

First Human-operated Underwater Submersible

India is gearing up to deploy its first human-operated underwater submersible as part of the Deep Ocean Mission.

Key Points

- ❖ As per the Ministry of Science and Technology the **submersible is designed for a depth of up to 500 meters**.
- ❖ It is expected to **launch this year (2025)** and the plans are to extend its reach to 6,000 meters by next year.
- ❖ The announcement was made during the second meeting of the Mission Steering Committee at Prithvi Bhawan, New Delhi.
- ❖ The **Deep Ocean Mission aims to explore underwater resources**, improve knowledge of deep-sea ecosystems, and advance India's blue economy.
- ❖ The mission's objectives include identifying critical minerals, rare metals, and undiscovered marine biodiversity, which have economic and environmental implications.

National Anubhav Awards Scheme, 2025

Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare, organized a workshop on National Anubhav Awards Scheme, 2025 for the Anubhav Nodal Officers on 23rd January, 2025.

Key Points

- ❖ The workshop **included the officers of various Ministries/Departments including 12 Public Sector Banks and Central Public Sector enterprises**.
- ❖ **Launched:** Anubhav Portal is an **initiative launched by the Government of India at the behest of the Hon'ble Prime Minister of India in the year 2015**.

- ❖ **Purpose:** It is to provide a **platform for retiring/retired Government employees to share their valuable experiences** and insights gained during their service tenure.
- ❖ The Anubhav write-up can be submitted by the Central Government employees within the time period starting from 8 months prior to their retirement till 1 year of their retirement.
- ❖ **Watershed moment:** The National Anubhav Awards Scheme, 2025 is the **watershed moment in the history of Anubhav Portal as for the first time, apart from the employees of Central Government, employees of Central Public Sector Undertakings (CPSUs), including Public Sector Banks, were also be eligible for submitting their write ups**.

SANJAY

Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh flagged-off 'SANJAY - The Battlefield Surveillance System (BSS)' from South Block, New Delhi on January 24, 2025.

Key Points

- ❖ **What is it?** SANJAY is an automated system which integrates the inputs from all ground and aerial battlefield sensors, processing them to confirm their veracity, preventing duplication and fusing them to produce a Common Surveillance Picture of the battlefield over secured Army Data Network & Satellite Communication Network.
- ❖ It will enhance **battlefield transparency and transform the future battlefield** through a Centralised Web Application which will provide inputs to Command & Army Headquarters, and the Indian Army Decision Support System.

- ❖ The **BSS is equipped with state-of-the-art sensors and cutting-edge analytics.** It will monitor the vast land borders, prevent intrusions, assess situations with unparalleled accuracy and prove to be a force multiplier in Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance
- ❖ **Developed:** It has been indigenously & jointly developed by the **Indian Army and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)** creating a conducive ecosystem towards achieving 'Aatmanirbharta' as a follow up to the Indian Army's 'Year of Technology Absorption'.
- ❖ These systems will be inducted to all operational Brigades, Divisions & Corps of the Indian Army in three phases w.e.f. March to October of 2025, which has been declared as 'Year of Reforms' in the Ministry of Defence (MoD).

BSNL Launches IFTV Pilot in UP East

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), India's Trusted Telecom Partner has expanded its IFTV to UP East.

Key Points

- ❖ After the success of its **pilot launch in Puducherry**, this marks the **first rollout of the service in UP as a pilot for FTTH users.**
 - IFTV is **India's first fibre-based intranet TV service.** It specifically for BSNL's Fibre-to-the-Home (FTTH) subscribers.
- ❖ In this over 500+ live TV channels, including premium channels will be offered to the users in **UP East at free of cost.**



- ❖ The expansion showcases BSNL's commitment to integrating cutting-edge entertainment into everyday life.
- ❖ After UP East, IFTV will be rolled out to Maharashtra, Bihar & Jharkhand in February 2025, with nationwide availability planned soon.

Uttar Pradesh Gaurav Samman

Exemplary work by six distinguished individuals from Uttar Pradesh was recognised by the state govt on the occasion of UP Diwas on 24th January 2025. The department of culture bestowed the UP Gaurav Samman upon them.

Recipient of the award:

1. **Krishnakant Shukla:** He is from Varanasi, a disciple of Pandit Kumar Gandharva and Ustad Ali Akbar Khan. Shukla has worked extensively to document the fast-vanishing legacy of Uttar Pradesh's folk songs, some of which are over 1,400 years old.
2. **Himanshu Gupta:** He is an entrepreneur from Vrindavan committed to environmental conservation, was another recipient. Gupta, co-founder and chief of Climate AI, is a notable name in sustainable energy and was featured in Forbes' 30 Under 30 for his work.
3. **Manish Verma:** He is an agriculturalist from Kanpur, was the third recipient. He has made significant contributions in warehousing and food processing, focusing on uplifting poor, backward, and tribal farmers. Verma has also been instrumental in supporting the daughters of these farming families.
4. **Krishna Yadav:** She is a woman entrepreneur from Bulandshahr, was lauded as a role model for self-reliance. Starting her pickle-making business in the 1990s with just Rs 500 borrowed from a friend, she now collaborates with over 100 women. Her company's recent turnover of Rs 5 crore highlights her success.



