

04 January 2025

Dhanu Jatra, the world's largest open-air theatre, commences in Odisha

Key Points:

- ❖ celebrated in Bargarh, Odisha. Spread across a 8 km radius area around the Bargarh municipality, it is world's largest open air theater, one that finds a mention in the Guinness Book of World Records.
- ❖ It is based on mythological story of Krishna and his demon uncle Kansa. Originating in Bargarh, in the present day play, the enactments of the play are being performed in many other places in Western Odisha.
- ❖ The major one of these is the original one at Bargarh. It is about the episode of Krishna and Balaram's visit to Mathura to witness the Dhanu ceremony organized by their (maternal) uncle Kansa.
- ❖ Dhanu Jatra or Dhanu Yatra is an annual drama-based open air theatrical performance celebrated in Bargarh, Odisha. Spread across a 8 km radius area around the Bargarh municipality, it is world's largest open air theater, one that finds a mention in the Guinness Book of World Records.
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- ❖ The major one of these is the original one at Bargarh. It is about the episode of Krishna and Balaram's visit to Mathura to witness the Dhanu ceremony organized by their (maternal) uncle Kansa.
- ❖ The plays start with the dethroning of emperor Ugrasena by the angry prince Kansa, over the marriage of his sister Debaki with Basudeba, and ends with death of Kansa, and Ugrasen restoring back to become the king.

- ❖ During this festival Kansa can punish people with penalty for their mistakes. Biju Patnaik, the former Chief Minister of Odisha was fined once along with his ministers. The department of Culture of the Government of India has accorded National Festival status to Dhanu Yatra on November 2014.
- ❖ The main municipality area turns into the historical town of Mathura Nagari, river Jeera turns into Yamuna, Ambapaali village (now a ward - part of Bargarh municipality) becomes Gopapura.
- ❖ A Pond by the side of Jeera river in Ambapali becomes the Kalindi Lake of the mythology. Since 2005, Nishamani School Ground has been used as the Rangamahall - Cultural stage of the festival.

GST collection jumps 7.3% YoY to Rs 1.77 lakh crore in December

Key Points:

- ❖ India's Goods and Services Tax (GST) collection grew 7.3% year-on-year (YoY) to Rs 1.77 lakh crore in December 2024. However, the figure marked a 3% decline compared to the Rs 1.82 lakh crore collected in November. The latest numbers indicate a steady growth in GST revenues but reflect a slowdown in consumption and a rise in refunds issued during the month.

India world's sixth largest exporter of Textile & Apparel in 2023

- ❖ According to the government of India, the country will emerge as the 6th largest exporter of textiles and apparel in the world in 2023. The share of the country in the world's textiles and apparel market was 3.9 % in 2023. China remains the largest exporter of textiles and apparel in the world followed by the European Union and Bangladesh.

- ❖ India mainly imports textiles and apparel for re-exporting purposes or as raw materials. According to the provisional data released by the government, the export of textiles, apparel, and handicrafts during April-October month of the financial year 2024-25 was USD 21.358 billion. The total import during the period was USD 5.425 billion.

Export of Textile, Apparel, and Handicrafts during April-October FY 25

- ❖ The total exports of textiles, apparel, and handicraft were USD 21.358 billion during the April-October period of FY 2025.
- ❖ The growth in the export of all these commodities as compared to April-October FY 24 was 7 %. All the major commodities registered positive growth in exports except the wool and handloom sectors, which declined by 19% and 6% respectively.

Share in Export during April-October FY 25

- ❖ The top five export commodities in the textile, apparel, and handicrafts were as follows
- ❖ Ready Made Garments. The total export during the period was USD 8.733 billion. Share in total exports 41%. Growth as compared to last year same period 12%.
- ❖ Cotton Textiles- USD 7.082 billion Share in total export 33%. Growth 1%
- ❖ Manmade Textiles- USD 3.105. Share in total export 15%. Growth rate of 5%.
- ❖ Silk products - USD 98 million. Share in total export 0.45 %. Growth rate of 40%.
- ❖ Wool and Woollen Textiles - USD 95 million. Share in total export around 0.4 %. Negative growth of 19 %.
- ❖ Major Export Markets for Indian Textiles, Apparel, and Handicrafts were the United States of America and the European Union.

Import of Textile, Apparel, and Handicrafts during April-October FY 25

- ❖ Import of textiles, apparel, and handicrafts products during April-October 2024 was USD 5.425 billion.
- ❖ The imports have declined by 1% as compared to the same period last year.
- ❖ Man-made Textiles has the largest share in total imports with USD 1.859 billion. The total share in imports was 34% during April-October of FY25.
- ❖ In second place was cotton textile with an import value of USD 1.721 billion.
- ❖ In third place were readymade garments with an import of USD 1.721 billion.
- ❖ Percentage-wise the maximum growth was registered in Handloom products which grew by 56%.

