Impact Expo 2026** with 400+ exhibitors, and flagship challenges like **AI for ALL, AI by HER, and YUVAi** promoting startups, women-led innovation, and youth participation.
- The **AI Compendium**, to be released on 17 February, will document real-world AI use cases across priority sectors.
- The summit is supported by **MeitY, IndiaAI Mission, STPI, and Digital India Initiative**, leveraging India's investments in **AI infrastructure, indigenous models, datasets, and large-scale skilling** to promote safe and trusted AI adoption nationwide.

### Telangana Explores UAE Partnership for Bharat Future City

- **Telangana and the UAE agreed to explore cooperation for Bharat Future City** during the World Economic Forum 2026.
- **Bharat Future City** is planned as **India's first net-zero greenfield smart city**, designed to be a **global urban and economic centre** with a focus on **sustainability, smart infrastructure, and innovation**.
- The **UAE-Telangana discussions** were held between **Abdulla bin Touq Al Marri**, UAE Minister of Economy and Tourism, and **A Revanth Reddy**, Telangana CM, highlighting **strategic investment and partnership opportunities**.
- The project is a **key pillar of Telangana Rising 2047**, aiming to **transform Telangana into a \$3 trillion economy** by 2047 through **infrastructure-led and innovation-driven development**.
- Several **global and Indian companies** are already associated, including **Marubeni, Sembcorp, and Reliance Group's Vantara**, showcasing strong investor confidence.
- A **joint task force** was proposed for faster implementation, along with a **UAE-Telangana food cluster collaboration** to support **rural and agriculture-based economic growth**.
- Telangana also engaged with **other international partners**, including **Saudi Expertise** for skills training at Young India Skills University and the **Israel Innovation Authority** for projects in **agriculture, AI, climate tech, and startups**.
- The initiative reflects Telangana's strategy for **global engagement, urban transformation, and inclusive economic growth**.



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### About Telangana:

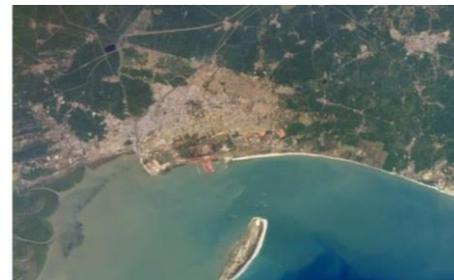
- Capital: Hyderabad
- Governor: Jishnu Dev Varma
- Chief Minister: Anumula Revanth Reddy
- National Parks: Kasu Brahmananda Reddy National Park, Mrugavani National Park, Mahavir Harina Vanasthali National Park
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Kawal Wildlife Sanctuary, Pocharam Wildlife Sanctuary, Manjira Wildlife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

### RECENT NEWS

- India's fisheries sector marked a major technological milestone with the launch of a large-scale trout farming project in Telangana. Traditionally limited to cold Himalayan regions, trout cultivation has now been successfully adapted to a warm inland climate.

### Andhra Pradesh to Get New Spaceport at Hope Island

- **Andhra Pradesh CM N. Chandrababu Naidu announced a new spaceport at Hope Island** under the Space City initiative to **support private and commercial launch missions**.
- The facility will focus on **small and medium-lift launch vehicles** and **complement existing national launch centres**.
- With this, **India's spaceport network will include Satish Dhawan Space Centre (Sriharikota), Kulasekharapatnam SSLV Launch Complex, and Hope Island** for different mission profiles.
- The project **diversifies launch capabilities, reduces dependence on a single site, and enhances efficiency** for multiple types of missions.
- It **encourages private sector participation**, supporting startups and companies in **space technology** and catering to the **rising demand for small satellite launches**.
- **Hope Island's location on India's eastern coastline** provides an advantage for **eastward launches**, leveraging Earth's rotation for **fuel efficiency**.
- The island is **tadpole-shaped, off Kakinada in the Bay of Bengal, formed from Koringa River sediments**, with its **northern tip overlooking Kakinada Harbour**.
- It is **ecologically important as a nesting ground for Olive Ridley turtles** and is adjacent to the **Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary**.
- The spaceport will strengthen India's commercial space ecosystem, support private launch missions, and maintain ecological balance.



Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu announced plans for a new spaceport at Hope Island on January 17, positioning it as part of the state's proposed Space City initiative. The site is expected to primarily support private launch providers, adding to India's expanding launch

### About Andhra Pradesh:

- Chief Minister: N. Chandrababu Naidu
- Governor: S. Abdul Nazeer
- Capital: Amaravati
- National Parks: Sri Venkateswara National Park, Papikonda National Park
- Wildlife Sanctuaries: Coringa Wildlife Sanctuary, Pulicat Lake Bird Sanctuary, Kambalakonda Wildlife Sanctuary, Rollapadu Wildlife Sanctuary, Krishna Wildlife Sanctuary

### SAMPANN Pension System Integrated with UMANG Platform

- The **SAMPANN pension portal** has been integrated with the **UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance)** platform, enabling nearly **4 lakh**

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**pensioners of the Department of Telecommunications to access Pension Payment Order (PPO) details and Life Certificate validity online.**

- **SAMPANN (System for Accounting and Management of Pension)** is a flagship digital platform developed by the **Office of the Controller General of Communication Accounts** and was dedicated to the nation in **December 2018**.