5. **Colonel Subhash Deshwal:** After serving the Indian Army for 21 years he turned to agriculture in Bulandshahr in 2002. Today, he is India's largest producer of carrots and has developed innovative methods for growing and storing exotic varieties of carrots throughout the year.
6. **Dr Jai Singh:** The sixth awardee, Dr Jai Singh is a renowned banana cultivation expert from Bahraich, was recognised for his pioneering work in sustaining banana production in extreme temperatures and mentoring others in this field.

Note: Each recipient was presented with Rs 11 lakh, a certificate of appreciation, and a ceremonial stole.

IWAI- Regional Office in Varanasi

Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) set up its sixth regional office in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

Key Points

- ❖ For effective implementation of Inland Water Transport (IWT) activities in National Waterway-1 (NW-1), River Ganga, the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) under the Union Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways has upgraded its existing sub-office at Varanasi to a full-fledged Regional Office on January 23, 2025.
- ❖ **Aim:** The decision is aimed at **streamlining IWAI projects and related works in the state of Uttar Pradesh.**
- ❖ **Regional offices:** IWAI, presently has five regional offices in:

- Guwahati (Assam),
- Patna (Bihar),
- Kochi (Kerala),
- Bhubaneswar (Odisha)
- Kolkata (West Bengal).
- It will now have its sixth regional office in Varanasi, Uttar Pradesh.

- ❖ The Varanasi regional office will have its sub-office at Prayagraj. It will oversee works in the **487-kilometre stretch from Majhua to Varanasi MMT (Multi-Modal Terminal)** and further up to Prayagraj, apart from other NWs in Uttar Pradesh.
- ❖ **Purpose:** Implementation of the World-Bank supported **Jal Marg Vikas Project (JMVP)** will be one of its key priorities. JMVP is aimed at the capacity augmentation of River Ganga, i.e., NW-1 through various river conservancy works like bandalling and maintenance dredging in addition to already constructed MMT at Varanasi to promote cruise tourism and smooth cargo movement along the waterway.

There are about 30 rivers in Uttar Pradesh, of which ten have been declared as National Waterways.

The Varanasi Regional Office of IWAI shall look after development works not only on River Ganga but its various tributaries and other national waterways in Uttar Pradesh. These include rivers like Betwa, Chambal, Gomti, Tons, Varuna and parts of Gandak, Ghaghra, Karamnasa and Yamuna rivers.

Uttar Pradesh- Short News

- ❖ The cabinet has approved selection of successful bidders to operate medical colleges in **public-private partnership (PPP) mode with viability gap funding from the Central government.**

- This initiative targets unserved districts in Uttar Pradesh, including **Hathras, Baghpat, and Kasganj**, where no medical colleges currently exist in the government or private sector.

- ❖ Uttar Pradesh (UP) is on its way to **become the country's only state with 1,047 km Expressway with the completion of the Ganga Expressway** that will stretch from Meerut to Prayagraj.

Person In News- Appointment

Ayushmann Khurrana	He has been appointed As Brand Ambassador For FICCI Frames . FICCI Frames is an international convention of the Indian film industry.	
CS Dhananjay Shukla	The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI), a statutory body under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs , has elected CS Dhananjay Shukla as the President, and CS Pawan G Chandak as the Vice President.	

Person In News- Sports

D Gukesh	He became India's No. 1 chess player , replacing his compatriot Arjun Erigaisi . He has secured the fourth spot in the latest FIDE rankings . Gukesh gained the first position after his victory at the prestigious Tata Steel Tournament in Wijk Aan Zee, Netherlands , where he defeated Germany's Vincent Keymer.	
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Places in News

Yale Glacier	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ It is one of Nepal's most extensively studied glaciers. It is expected to vanish by the 2040s. ❖ It is the only glacier in the entire Himalayas to be included in the Global Glacier Casualty List. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ It is a project launched in 2024 through a collaboration between Rice University, University of Iceland, Iceland Glaciological Society, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), World Glacier Monitoring Service, and UNESCO. ❖ Yala glacier saw significant reductions in both area and volume since monitoring began. ❖ According to scientists at the International Centre for Integrated Mountain Development (ICIMOD), between 1974 and 2021, it retreated by 680m. Its elevation, which ranged from 5,170m to 5,750m in 2011, has also significantly declined.
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Reports/Indexes