MoU between India & Indonesia on Non-Basmati White Rice Trade

Key Points:

- ❖ The Union Cabinet has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Union Ministry of Cooperation and the Ministry of Trade of Indonesia. The approval was given in a meeting of the Union Cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in New Delhi.



Terms of the MoU

- ❖ India will supply one million metric tonnes of non-basmati white rice to Indonesia per year at the prevalent international price.
- ❖ The duration of the MoU will be four years and will be automatically extended for four years.
- ❖ The rice will be supplied to Indonesia by the National Cooperative Exports Limited.

- ❖ The National Cooperative Exports Limited will source the rice from the cooperative societies only. The export of rice is likely to improve the trade balance which is heavily in favour of Indonesia.
- ❖ In 2023-24 bilateral trade between the two countries was US\$29.4 billion. India's exports to Indonesia were 5.99 billion and its imports were \$23.4 billion.
- ❖ Indonesia is India's eighth-largest trading partner, while India is the second-largest buyer of Indonesian coal and crude palm oil.

Export of Rice from India

- ❖ India, which is the largest exporter of rice, exports many varieties of rice but the main varieties are basmati and non-basmati white rice.
- ❖ Basmati rice is a premium rice and in 2023-24 the major export destinations of basmati rice were Saudi Arabia, Iran Iraq, United Arab Emirates, the USA, and Yemen.
- ❖ The total export of non-basmati rice in 2023-24 was Rs. 37804.48 Crores or \$4570.06 Million. The major export markets were Benin, Guinea, Togo, Cote D Ivoire, and Vietnam.

Ban on the export of Non-Basmati Rice

- ❖ To control the price of rice in India the government banned the export of non-basmati white rice on 20 July 2023.
- ❖ The export was allowed only to those countries that requested Indian rice to meet their food security requirements.
- ❖ The ban on the export of non-basmati rice was removed by the government of India in September 2024 but it imposed a minimum export price of \$490 per tonne.

About National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL)

- ❖ The National Cooperative Exports Limited (NCEL) was set up in 2023 as a Multi-state

Cooperative Society under the Multi-State Cooperative Society Act, of 2002.

- ❖ It has been jointly promoted by the Gujarat Cooperative Milk Marketing Federation (GCMMF), Indian Farmers Fertilizer Cooperative Limited (IFFCO), National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India Limited (NAFED), Krishak Bharati Cooperative Limited (KRIBHCO) and National Co-operative Development Corporation (NCDC).

Function

- ❖ The National Cooperative Exports Limited is an umbrella organization for exports by the cooperative sector of the country.
- ❖ Headquarters: New Delhi
- ❖ Managing Director: Unupom Kausik

CM Mohan Yadav inaugurates 31st National Children's Science Congress

- ❖ Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav inaugurated the 31st National Children's Science Congress at the Ravindra Bhawan in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh on 3rd January 2025.
- ❖ The Chief Minister also inaugurated the automation of the Varahmihira Astronomical Observatory which will allow the common citizens to use the observatory's telescope while sitting at home.
- ❖ Prof. Abhay Karandikar, Secretary, Department of Science and Technology, Government of India, Anurag Jain, Chief Secretary, Government of Madhya Pradesh, Dr. Suhas Joshi, Director, IIT Indore was also present during the inauguration ceremony.



Organiser of the National Children's Science Congress

- ❖ The National Children's Science Congress is organised by the National Council for Science and Technology Communication (NCSTC).
- ❖ The NCSTC comes under the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India.
- ❖ The 31st National Children's Science Congress will be held from 3-6 January 2025. The 30th National Children's Science Congress (NCSC) was held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat from 27–31 January 2023.

About the National Children's Science Congress

- ❖ The first National Children's Science Congress was organised in 1993.
- ❖ The National Children's Science Congress is held every year and is hosted by a State/Union Territory government.
- ❖ Children in the age-group of 10-17 years participate in the Congress. The children could be from formal school or out of school.
- ❖ The main aim of the National Children's Science Congress is to provide a platform to children to exhibit their creativity and innovativeness and their ability to solve a societal problem experienced locally using the method of science.

Participant of the 31st National Children's Science Congress

- ❖ The Conference is expected to see the participants of around 700 students, their teachers, and mentors. The students are primarily from India but students of Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Kuwait, Oman, and Saudi Arabia will also present their ideas and innovations.
- ❖ The students will also interact with the country's top scientists like Dr Chetan

Solanki (IIT-Bombay), Dr Nand Kumar (AIIMS, Delhi).

