

International

Rajnath Singh to meet Maldivian defence minister to review bilateral defence cooperation

About News:-

- ❖ Defence Minister Rajnath Singh will hold a crucial bilateral meeting with Maldives Defence Minister Mohammed Ghassan Maumoon in New Delhi on January 8, 2025. The discussions will focus on enhancing defence cooperation between India and the Maldives, specifically in areas such as training, joint exercises, defence projects, and supply of equipment to bolster the Maldives National Defence Forces (MNDF) capabilities.



Key Points:-

- ❖ Maumoon is scheduled to visit India for three days from January 8 to 10. During his stay, he will also visit Goa and Mumbai to strengthen ties between the two nations.
- ❖ According to a press release from the Ministry of Defence, the two Ministers will review various aspects of the bilateral defence relationship, including ongoing training programs, regular military exercises, defence initiatives, and seminars aimed at enhancing MNDF's operational readiness. Additionally, discussions will cover the supply of defence equipment and stores to the Maldives.
- ❖ India and the Maldives share deep-rooted historical, cultural, and linguistic ties, with the Maldives holding a special place in India's 'Neighbourhood First' policy. This policy aims to foster stability and prosperity in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). Both nations play pivotal roles in ensuring the safety and security of the region, in line with India's broader vision of Security and Growth for All in the Region (SAGAR).

- ❖ The meeting comes on the heels of a significant diplomatic development, as Maldives' Minister of Foreign Affairs, Abdulla Khaleel, wrapped up his first official visit to India earlier this week. The visit included high-level talks and the signing of critical agreements aimed at boosting bilateral development cooperation.
- ❖ Among the key achievements was the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDP). The MoU launched the third phase of cooperation between India and the Maldives, designed to deliver tangible benefits to communities at the grassroots level and further solidify the enduring partnership between the two nations.
- ❖ Khaleel's visit also included discussions with India's Minister of External Affairs, S. Jaishankar, where they explored new areas of collaboration, particularly in development projects, infrastructure, and socio-economic initiatives. Khaleel expressed gratitude for India's continued support in addressing the fiscal challenges faced by the Maldives, underscoring the significance of this partnership in promoting economic stability.

About Maldives:-

- ❖ Capital:- Malé
- ❖ Currency :- Maldivian rufiyaa
- ❖ President :- Mohamed Muizzu

National

Inaugural India-Malaysia Security Dialogue held in New Delhi

About News:-

- ❖ The inaugural India-Malaysia Security Dialogue was held in New Delhi on January 7, 2025, co-chaired by Shri Ajit Doval, National Security Adviser to the Prime Minister of India, and Raja Dato Nushirwan Bin Zainal Abidin, Director General of the National Security Council of Malaysia.



- ❖ This high-level meeting marked a significant step in strengthening bilateral cooperation in security and defence between the two nations.

Key Points:-

- ❖ During the dialogue, both sides discussed the global and regional security landscape and assessed their ongoing partnerships in the areas of security, defence, and maritime operations.
- ❖ Key agreements were reached to enhance collaboration in counter-terrorism, de-radicalisation, cyber security, defence industries, and maritime security.
- ❖ Additionally, they explored opportunities for joint efforts in the critical minerals and rare earths sectors. A major outcome of the meeting was the decision to institutionalise the dialogue through annual meetings, ensuring continuity and progress in bilateral engagements.
- ❖ This dialogue stems from the August 2024 visit of Prime Minister of Malaysia Dato Seri Anwar Ibrahim to India at the invitation of Indian Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.
- ❖ During that visit, the bilateral relationship was elevated to a Comprehensive Strategic Partnership, reflecting both nations' commitment to deepening ties across multiple domains. Strengthening security cooperation was a key focus of the leaders' discussions, which laid the groundwork for this historic meeting.

India and Malaysia relationship:-

- ❖ India and Malaysia share a long-standing bilateral relationship that dates back to 1957 when India established diplomatic ties with the Federation of Malaya, Malaysia's predecessor state. In the 1960s, this bond was reinforced through the personal friendship between then-Prime Ministers Jawaharlal Nehru and Tunku Abdul Rahman Putra.
- ❖ Over the years, successive Malaysian leaders, including PM Abdullah Badawi and former PM Dato' Seri Mohd. Najib Tun Abdul Razak, has introduced initiatives to foster closer ties with India.
- ❖ The people-to-people connection remains a cornerstone of the relationship, with Malaysia hosting approximately 2.75 million Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs), making it home to the second-largest PIO community globally. Additionally, tourism plays a vital role in enhancing bilateral ties.
- ❖ India is the fifth-largest source of tourists to Malaysia, with visa-free travel for Indian nationals introduced in December 2023 and Malaysia granted gratis tourist visas to Indian travellers in July 2024. With over 200 weekly flights connecting the two countries, the collaboration in the civil aviation and tourism sectors continues to flourish.