Dependency and Depopulation: Confronting the Consequences of New Demographic Reality' report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ It has been published by McKinsey Global Institute. ❖ As per the report India is projected to account for 16 per cent of global consumption by 2050, up from 9 per cent in 2023. ❖ Only North America, with a 17 per cent share in 2050, will have a higher consumption share. ❖ The estimates have been calculated on the basis of purchasing power parity which equalises the price differences between countries.
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Awards/ Titles

Vyas Samman 2024 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ On January 28, noted Hindi writer Suryabala is to be presented the 34th Vyas Samman, 2024. ❖ She will receive the award for her novel “Kaun Des Ko Vasi: Venu Ki Diary”. ❖ In the book “Kaun Des Ko Vasi: Venu Ki Diary”, she deals with how the Indian youth believes that America is his promising future and challenges one faces going to America, temptations one falls prey to and what ideological conflict one goes through at the cultural level. ❖ Born in Varanasi of Uttar Pradesh in 1943, Suryabala has an MA in Hindi literature from Kashi Vishwavidyalaya, and later did her PhD. <p>About the Vyas Samman 2024</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ It was instituted in 1991. ❖ It is awarded annually by the K.K. Birla Foundation. ❖ The award is given to an outstanding Hindi literary work by an Indian citizen published during the last 10 years. ❖ It carries a cash prize of ₹4 lakh, a citation, and a plaque. ❖ For 2023 the winner was Pushpa Bharati for her memoir ‘Yaadein, Yaadein!...Aur Yaadein’.
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Important Days/Dates

January 25	National Voters Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The 15th National Voters' Day (NVD) was celebrated across the country on 25th January. ❖ The Hon'ble President of India Smt. Droupadi Murmu was the Chief Guest. ❖ This Year's Theme “Nothing Like Voting, I Vote for Sure” is a continuation of last year's theme emphasizing the importance of participation in the electoral process, and encouraging voters to take pride in exercising their franchise.
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The first copy of the ECI Coffee Table Book titled “India Votes 2024: A saga of democracy” was presented to the Hon’ble President by Chief Election Commissioner Shri Rajiv Kumar. ❖ A short clip of the upcoming docu-drama series “India Decides” produced by Warner Bros Discovery was also released at the event. ❖ An ECI publication “Belief in the Ballot: Human stories shaping India’s 2024 elections” was also presented to the Hon’ble President by the Commission. The book is a curated set of human interest stories that set these elections apart. ❖ Since 2011, National Voters’ Day has been observed annually on January 25 to commemorate the foundation day of the Election Commission of India, established on January 25, 1950, a day before India became a Republic.
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Important News- Other States

Himachal Pradesh	<p>Himachal Pradesh is celebrating its 55th Statehood Day on 25th January 2025.</p> <p>On this day in 1971, Himachal was carved out as an 18th state and got full statehood.</p>
West Bengal	<p>The iconic Kolkata book fair is set to take place in Salt Lake City, from January 28- February 9, 2025.</p> <p>For the first time a mascot has been introduced for the fair. It is a vehicle of Goddess Saraswati. The vehicle of Saraswati, is the swan, and it has been given the look of a bookworm.</p>

Important News- Worldwide

USA	<p>The Trump Administration Officially changes the names of Gulf of Mexico to Gulf of America and the Alaskan Peak Denali to Mount McKinley.</p>	
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Miscellaneous

- ❖ The **All-India Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL) and Rural Labourers (CPI-RL)** (Base: 1986-87=100) remained unchanged for the month of December 2024 at 1320 and 1331 points respectively.
 - The compilation of CPI Numbers for Agricultural Labourers started w.e.f. September, 1964.
- The existing series of CPI Numbers for Agricultural and Rural Labourers (base 1986-87=100) replaced the same w.e.f. November, 1995.
- ❖ In Bengaluru the conference on **‘Sun, Space Weather, and Solar-Stellar Connections’** has been organised by the **Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA)** to commemorate the 125th anniversary of the Kodaikanal Solar Observatory.

- The Observatory has been providing invaluable insights into the Sun's behaviour and its impact on Earth through its repository of photographic images, and was the harbinger of the birth of solar astrophysics in the country.
- ❖ The **Halwa ceremony, marking the final stage of the Union Budget 2025-26 preparation process, was held on 24th January 2025.** The ceremony was led by Finance Minister Sitharaman in the presence of Union Minister of State for Finance Pankaj Chaudhary and secretaries.
- The **halwa ceremony is a customary ritual observed a few days before the budget presentation in the Parliament**, involving the preparation and serving of "halwa" to officials and staff involved in the budget's preparation.
- The halwa ceremony also marks the beginning of the lock-in period at the finance ministry, meaning that no official involved in the budget process is allowed to leave the North Block premises



UPPSC
WALLAH