SAMPANN Integration on UMANG Enables Easy PPO & Life Certificate validity status for about 4 lakh pensioners of Department of Telecommunication across the country

Posted On: 21 JAN 2026 4:18PM by PIB Delhi

The SAMPANN pension management system developed by the office of Controller General of Communication Accounts has been integrated with the UMANG (Unified Mobile Applications for New-age Governance) platform. This initiative facilitates pensioners in retrieving their Pension Payment Order (PPO) number and Life Certificate (LC) validity status via the UMANG web portal or mobile application, thereby ensuring that all the pensioners have access to vital information related to their pension available at all times.

Shri Ashish Joshi, Principal Controller of Communication Accounts (P. CCA), Delhi, emphasized that this integration is designed to enhance ease of access for pensioners, promote transparency, and ensure the seamless delivery of pension-related information via a unified digital platform. The availability of these services through the UMANG application, complemented by the recent DigiLocker integration, underscores the department's commitment to providing prompt and transparent services to all pensioners.



- The system manages the **entire pension lifecycle**, including pension processing, disbursement, and grievance redressal, marking a shift from **system-centric to pensioner-centric governance**.
- The platform enables pensioners to receive pensions **directly into their bank accounts** and access services digitally, significantly reducing the need for **physical visits to offices or banks**, which is especially beneficial for **senior citizens**.
- With its **integration into UMANG**, pensioners can now retrieve their **PPO number** and check **Life Certificate (LC) validity status** through a **single digital interface**. According to **Ashish Joshi, Principal Controller of Communication Accounts**, the integration improves **ease of access, transparency, and service efficiency**.
- Support through **DigiLocker** ensures that pensioners can securely access vital pension information anytime.
- Currently, two key **SAMPANN services** are available on UMANG. Pensioners can **know their PPO number** by entering bank or post office account details along with date of birth, and they can **check Life Certificate validity**, ensure uninterrupted pension disbursement and avoid delays due to missing documentation.
- **UMANG** is a unified digital platform under the **Digital India initiative**, providing access to **Central, State, and Local Government services** through a single **mobile app and web portal**.
- Available on **Android, iOS, and web**, UMANG allows authentication through **Aadhaar, MPIN, and DigiLocker**, and its integration with platforms like SAMPANN reflects India's push toward **inclusive, accessible, and technology-driven governance**.

## AWARDS AND HONOURS

### Karnataka Bank Wins National-Level Technology Award

- **Karnataka Bank** won the **'Best Fintech & DPI Adoption'** award at the **Indian Banks' Association (IBA) Banking Technology Awards 2026**, recognising its excellence in digital banking and technology adoption.
- The award highlights the bank's **strong integration of fintech solutions** and **Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**, including digital payments, online banking services, and backend system efficiency.
- The bank was also **runner-up in the 'Best Tech Talent'** category, reflecting its focus on building skilled IT and digital teams.
- Karnataka Bank received **Special Mentions** in categories such as **Best Technology Bank, Best Digital Financial Inclusion, and Best Digital Sales**,



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showing consistent performance across innovation, inclusion, and customer outreach.

- Effective use of **DPI platforms like UPI, Aadhaar, and digital KYC** positions banks to improve operational efficiency, expand financial inclusion, and reduce transaction costs.
- The recognition underscores how traditional banks can leverage **technology and innovation** to stay competitive and customer-centric in India's rapidly digitising banking ecosystem.
- **IBA Banking Technology Awards** are annual awards recognising excellence in **digital transformation, cybersecurity, fintech innovation, and technology adoption** in the banking sector.

### INTERNATIONAL NEWS

#### Global Unemployment Rate to Remain at 4.9% in 2026: International Labour Organisation's Employment and Social Trends 2026

- The **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** released the report titled '**Employment and Social Trends 2026: World of Work Series**' from **Geneva, Switzerland**.

