

13 January 2025

Neeraj Chopra named best javelin thrower of the year by US Magazine

Key Points:

- ❖ Tokyo Olympics gold medalist Neeraj Chopra of India has been named the best javelin thrower of the 2024 by the respected American magazine Track and Fields News.
- ❖ Anderson Peters of Grenada was ranked second by the magazine. 27-year-old Neeraj Chopra competed in six international events in 2024, won two and finished runners up in four events. Neeraj Chopra won a silver medal in the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics behind Arshad Nadeem of Pakistan who won the gold medal.
- ❖ Arshad Nadeem was ranked 6th by the Magazine as he competed in only two international events in 2024.



- ❖ The first competition of Neeraj Chopra in 2024 was the Doha Diamond league in May where he finished second behind Czechia's Jakub Vadlejch.
- ❖ He won the Paavo Nurmi Games in Finland held in June and the National Federation Senior Athletics Competition in India.
- ❖ Neeraj Chopra achieved his career best throw of 89.49 meters at the Lausanne Diamond League, and concluded the 2024 season in the Diamond League Final, held at Brussels, Belgium in September 2024.
- ❖ In both the Lausanne and Brussels events Neeraj Chopra finished second behind Paris 2024 bronze medallist Anderson Peters of Grenada.

Sri Lanka launch 1st certificate course in Hindi on World Hindi Day

- ❖ Sri Lanka has launched the first certificate course in Hindi in the country to promote Hindi education in the country. The initiative was launched in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 10 January 2025 on the occasion of the World Hindi Day or Vishwa Hindi Diwas.
- ❖ The World Hindi Day has been observed every year on 10th January since 2006. The certificate course was launched at the Bharat-Sri Lanka Hindi Sammelan held in Colombo on 10th January 2025 on the occasion of the World Hindi Day.
- ❖ The launch of the Hindi course in Sri Lanka was a part of the effort of the Ministry of External Affairs to promote Hindi language around the world.

Who is offering the Hindi Course in Sri Lanka?

- ❖ The certificate course in Hindi is being launched by the Open University of Sri Lanka in collaboration with the Swami Vivekananda Cultural Centre (SVCC), the cultural arm of the High Commission of India in Colombo, Sri Lanka.
- ❖ The course was launched by India's High Commissioner to Sri Lanka, Santosh Jha and Dr. Madhura Seneviratne, Deputy Minister of Education and Higher Education of Sri Lanka.

Different from Hindi Diwas

- ❖ The World Hindi Day or the Vishwa Hindi Diwas is different from Hindi Diwas. Hindi Diwas is observed on 14th September every year to mark the adoption of Hindi language in devanagari script by the Constituent Assembly of India as the Official language of the country.
- ❖ First Hindi Diwas was observed by the government of India on 14th September 1953. Hindi is the largest spoken language in India and third most spoken language in the world after English and Mandarin Chinese.

2025 Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award winners

- ❖ Following are the 27 persons/organisations honoured with the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards 2025 in Bhubaneswar, Odisha on 10th January 2025.



Serial Number	Award Winner	Nationalities	Profession
1	Prof. Ajay Rane	Australia	Community Service
2	Dr. Mariatena Joan Fernandes	Austria	Education
3	Dr. Philomena Ann Mohini Harris	Barbados	Medical Science
4	Swami Sanyuktanand	Fiji	Community Service
5	Saraswati Vidy Niketan	Guyana	Community Service
6	Dr. Lekh Raj Juneja	Japan	Science & Technology
7	Dr. Prem Kumar	Kyrgyzstan	Medical Science
8	Soukthavy Chowdhury	Lao People Democratic Republic	Business

9	Krishna Savjani	Malawi	Business
10	Dr. Subramaniam K.V. Sathasivam	Malaysia	Politics
11	Dr. Sarita Boodhoo	Mauritius	Community Service
12	Abhaya Kumar	Moldova	Business
13	Dr. Ram Niwas @ Hla Tun	Myanmar	Education
14	Jaggannath Shekhar Asthana	Romania	Business
15	Hindustani Samaj	Russia	Community Service