Theme of the 31st National Children's Science Congress

- ❖ The main theme of the 31st National Children's Science Congress is "Understanding Ecosystems for Health and Well-being".
- ❖ The theme has been further divided into five sub-themes; understanding of ecosystems, ecological approaches for self-reliance, promotion of nutrition and health, socio-cultural practices and technological innovations.

India's first coastal and wader bird census in Jamnagar, Gujarat

Key Points:

- ❖ India's first coastal and wader bird census will be conducted in the Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary in Jamnagar, Gujarat from 3 -5 January 2025.
- ❖ Wader birds are those birds which has long legs, long necks, and long bills, that are adapted for wading in shallow waters and live on fish, frogs, etc. Crane, stork, shoebill, ibis, heron, flamingo etc are some of the examples of wader bird.



- ❖ The term "wader bird" refers to a group of birds, also known as shorebirds, that are commonly found near wetlands, mudflats, and shores. These birds are characterized by their long legs, which they use for wading in shallow water to feed on small invertebrates, insects, and other aquatic organisms.

- ❖ Examples of wader birds include:
- ❖ Herons
- ❖ Egrets
- ❖ Sandpipers
- ❖ Plovers
- ❖ Flamingos

Who is conducting the census?

- ❖ The three day census is being carried out by the Gujarat government's Forest Department in collaboration with a non governmental organisation (NGO) Bird Conservation Society Gujarat (BCSG). The first day of the census will feature speeches by experts in forest and wildlife. On the second day the bird counting will begin and on the third day, knowledge sharing and a closing ceremony will be held.

About the Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary

- ❖ India's first Marine Sanctuary was set up in 1980 and in 1982 the first Marine National Park was set up in the Gulf of Kutch, Jamnagar. It is an archipelago of 42 tropical islands situated along the northern coast of Jamnagar district and the southern coast of Kutch. The total area of the Marine National Park is 163 sq km and Marine Sanctuary is 458 sq.km.

Geographical feature

- ❖ The sanctuary lies in the intertidal zone. Intertidal zone refers to the area where the sea meets the land during high and low tides. The land area is submerged during the high tides and exposed during the low tide. The area is also rich in coral reef fringes and 52 coral species are found here especially at Pirotan, Narala, Ajad and Positara.

Bangladesh's new textbooks claim Khaleda Zia's husband declared independence, not Mujib

Key Points:

- ❖ The Yunus government of Bangladesh has started erasing the legacy of Sheikh Hasina's father and former President Sheikh Mujibur Rahman. The current government has decided to change the textbooks of Bangladesh.



- ❖ According to the Daily Star, from now on, it will be mentioned in the book that in 1971, Bangladesh got independence from Pakistan not by Mujibur Rahman but by Ziaur Rahman. Ziaur Rahman was the husband of former Bangladesh President Khaleda Zia.
- ❖ He became the co-army chief after Bangladesh's independence. Later he also became the President of the country. In 1981, he was assassinated by some people associated with the army.
- ❖ According to the report, Mujib's title of Father of the Nation has also been removed in the new book. This book will be taught to students from primary to secondary level.



Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar Sworn in as Kerala Governor

Key Points:

- ❖ On January 2, 2025, Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar took the oath as the 23rd Governor of Kerala in a ceremony held at Raj Bhavan, Thiruvananthapuram. He succeeds Arif Mohammed Khan, who has been appointed as the Governor of Bihar.

- ❖ The oath was administered by the Chief Justice of the Kerala High Court, Justice Nitin Madhukar Jamdar, in the presence of prominent dignitaries, including Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan and various ministers.



Arif Mohammad Khan Takes Oath as Bihar's New Governor

Key Points:

- ❖ Arif Mohammad Khan was sworn in as the 42nd Governor of Bihar, succeeding Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, who has been appointed as the Governor of Kerala.
- ❖ The ceremony took place at the Raj Bhawan, where Patna High Court Chief Justice K. Vinod Chandran administered the oath in the presence of several key political figures, including Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Leader of the Opposition Tejashwi Yadav.



Pakistan Begins Two-Year Term as Non-Permanent UNSC Member

Key Points:

- ❖ On January 1, 2025, Pakistan commenced its two-year tenure as a non-permanent

member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). This marks Pakistan's eighth term on the 15-member council, succeeding Japan as the Asian representative. This is Pakistan's eighth term on the UNSC, with previous terms in 2012-13, 2003-04, 1993-94, 1983-84, 1976-77, 1968-69, and 1952-53.