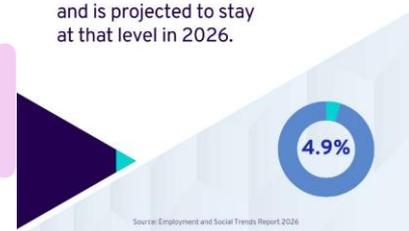


#### Key Highlights :

- The **global unemployment rate** is projected to remain at **4.9% in 2026**, equivalent to **186 million people** still lacking access to **quality jobs**, and this rate will remain unchanged until **2027**.
- The **global jobs gap**, capturing people wanting paid work but unable to access it, is expected to reach **408 million in 2026**.
- The share of workers living in **extreme poverty** declined by **3.1 percentage points** to **7.9%** between **2015–2025**, yet nearly **300 million workers** still earn less than **USD 3 per day**.
- The **global informality rate** increased by **0.3 percentage points** between **2015–2025**, with **2.1 billion workers** projected to be **informally employed in 2026**, mainly in **Africa and Southern Asia**.
- The **global Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR)** is projected to decline by **0.2 percentage points** per year, reaching **60.5% in 2027**.
- **Global employment growth** is estimated at **1.0% in 2026**, slightly below the previous decade's average, with **0.5% growth** in **upper middle-income countries**, **1.8%** in **lower middle-income countries**, and **3.1%** in **low-income countries**.
- **Women** accounted for only **40% of global employment in 2025**, with **24.2 percentage points** lower labour force participation than men, and **young women 14.4 percentage points** more likely than young men to be **NEET**.
- The **job gap rate** continues to be **higher for women than men**, with an estimated gap of **4.3 percentage points in 2026**.
- The **global youth unemployment rate** increased from **12.3% in 2024 to 12.4% in 2025**, while **NEET youth** reached **20%**, i.e., nearly **260 million young people**, with higher rates in **low-income countries at 27.9%**.
- The report highlighted **trade uncertainty**, with disruptions in **international trade rules and tariff rates**, led by the **USA**, affecting worker wages, especially in **Southeast Asia, Southern Asia, and Europe**.
- **Global trade** generated **465 million jobs** in **80 countries and territories in 2024**, with more than **50% in Asia and the Pacific**.

The global unemployment rate stood at **4.9% in 2025**

and is projected to stay at that level in 2026.



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- **Income losses** due to **supply chain disruptions** are projected as high as **0.45%** in **Southeast Asia** and **0.3%** in **Europe and Southern Asia**.

**About ILO:**

- **Established : 1919.**
- **Headquarters : Geneva, Switzerland**
- **Director-General : Gilbert F. Hougbo**
- **Member nations : 187**

**APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS**

**HDFC Bank’s Kaizad Bharucha Re-appointed as Whole-Time Director with Reserve Bank of India Approval**

- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** approved the continuation of senior leadership at **HDFC Bank**, ensuring stability at India’s **largest private sector lender**.
- The approval covers the **re-appointment of Kaizad Bharucha as Whole-time Director** on HDFC Bank’s board for a fresh **three-year term** starting **April 19, 2026**.
- **RBI approval is mandatory for senior bank appointments** under India’s **banking regulations**, highlighting **regulatory oversight** on governance and **management continuity**.
- **Kaizad Bharucha** currently serves as **Deputy Managing Director**, overseeing critical **business verticals**, **strategy execution**, **risk management**, and **operational performance**.
- The **re-appointment** aligns with **regulators’ emphasis** on **strong corporate governance** and **stable leadership** in the banking sector.



**ACQUISITIONS & MERGERS**

**Competition Commission of India Clears Emirates NBD Bank’s Acquisition of Majority Stake in RBL Bank Limited.**

- **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has approved the proposed acquisition of a significant stake in **RBL Bank Limited** by **Emirates NBD Bank (P.J.S.C.) (ENBD)**.
- The proposed acquisition involves **ENBD** acquiring **51% to 74% shareholding** in **RBL Bank**, resulting in **change of control**.
- The transaction includes a **mandatory open offer** under **SEBI (SAST) Regulations, 2011** for up to **26%** of the expanded voting capital of **RBL Bank**.
- It also includes a **preferential allotment** of equity shares amounting to up to **60%** of the total **paid-up equity share capital** of **RBL Bank**.
- Additionally, **ENBD’s banking operations** in India, currently functioning through **3 branch offices**, will be **amalgamated** with **RBL Bank** on a **going concern** basis.
- **Emirates NBD Bank (P.J.S.C.)** is a **public joint stock company**, listed on the **Dubai Financial Market**, and headquartered in **Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE)**.
- **ENBD** operates across multiple countries including India and offers services in **retail banking, corporate and institutional banking, Islamic banking**, investment banking, private banking, **asset management**, treasury, global markets, and brokerage services.

CCI approves proposed acquisition of certain shareholding in RBL Bank Ltd. by Emirates NBD Bank (P.J.S.C.)

Posted On: 20 JAN 2026 7:30PM by PIB Delhi

The Commission has approved the proposed acquisition of certain shareholding in RBL Bank Limited by Emirates NBD Bank (P.J.S.C.)

The proposed combination envisages the acquisition of shareholding of up to 74% (and not less than 51%) of RBL Bank Limited (RBL) by Emirates NBD Bank (P.J.S.C.) (ENBD), pursuant to:

a. A mandatory open offer under the provisions of the SEBI (Substantial Acquisition of Shares and Takeovers) Regulations, 2011 representing up to 26% of the expanded voting capital of RBL;

b. A preferential allotment of equity shares amounting to up to 60% of the total paid-up equity share capital of RBL; and

c. The proposed amalgamation of ENBD’s banking operations in India (carried on through the branch mode and operating through its network of 3 branches in India) (ENBD India Branches) into and with RBL on a going concern basis.

ENBD is a public joint stock company listed on the Dubai Financial Market, and headquartered in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE). ENBD is a banking group active in several countries including India. It is engaged in range of banking products and services including retail banking, corporate and institutional banking, Islamic banking, investment banking, private banking, asset management, global markets and treasury, and brokerage operations.

RBL is a listed company incorporated in India, operating in the business of providing banking, financial and insurance services. It is a private sector bank and offers inter alia deposit taking services, loans and lending services, digital payment services and cash management services. RBL also has an IFSC Banking Unit (IBU) in GIFT City, which functions as an overseas branch.