16.	Ms. Sudha Rani Gupta	Russia	Education
17.	Dr. Syed Anwar Khursheed	Saudi Arabia	Medical Science
18.	Mr. Atul Arvind Temurnikar	Singapore	Education
19.	Mr. Robert Masih Nahar	Spain	Community Service
20.	Dr. Kaushik Laxmidas Ramaiya	Tanzania	Medicine
21.	H.E. Christine Carla Kangaloo ORTT	Trinidad & Tobago	Public Affairs
22.	Mr. Ramakrishnan Sivaswamy Iyer	UAE	Business
23.	Mr. Bonthala Subbaiah Setty Ramesh Babu	Uganda	Community Service
24.	Baroness Usha Kumari Prashar	UK	Politics

25.	Dr. Sharad Lakhnarpal	USA	Medicine
26.	Dr. Sharmila Ford	USA	Community Service
27.	Mr. Ravi Kumar S.	USA	Business (IT & Consulting)

Swiggy launches new app 'Snacc' for 15-minute food delivery

- ❖ Swiggy has launched a new standalone food delivery app 'Snacc by Swiggy'. Snacc is a 15-minute food delivery app offering quick snacks and meals, similar to Zepto's Zepto Cafe. Snacc is currently being piloted in very select pin codes of Bengaluru.
- ❖ The offerings include items like tea, coffee, breakfast items, quick meals and dessert options. Most recently, Zomato launched a 15-minute food delivery option on its main app, where it is delivering quick-to-prepare and ready to eat options from restaurants within a 2-kilometre radius.



- ❖ This is similar to Swiggy's Bolt that it launched in October, and said during its Q2 earnings that 5% of all its food delivery orders were already coming from Bolt. Ola too, launched 10 minute food delivery called Ola Dash in Bengaluru, which is currently in the process of expanding nationwide.
- ❖ Another player in this space is magicpin, which recently announced its 15-minute food delivery service magicNOW across six major Indian cities delivering within a 1.5-2 km radius.

Mo Farah announced as international event ambassador for Mumbai Marathon

- ❖ Multiple Olympic and world champion Mo Farah has been announced as the international event ambassador for the Tata

Mumbai Marathon, which will see a record-breaking 60,000 runners participating on January 19.

- ❖ The start line for the World Athletics Gold Label race will be the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus and the presence of Mo, the greatest male track distance runner, will add to the event.
- ❖ Somalian-born British runner Mo won four Olympic and six World Championship gold medals and is the first man to retain both the 5,000m and 10,000m titles at both the Olympics (2012 & 2016) and World Championships (2013 & 2015) — a feat described as the 'quadruple-double'.



National Youth Day

- ❖ India celebrates **National Youth Day** on **12th January** annually, commemorating Swami Vivekananda's birth anniversary.
- ❖ Since **1984**, the nation has observed the day to inspire youth to uphold the **values, principles, and beliefs** of Swami Vivekananda.
- ❖ As part of the celebrations, India organizes the **National Youth Festival** every year from **January 12 to 16**.
- ❖ The theme for this year's festival is : **"Youth for a Sustainable Future: Shaping the Nation with Resilience and Responsibility"**.
- ❖ Swami Vivekananda is regarded as a great Indian monk who introduced the Western world to **Hinduism**.

- ❖ A disciple of **Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa**, he advocated for **national integration** during colonial India.
- ❖ Swami Vivekananda is credited with the **revival of Hinduism** in the nation.

About Swami Vivekananda:

- ❖ Vivekananda was born in Kolkata on January 12, 1863, as Narendra Nath Datta. From an early age, he nurtured an interest in Western philosophy, history, and theology, and went on to meet the religious leader Ramakrishna Paramhansa, who later became his Guru.
- ❖ He remained devoted to Ramakrishna until the latter's death in 1886. In 1893, he took the name 'Vivekananda' after Maharaja Ajit Singh of the Khetri State requested him to do so, changing from 'Sachidananda' that he used before.

The Chicago address

- ❖ Vivekananda is especially remembered around the world for his speech at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago in 1893. The speech covered topics including universal acceptance, tolerance and religion, and got him a standing ovation.
- ❖ Though the speech spoke of how religions present different paths to the same spiritual goals, it also argued for the superiority of Indian traditions. Many parts of his speech have since become popular, including "I am proud to belong to a religion which has taught the world both tolerance and universal acceptance."
- ❖ We believe not only in universal tolerance but we accept all religions as true."; "I am proud to belong to a nation which has sheltered the persecuted and the refugees of all religions and all nations of the earth."; and "Sectarianism, bigotry, and its horrible descendant, fanaticism, have long possessed this beautiful earth... Had it not been for these horrible demons, human society would be far more advanced than it is now."