Membership	
Permanent members:	
	China ^[a]
	France
	Russia ^[b]
	United Kingdom
	United States
Non-permanent members on rotation:	
	Algeria
	Denmark
	Pakistan
	Greece
	Guyana
	Panama
	Sierra Leone
	Slovenia
	Somalia
	South Korea
Presidency	Algeria (January 2025)

Sai Paranjpye to be honoured with Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award

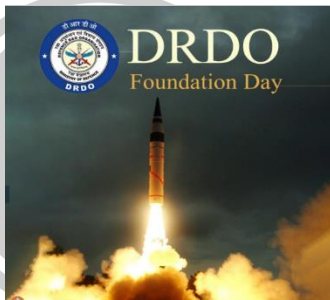
Key Points:

- ❖ Veteran director-writer Sai Paranjpye, known for slice-of-life films such as "Sparsh", "Chashme Buddoor", "Katha", and "Saaz", will receive the Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award at the Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival (AIFF) 2025. The 10th edition of the film gala is scheduled to be held in Chhatrapati Sambhajanagar from January 15 to January 19.



DRDO 67th Foundation Day

- ❖ On January 2, 2025, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) marked its 67th foundation day, reflecting on decades of contributions to India's defence capabilities. Since its establishment in 1958, DRDO has grown from a modest setup of 10 laboratories to a robust network of 52 laboratories and 5 DRDO Young Scientist Laboratories (DYSLs), covering a vast spectrum of defence technologies.



- ❖ **Agency executive** - Sameer V. Kamat,
- ❖ **Chairman, DRDO Parent agency** - Ministry of Defence

China steps up monitoring of emerging respiratory diseases: Report

Key Points:

- ❖ A seasonal rise in respiratory illnesses in China is drawing significant attention this year, especially on social media. The focus stems from unfounded comparisons to the Covid-19 pandemic, which began five years ago.
- ❖ The World Health Organization (WHO) highlighted the increase in cases in a November bulletin, noting that respiratory infections had been on the rise since October. In response, China's National

Disease Control and Prevention Administration (NCDPA) has launched a pilot monitoring system aimed at identifying and managing pneumonia of unknown origin.

- ❖ Respiratory infections are infections that affect the respiratory system, which is responsible for breathing. They can affect the lungs, airways, throat, or sinuses. Respiratory infections are caused by bacteria, viruses, or fungi.
- ❖ Although social media is filled with claims of overcrowded hospitals, no official reports suggest that the situation is critical. However, the NCDPA acknowledged a notable rise in respiratory infections between December 16 and 22.
- ❖ The ongoing pneumonia outbreak is particularly concerning for vulnerable groups, including young children and the elderly.
- ❖ Children, whose immune systems are still developing, are especially susceptible to severe symptoms, while older adults with pre-existing conditions, such as asthma or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), are at heightened risk of complications.

ବର୍ତ୍ତମାନ ସୁଦ୍ଧା ଚୀନରେ ୭.୮୩୪ଟି ସଂକ୍ରମଣ ଓ ୧୭୦ ଜଣଙ୍କ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ରେକର୍ଡ କରାଯାଇଛି । ଚେନେଇ ସାମ୍ବାଦିକ ସମ୍ବଳନାରେ ହୁ ମହାନିବେଶକ ଟେଡ୍ରୋସ୍ ଆଧାନମ୍ ରେଡ୍ରେଡେସ୍ ଏହି ସୂଚନା ଦେଇଛନ୍ତି । ଏହି ମୃତ୍ୟୁ କୁଟାଣୁ ୧୮ଟି ଜିନିଷ ଦେଖିଲେ ୭.୮୩୪ ଜଣଙ୍କୁ ସଂକ୍ରମିତ କରିଛି । ଏଥିରେ ୧୭୦ ଜଣଙ୍କ ମୃତ୍ୟୁ ଘଟିଛି ଏବଂ ସମସ୍ତେ ଚୀନର ।

- ❖ HMPV(human metapneumovirus) is a respiratory virus responsible for both upper and lower respiratory infections. Identified in 2001, it affects individuals across all age groups, with young children, the elderly, and those with compromised immune systems being particularly vulnerable.





HMPV spreads through mechanisms common to other respiratory viruses:

- ❖ Respiratory secretions from coughing and sneezing.
- ❖ Close personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands.
- ❖ Contact with contaminated surfaces followed by touching the mouth, nose, or eyes.

Preventive Measures:

- ❖ Handwashing, mask-wearing, avoiding close contact, and cleaning frequently touched surfaces.

2 January – World Introvert Day

- ❖ World Introvert Day is celebrated on 2 January to acknowledge and appreciate the unique qualities of introverts, emphasizing their strengths and contributions to society. The day raises awareness about the misconceptions surrounding introversion and promotes acceptance of different personality types. **Theme 2025 – Some peace and calm in a noisy world.** A quiet, shy person who prefers to be alone than with other people.