Detailed order of the Commission will follow.

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- **RBL Bank Limited** is a listed **private sector bank** in India, engaged in **banking, financial and insurance services**.
- **RBL Bank** also operates an **International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) Banking Unit (IBU)** at **GIFT City**, functioning as an **overseas branch**.

### Competition Commission of India Clears Tata Steel's Acquisition of Majority Stake in Thriveni Pellets Private Limited

- **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has approved **Tata Steel Limited's (TSL)** acquisition of **50.01% equity share capital** of **Thriveni Pellets Private Limited (TPPL)** from **Thriveni Earthmovers Private Limited**.
 

CCI approves acquisition of 50.01% equity share capital of Thriveni Pellets Pvt Ltd by Tata Steel Ltd

Posted On: 20 JAN 2026 7:27PM by PIB Delhi

The Commission has approved acquisition of 50.01% equity share capital of Thriveni Pellets Pvt Ltd by Tata Steel Ltd. The proposed combination relates to Tata Steel Limited's proposed acquisition of 50.01% equity share capital of Thriveni Pellets Private Limited (TPPL) from Thriveni Earthmovers Private Limited. Tata Steel Limited is a public limited listed entity engaged in integrated steel manufacturing operations, ranging from mining to steelmaking to further processing. It is engaged in the production and sale of steel and related steel products, serving diverse sectors such as agriculture, automotive, construction, energy and infrastructure. It is *inter alia* also engaged in the mining of iron ore, and production of iron ore pellets, sponge iron and crude steel. TPPL is a private limited company engaged in the sale of iron ore pellets in India. TPPL's wholly owned subsidiary, Brahmani River Pellets Limited, is also engaged in production and sale of iron ore pellets in India. Detailed order of the Commission will follow.
- The approval gives **Tata Steel Limited (TSL)** **majority ownership and control (50.01%)** in **Thriveni Pellets Private Limited (TPPL)**.
- **TPPL** is engaged in the **production and sale of iron ore pellets** in India, a **key raw material for steel manufacturing**.
- **Brahmani River Pellets Limited**, a **wholly owned subsidiary of TPPL**, is also involved in the **production and sale of iron ore pellets** in India.
- **Tata Steel Limited (TSL)** is a listed **public company** engaged in **integrated steel manufacturing**, covering the **entire value chain from mining to steelmaking and downstream processing**.
- **TSL's business operations** include the production and sale of **steel, iron ore, iron ore pellets, sponge iron, and crude steel**.
- **Tata Steel** serves multiple sectors such as **agriculture, automotive, construction, energy, and infrastructure**.
- The acquisition strengthens **Tata Steel's raw material security and pellet production capacity**, supporting its **core steel manufacturing operations**.
- The transaction is classified as a **proposed combination** under **competition law** and has received **regulatory clearance** from the **CCI**, ensuring compliance with **competition norms** in India.

### Competition Commission of India approves merger deal between Bhushan Power & Steel, JSW Sambalpur, JFE Steel Corp. and JSW Kalinga Steel

- **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** approved the proposed combination involving **Bhushan Power and Steel Limited (BPSL), JSW Sambalpur Steel Limited, JFE Steel Corporation (Japan) and JSW Kalinga Steel Limited**.
 

CCI approves proposed combination between Bhushan Power and Steel Ltd, JSW Sambalpur Steel, JFE Steel Corp. and JSW Kalinga Steel

Posted On: 20 JAN 2026 7:28PM by PIB Delhi

The CCI has approved proposed combination between Bhushan Power and Steel Limited (BPSL), JSW Sambalpur Steel Limited (JSW Sambalpur), JFE Steel Corporation (JFE) and JSW Kalinga Steel Ltd. (JSW Kalinga). The proposed combination pertains to (a) transfer of BPSL's steel business undertaking (Target Business) to JSW Sambalpur by way of slump sale; and (b) the acquisition by JFE of a 50% direct shareholding in JSW Kalinga, thereby resulting in an indirect acquisition of 50% shareholding by JFE in JSW Sambalpur. Thereafter, JSW Kalinga (and therefore, indirectly, JSW Sambalpur) will be operated as a 50:50 joint venture between JFE and JSW Steel Ltd. (JSW Steel). JFE is part of the JFE Group under which there are three operating companies, namely - JFE (steel business), JFE Engineering Corporation (engineering business) and JFE Ship Corp (trading business). JSW Kalinga is a wholly owned subsidiary of Piombino Steel Limited (PSL), which is a subsidiary of JSW Steel Limited. JSW Kalinga is yet to commence commercial operations. JSW Sambalpur is a wholly owned subsidiary of JSW Kalinga. Post the Proposed Transaction, it will own the Target Business. JSW Sambalpur is yet to commence commercial operations. The Target Business is currently owned by BPSL. BPSL is a public limited company engaged in integrated steel manufacturing operations, including downstream processing of finished steel products. As on date, BPSL is an indirect subsidiary of JSW Steel, held through PSL. Detailed order of the Commission will follow.
- The transaction involves a **major restructuring** to establish a **50:50 Joint Venture (JV)** between **JFE Steel Corporation** and **JSW Steel Limited**.
- The **steel business undertaken by BPSL (Target Business)** will be transferred to **JSW Sambalpur Steel Limited** through a **slump sale** route.
- **JFE Steel Corporation (JFE)** will acquire a **50% direct equity stake** in **JSW Kalinga Steel Limited** as part of the transaction.