EAM Jaishankar to represent India at Donald Trump's swearing-in ceremony on January 20

- ❖ With Donald Trump returning to the Oval Office in the White House on January 20, External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar will be in Washington DC on January 20 to represent the Government of India at the ceremony that will mark the inauguration of the 47th president of the United States.
- ❖ Trump invited some foreign leaders, like President Xi Jinping of China, President Javier Milei of Argentina, Prime Minister Giorgia Melony of Italy, Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu of Israel and Prime Minister Viktor Orbán of Hungary, to his second inauguration. Xi, himself, may not travel to Washington DC.
- ❖ But he is likely to send a senior official to attend the ceremony, in a departure from the past practice of Beijing's envoy to Washington DC representing the government of the communist country in the inaugurations of the US presidents.
- ❖ Whether Trump invited Prime Minister Narendra Modi or not remained a subject of speculation over the past several weeks.
- ❖ New Delhi, however, ended all speculation on Sunday, with the Ministry of External Affairs confirming that Jaishankar would represent the Government of India at the ceremony, "on the invitation of the TrumpVance Inaugural Committee".
- ❖ Jaishankar will also have meetings with representatives of the incoming administration in Washington DC, apart from some other dignitaries visiting the US on that occasion, a spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs said in New Delhi.
- ❖ The External Affairs minister visited Washington DC from December 24 to 29, 2024. He met Michael Waltz, who would soon take over as the National Security Advisor to the new US president.

ଅମୁନି ଲଂଜେଲସ୍ ନିଆଁ, ପ୍ରାୟତଃ ୧୨ ହଜାର ଘର ଭସ୍ମ, ମୃତ୍ୟୁସଂଖ୍ୟା ୧୭ ଛୁଇଁଲା



ଜଳ ଅଭାବନକୁ ନେଇ କାଲିଫର୍ନିଆର ଗଭୀର ଗାଭିନ୍ ଘୃସମ୍ ଅସନ୍ତୋଷ ପ୍ରକାଶ କରିଛନ୍ତି । ଜଳ ଅଭାବ ଯୋଗୁଁ କିପରି ନିଆଁ ଲିଭାଇବା କାମ ପ୍ରଭାବିତ ହେଉଛି ସେ ତାହାର ଚଦନ୍ତ ଦାବି କରିଛନ୍ତି

- ❖ ଗଭୀର କହିଛନ୍ତି ଯେ କେତେକ ଅଗ୍ନି ହାଇଡ୍ରୋସ୍ପେରେ ଜଳ ଯୋଗାଣ ଅଭାବ ଏବଂ ସାନ୍ତା ଯାନେଜ୍ ଜଳଭଣ୍ଡାରରୁ ଜଳ ଯୋଗାଣ ଅନୁପଲବ୍ଧତା ଅଭିଯୋଗର ନିରାପେକ୍ଷ ଚଦନ୍ତ ହେବା ଉଚିତ ।



- ❖ Wildfires raging in the Los Angeles have turned thousands of structures into ashes and rubble, and forced more than 100,000 people to flee their homes. The wildfires have claimed at least 11 lives and the toll is expected to rise in the Southern California city, a fire department official told The Associated Press. According to the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL Fire), as of January 11, nearly 36,000 acres has burned down in the wildfires.

- ❖ Hollywood celebrities also figured among those who lost their homes to the massive wildfires in LA, California. Adam Brody and Leighton Meester, Paris Hilton, Mandy Moore and Billy Crystal, all endured the loss of their homes in the raging blazes. As of January 11, the intense wildfires destroyed 10,000 buildings, forced 180,000 out of their homes, claimed 11 lives, and caused a damage of \$150 billion.



- ❖ **Strong Santa Ana Winds:** These seasonal winds, with gusts reaching up to 100 mph, have significantly intensified the fires' spread.
- ❖ **Dry Conditions:** Prolonged drought and low humidity have created an environment where vegetation is highly flammable, providing ample fuel for the fires.
- ❖ **Climate Change:** Rising temperatures and changing weather patterns have increased the frequency and severity of wildfires in California.