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- Through this acquisition, **JFE** will obtain an **indirect 50% shareholding** in **JSW Sambalpur Steel Limited**.
- After completion, **JSW Kalinga Steel Limited** and its subsidiary **JSW Sambalpur Steel Limited** will operate as a **50:50 Joint Venture** between **JFE** and **JSW Steel**.
- The approved combination strengthens **India–Japan industrial collaboration** in the **steel sector** and aligns with **regulatory norms** under **CCI**.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Researchers Discover Two New Rare Ant Fly Species in Delhi Ridge and Western Ghats

- Researchers from **Kerala** and **Tamil Nadu (TN)** discovered two new rare **ant fly species** named ***Metadon ghorpadei*** and ***Metadon reemeri***.
- ***Metadon ghorpadei*** was found in **Delhi's Northern Ridge** forest, while ***Metadon reemeri*** was discovered in the **Siruvani Hills** of the **Western Ghats**.
- This marks the **first discovery** of ant fly species in **over 100 years** in India, highlighting the importance of conserving **urban forest ecosystems**.
- The findings were published in the international journal **Zootaxa** after **morphological** and **Deoxyribonucleic Acid (DNA)** analysis.
- Both species belong to the **Microdontinae** subfamily under the **Syrphidae (hoverflies)** family.
- Larvae are **myrmecophilous**, meaning they live inside **ant nests** and feed on **ant brood**, while adult flies are rare and difficult to detect.
- With this discovery, India now has **eight species** of the genus **Metadon**, increased from six earlier.
- Globally, there are **454 Microdontinae** species, of which **27 species** are found in India.
- **Habitat contrast: Delhi Ridge** represents a **disturbed urban forest**, whereas the **Siruvani Hills (Western Ghats)** are a **biodiversity hotspot**.
- The discovery underscores the presence of **hidden biodiversity** and emphasizes the need for **systematic surveys, habitat protection, invasive species control**, and studies on **species divergence**.



### Recent News :

- In Jan 2026, **Researchers from Cochin University of Science and Technology (CUSAT)** discovered a **new genus and species of microscopic harpacticoid copepod** from the **Kavaratti lagoon, Union Territory of Lakshadweep**.

## PERSON IN NEWS

### Indian-Origin National Aeronautics and Space Administration Astronaut Sunita Williams Concludes 27-Year Space Career

- The **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** announced the retirement of **Indian-origin astronaut Sunita Lyn Williams** from service effective **27th December 2025**, ending her **27-year career** in human space exploration.
- In **2008**, she was awarded the **Padma Bhushan**, the **third highest civilian award in India**, for contributions in **Science and Engineering**.

Sunita Williams Retires From NASA After 27 Years Of Service



### Key Highlights :

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- Born on **19th September 1965** in **Ohio, USA**, **Sunita Williams** is a former **US Navy officer** and one of **NASA's most experienced astronauts**.
- She was commissioned in the **US Navy in 1987**, became a **Naval Aviator in 1989**, and flew helicopters on deployments to the **Mediterranean, Red Sea, and Persian Gulf**, including **Hurricane Andrew relief**.
- She trained and served as a **test pilot and instructor**, flew over **30 aircraft**, and logged over **3,000 flight hours**.
- In **1998**, she was selected by **NASA** as an **astronaut candidate** and trained in **spacecraft systems, robotics, T-38 jet flight, survival training, and Russian space operations**.
- She participated in **NASA Extreme Environment Mission Operations (NEEMO 2)**, living **underwater for 9 days** as part of astronaut training.
- She completed three space missions: **Expedition 14/15, Expedition 32/33** aboard **ISS**, and the **Boeing Starliner Crew Flight Test** mission.
- **Expedition 14/15 (2006-2007)**: Served as **flight engineer**, spent **6 months** in space, and conducted **spacewalks** totaling **29 hours 17 minutes**.
- **Expedition 32/33 (2012)**: Spent **127 days** aboard **ISS**, conducted **three spacewalks**, repaired **solar power system**, fixed a **radiator ammonia leak**, and served as **Commander of ISS** during **Expedition 33**.
- **Expedition 71/72 (2024-2025)**: Launched aboard **Boeing Starliner**, returned in **March 2025** via **SpaceX Crew Dragon**, performed spacewalks with **Butch Wilmore** to remove a **radio antenna** and collect samples.
- **Time in Space**: Logged **608 days**, ranking **second in NASA** for cumulative time in orbit; **286 days** on a single mission places her **joint sixth** among Americans.
- **Spacewalks**: Completed **nine spacewalks** totaling **62 hours 6 minutes**, the **most by a woman** and **fourth overall** in NASA history.
- **First marathon in space**: Ran **Boston Marathon** distance (**42.195 km**) on a **treadmill** aboard the **ISS**.
- **Awards and Recognitions**: Includes two **Defence Superior Service Medals**, **Legion of Merit**, two **Navy Commendation Medals**, **Navy & Marine Corps Achievement Medal**, **Humanitarian Service Medal**, and several other service awards.

#### About NASA :

- **Established** : 1958.
- **Headquarters** : Washington DC, USA
- **Administrator** : Jared Isaacman

### DEFENCE NEWS

#### Bharat Forge Aerospace Division Bags Rs 300 Crore Contracts for Indigenous Unmanned Systems for Indian Army and Navy

- **Bharat Forge Limited (BFL)**'s aerospace division secured contracts worth nearly **Rs 300 crore** under the **Emergency Procurement-VI (EP-VI)** framework for the supply of **indigenously built unmanned systems** to the **Indian Army (IA)** and **Indian Navy (IN)**.
- Under the **EP-VI framework**, the total value of each contract is capped at **Rs 300 crore**, with equipment delivery required within **one year** of signing.
- **Key Platforms** covered under the contracts include **Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance**



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(ISR) platforms, such as **Omega One** and **Omega Nine** ISR drones, and **loitering munitions** named **Bayonet** and **Cleaver**.

- **Omega One** was displayed during **Army Day (January 15, 2026)** in **Jaipur, Rajasthan**, mounted on an **upgraded BMP-2** infantry combat vehicle, providing **short to medium-range battlefield surveillance**.
- **Omega Nine** is a **high-endurance** ISR drone, designed for **long-duration missions**, to detect enemy presence, identify targets, and enhance **situational awareness**.
- **Loitering munitions** like **Bayonet** and **Cleaver** are ‘**kamikaze drones**’, which hover over a target, identify critical assets, and strike with precision.
- These **indigenous unmanned systems** are developed to meet **urgent operational requirements** of India across **diverse terrains** and mission profiles.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### Union Minister Manohar Lal Inaugurates Centre of Excellence for Power Sector Regulation at IIT Delhi

- **Union Minister Manohar Lal** of **Ministry of Power (MoP)** and **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** inaugurated the **Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Regulatory Affairs in the Power Sector** at **IIT Delhi, New Delhi**.
- The **CoE** is jointly established by **IIT Delhi, Central Electricity Regulatory Commission (CERC), and Grid Controller of India Limited (Grid India)** to strengthen India’s **regulatory capacity** amid rapid changes in the **electricity sector**.
- **Purpose:** The **CoE** will function as a **national hub** for **regulatory research, capacity building, advisory support, and knowledge dissemination**.
- **Framework:** It integrates **policy, regulation, system operations, and academic research** within a single **institutional framework**.
- **Policy Support:** Provides **evidence-based tools** and **analytical models** to policymakers to evaluate **regulatory proposals** on **consumer welfare, system reliability, and investment signals**.
- **Focus Areas:** The **CoE** will conduct **multidisciplinary research** on **power sector regulation, market design, grid operations, energy transition challenges, decarbonisation pathways, digitalisation, and emerging technologies**.
- **Capacity Building:** Offers **analytical support** to **regulators and system operators** and develops **long-term regulatory capacity** through **structured training programmes**.



## MOUS AND AGREEMENT

### India–Namibia Fifth Foreign Office Consultations 2026

- **India and Namibia** held the **5th round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC)** and agreed to **deepen cooperation in defence, critical minerals, health, agriculture, and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**, reaffirming commitment to **South–South Cooperation**.
- The consultations **reviewed the entire spectrum of bilateral relations**, including **trade and investment, health and pharmaceuticals, education, capacity**

The Ministry of External Affairs of the Government of India, on 20 January announced that India and Namibia agreed to continue deepening their bilateral ties in key areas such as health, Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI), agriculture, defence and critical minerals.

The ministry said these ties were deepened at the fifth round of the India-Namibia Foreign Office Consultations (FOC) which was held from 19 to 20 January in New Delhi. “The two sides undertook a comprehensive review of the entire gamut of India-Namibia relations encompassing key areas of bilateral cooperation in trade, investment, health and pharmaceuticals, education, capacity building, defence, agriculture, infrastructure development, consular matters, and people to people and cultural exchange.”

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**building, agriculture, infrastructure development, consular matters, and cultural exchanges.** Both sides expressed satisfaction over progress since previous high-level engagements.

- A major outcome was the decision to **strengthen cooperation in defence and critical minerals**, which has gained strategic importance amid **global supply chain disruptions and tightening export controls on rare earths and critical minerals**, especially by China.
- **Namibia's rich mineral resources**, crucial for **clean energy, electronics, and defence technologies**, were highlighted.
- India's engagement is part of a broader strategy to **diversify and secure critical mineral supply chains**, reducing strategic dependence and enhancing long-term economic and security resilience.
- Both countries agreed to expand collaboration in **Digital Public Infrastructure**, leveraging **India's globally recognised digital governance platforms** in areas such as **payments, service delivery, and e-governance**, to support Namibia's development objectives.
- Cooperation in **health, pharmaceuticals, agriculture, and capacity building** was reaffirmed, with a focus on **inclusive growth, sustainability, and long-term capacity creation**, reflecting India's development partnership approach.
- The talks were held in a **cordial and constructive atmosphere**, and it was agreed that the **next round of Foreign Office Consultations will be hosted in Windhoek, Namibia**, at a mutually convenient time.
- The engagement underlines the growing **India–Africa partnership** and aligns with India's emphasis on **resource security, development cooperation, and strategic ties with the Global South**.

## RANKING AND INDEX

### Numbeo Safety Index 2026: Global and Indian City Safety Rankings

- The **Numbeo Safety Index 2026** was released in **January 2026**, covering **304 cities worldwide**, and ranks cities based on **public perception of safety and crime levels**.
- **Qingdao (China)** ranked as the **world's safest city** with a safety score of **89.2**, while **Mangaluru (Karnataka)** emerged as the **safest city in India**, ranking **46th globally** with a score of **74.4**.
- The index is released by **Numbeo**, a crowd-sourced global database, using **user surveys** on factors such as **safety while walking alone at night, violent crime, property crime, and overall security**.
- Survey responses are scored from **-2 to +2**, statistically filtered and weighted, and converted into a **safety score ranging from 0 to 100**, where a **higher score indicates greater perceived safety**.
- Cities are grouped into safety categories: **Very Low (below 20)**, **Low (20–40)**, **Moderate (40–60)**, **High (60–80)**, and **Very High (above 80)**.
- **India ranked 70th globally among countries** with an overall safety score of **55.8**, falling under the **moderate safety category**. While cities like **Mangaluru and Ahmedabad** performed well, major metropolitan areas such as **Delhi, Noida, and Gurugram** ranked among the **least safe cities**, with **Delhi placed 255th globally**.



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- At the country level, the **United Arab Emirates** ranked as the **safest country** with a score of **86.0**, followed by **Qatar** and **Andorra**, while **Papua New Guinea, Venezuela, and Haiti** ranked among the **least safe countries**.
- **Top 10 Safest Cities in the World – Numbeo Safety Index 2026**

| Global Rank | City       | Country  | Safety Score |
|-------------|------------|----------|--------------|
| 1           | Qingdao    | China    | 89.2         |
| 2           | Abu Dhabi  | UAE      | 88.9         |
| 3           | Doha       | Qatar    | 84.5         |
| 4           | Sharjah    | UAE      | 84.5         |
| 5           | Dubai      | UAE      | 83.9         |
| 6           | Taipei     | Taiwan   | 83.5         |
| 7           | Manama     | Bahrain  | 82.0         |
| 8           | Muscat     | Oman     | 81.3         |
| 9           | Hong Kong  | China    | 78.6         |
| 10          | Chiang Mai | Thailand | 77.9         |

- **Top 5 Safest Cities in India – Numbeo Safety Index 2026**

| India Rank | Global Rank | City               | State      | Safety Score |
|------------|-------------|--------------------|------------|--------------|
| 1          | 46          | Mangaluru          | Karnataka  | 74.4         |
| 2          | 87          | Ahmedabad          | Gujarat    | 68.5         |
| 3          | 106         | Jaipur             | Rajasthan  | 65.3         |
| 4          | 123         | Coimbatore         | Tamil Nadu | 62.0         |
| 5          | 132         | Thiruvananthapuram | Kerala     | 61.0         |

- **Numbeo** was established in **2009** and is headquartered in **Belgrade, Serbia**. It is the **world’s largest crowd-sourced database** covering **cost of living, quality of life, pollution, traffic, and crime**, and its **CEO is Mladen Adamovic**.

### SPORTS NEWS

#### Saina Nehwal Announces Retirement from Competitive Badminton

- **Saina Nehwal**, one of India’s most celebrated badminton players, has **officially retired** after nearly two years of inactivity due to severe knee injuries, including **cartilage degeneration and arthritis**.
- She revealed that **elite-level badminton demands 8–9 hours of daily training**, but her knees allowed only 1–2 hours, forcing her to step away from competitive play.
- **Olympic Achievement:** Saina won **bronze at the 2012 London Olympics**, becoming the **first Indian woman to win an Olympic medal in badminton**, inspiring a new generation of players.
- **World No.1:** In 2015, she became **World No.1**, only the second Indian after Prakash Padukone to reach the top ranking.
- **Historic Wins:**
  - **2009 Indonesia Open Super Series** – first Indian to win a BWF Super Series title.
  - **Commonwealth Games Gold Medals** – multiple editions.
  - **BWF World Championships** – silver in 2015, bronze in 2017.
  - **2018 Commonwealth Games Gold** – comeback performance despite injuries.



A trailblazer of Indian badminton, Saina Nehwal became the first Indian woman to win an Olympic medal in badminton at London 2012 and later rose to World No.1 in 2015. Her career is filled with titles and national honours. | Photo Credit: ANI

Olympic medallist Saina Nehwal on Tuesday confirmed her retirement from competitive badminton after being out of action for nearly two years due to a chronic knee condition, according to the Olympics.com.

- **Awards and Recognition:** Padma Bhushan, Padma Shri, Khel Ratna, and Arjuna Award.
- **Legacy:** Saina's career has **transformed Indian badminton**, inspired young athletes, especially women, and established India as a **global badminton powerhouse**.

### National Paralympic Powerlifting Championship 2026 Hosted by Uttarakhand

- Uttarakhand hosted the **National Paralympic Powerlifting Championship** in January 2026, which was **inaugurated by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami** through a **virtual ceremony from COER University, Roorkee**.
- The event highlighted India's commitment to **inclusive sports and empowerment of persons with disabilities**.
- The championship is a **prestigious national-level para-sports event** focused on **Paralympic powerlifting**, a discipline that tests **physical strength, mental resilience, discipline, and determination**.
- It provides competitive exposure to para-athletes and plays an important role in talent identification for future international events, including the Paralympic Games and World Championships.
- The event promoted **equal participation and confidence-building among persons with disabilities**, helping to break social barriers and encourage positive attitudes towards disability. Such championships support the **physical, mental, and social well-being** of para-athletes and align with the broader vision of **inclusive nation-building**.
- The championship aligns with national initiatives like **Khelo India**, reflecting India's **growing success and focus on para-sports** at both national and international levels.
- **Uttarakhand is steadily emerging as a sports hub**, often referred to as "Khelbhoomi", having previously hosted major events such as the **38th National Games**.
- Hosting the National Paralympic Powerlifting Championship further reinforces the state's role in **promoting inclusive, competitive, and national-level sports events**.



### Daily CA One- Liner: January 23

- **Punjab has opened its first Dog Sanctuary** in Ludhiana as a **pilot project** to manage stray dog populations humanely and reduce dog bite cases in urban areas
- **India will host the India AI Impact Summit 2026** from 16–20 February at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi**, as the first global AI summit in the **Global South**
- **Telangana and the UAE agreed to explore cooperation for Bharat Future City** during the World Economic Forum 2026.
- **Andhra Pradesh CM N. Chandrababu Naidu announced a new spaceport at Hope Island** under the Space City initiative to **support private and commercial launch missions**
- The **SAMPANN pension portal** has been integrated with the **UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance)** platform, enabling nearly **4 lakh pensioners of the Department of Telecommunications** to access **Pension Payment Order (PPO) details** and **Life Certificate validity** online

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- **Karnataka Bank** won the ‘**Best Fintech & DPI Adoption**’ award at the **Indian Banks’ Association (IBA) Banking Technology Awards 2026**, recognising its excellence in digital banking and technology adoption.
- **India and Namibia** held the **5th round of Foreign Office Consultations (FOC)** and agreed to **deepen cooperation in defence, critical minerals, health, agriculture, and Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI)**, reaffirming commitment to **South–South Cooperation**
- The **Numbeo Safety Index 2026** was released in **January 2026**, covering **304 cities worldwide**, and ranks cities based on **public perception of safety and crime levels**
- **Saina Nehwal**, one of India’s most celebrated badminton players, has **officially retired** after nearly two years of inactivity due to severe knee injuries, including **cartilage degeneration and arthritis**
- **Uttarakhand** hosted the **National Paralympic Powerlifting Championship in January 2026**, which was **inaugurated by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami** through a **virtual ceremony from COER University, Roorkee**.
- The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi**, approved the continuation of **Atal Pension Yojana (APY)** up to **FY 2030-31**.
- The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by **Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi**, approved **equity support of Rs 5,000 crore** to the **Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)**.
- **Global credit rating agency Moody’s Ratings** projected that **India** will record a **GDP growth rate of 7.3% in FY26**, higher than **6.5% in FY25**.
- The **International Labour Organisation (ILO)** released the report titled ‘**Employment and Social Trends 2026: World of Work Series**’ from **Geneva, Switzerland**.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** approved the continuation of senior leadership at **HDFC Bank**, ensuring stability at India’s **largest private sector lender**.
- **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has approved the proposed acquisition of a significant stake in **RBL Bank Limited** by **Emirates NBD Bank (P.J.S.C.) (ENBD)**.
- **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** has approved **Tata Steel Limited’s (TSL)** acquisition of **50.01% equity share capital** of **Thriveni Pellets Private Limited (TPPL)** from **Thriveni Earthmovers Private Limited**.
- **Competition Commission of India (CCI)** approved the proposed combination involving **Bhushan Power and Steel Limited (BPSL)**, **JSW Sambalpur Steel Limited**, **JFE Steel Corporation (Japan)** and **JSW Kalinga Steel Limited**.
- Researchers from **Kerala** and **Tamil Nadu (TN)** discovered two new rare **ant fly species** named ***Metadon ghorpadei*** and ***Metadon reemeri***.
- The **National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)** announced the retirement of **Indian-origin astronaut Sunita Lyn Williams** from service effective **27th December 2025**, ending her **27-year career** in human space exploration.
- **Bharat Forge Limited (BFL)**’s aerospace division secured contracts worth nearly **Rs 300 crore** under the **Emergency Procurement-VI (EP-VI)** framework for the supply of **indigenously built unmanned systems** to the **Indian Army (IA)** and **Indian Navy (IN)**.
- **Union Minister Manohar Lal** of **Ministry of Power (MoP)** and **Ministry of Housing & Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** inaugurated the **Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Regulatory Affairs in the Power Sector** at **IIT Delhi, New Delhi**.