About Malaysia:-

- ❖ Capital :- Kuala Lumpur
- ❖ Currency :- Malaysian ringgit
- ❖ President :- Anwar Ibrahim

State

UP govt's new export policy to provide additional benefits to exporters



About News:-

- ❖ The Uttar Pradesh government is drafting a new export policy to boost the state's share in India's exports.
- ❖ The move aims to provide additional incentives to exporters.

Key Points:-

- ❖ In the last financial year (FY24), UP's merchandise exports were worth nearly \$20.67 billion, contributing 4.71 per cent to India's total exports. With the new policy, the government targets to increase this share to 7.5 per cent, a senior official said. For the first six months of FY25, the state logged exports worth \$10.56 billion, raising its share in the country's total exports to 4.89 per cent.
- ❖ The proposed policy would introduce several incentives for exporters, especially in the food processing, handicrafts, and One District One Product sectors. UP is known for its traditional industries, such as Banarasi silk sarees, carpets from Bhadohi, chikan embroidery from Lucknow, Kanpur's leather goods, and leather footwear from Agra.
- ❖ The policy would emphasise job creation and offer incentives, including marketing development support, air freight subsidies, international certification subsidies, and gateway port freight subsidies, the official added.
- ❖ The state government is aiming to achieve merchandise exports worth Rs 3 trillion in the next two to three years. Being a landlocked state, UP is also focusing on creating infrastructure to support its export supply chain.
- ❖ The state plans to develop all 75 districts into potential export hubs by building a robust network of warehouses, cargo terminals, and trucking hubs. These facilities will be located in industrial zones and near expressway projects.
- ❖ Under the UP Warehousing & Logistics Policy, the government is offering various financial incentives to attract private investments. Additionally, plans are in place to establish seamless air, water, road, and rail connectivity for enhanced access to global and domestic markets.

About Uttar Pradesh:-

- ❖ Capital:- Lucknow
- ❖ CM :- Yogi Adityanath
- ❖ Governor :- Anandiben Patel

Maharashtra

Pune Startup Develops AI-Powered Ayurveda Diagnostic Device



About News:-

- ❖ Nadi Tarangini, the country's first ayurvedic diagnostic tool to receive approval from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organization (CDSCO), is expected to redefine healthcare, fusing ancient wisdom and modern technology.

Key Points:-

- ❖ The brainchild of renowned chemical-nuclear scientist J B Joshi and his computer scientist son Aniruddha Joshi, the device uses sensors and artificial intelligence to detect, analyse, and predict imbalances in vata, pitta, and kapha the trinity of Ayurvedic diagnosis.
- ❖ JB Joshi, chancellor of the Institute of Chemical Technology, came up with the idea 20 years ago when he underwent ayurvedic treatment. Struck by the importance of pulse diagnosis and variability among practitioners, Joshi envisioned a scientific device to bring consistency and credibility to Ayurveda. "We wanted to introduce evidence-based tools to standardise the practice," Joshi said.
- ❖ Aniruddha Joshi, then pursuing his PhD at IIT Bombay, took on the challenge. Experimenting with several sensors, he developed piezoelectric sensors that mimic the tactile sensitivity of a human finger to capture pulse waves. Coupled with an AI-driven analysis system, the device generates a 10-page report in 10 Indian languages, detailing 22 Ayurvedic parameters, including stress levels, digestive health, and overall well-being.

- ❖ Supported by funding from CSIR and encouraged by Persistent Systems' Anand Deshpande to commercialise his research, Aniruddha founded Atreya Innovations in Pune. The resulting device, Nadi Tarangini, has patents in India, the US, Europe, and Indonesia. It is currently used in 1,250 Ayurvedic clinics and has tested over five lakh patients.

About Maharashtra:-

- ❖ Capital :- Mumbai
- ❖ CM :- Devendra Fadnavis
- ❖ Governor :- C. P. Radhakrishnan

Economic

India's GDP growth pegged at 6.4% for 2024-25

About News:-

- ❖ India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is expected to grow by 6.4% in the financial year 2024-25, down from the 8.2% growth recorded in 2023-24, according to the first advance estimates released by the Ministry of Statistics on Tuesday.

Key Points:-

- ❖ This projection is lower than the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) recent estimate of 6.6% for the current fiscal year. Despite this, India continues to retain its position as the fastest-growing major economy globally, while China's growth rate is projected to fall below 5%.



- ❖ The agriculture, construction, and services sectors have recorded a growth in performance compared to the previous year. Agriculture and allied sectors are estimated to grow by 3.8% in 2024-25, up from 1.4% in 2023-24. The construction sector and financial, real estate, and professional services sectors are projected to grow by 8.6% and 7.3%, respectively.

- ❖ Private final consumption expenditure has increased by 7.3% during the fiscal year, up from 4% in the previous year, the official statement noted. The Government's final consumption expenditure has also grown at a rate of 4.1% compared to 2.5% in the previous fiscal year, contributing to overall economic demand.
- ❖ Releasing the first advance estimates for 2024-25, the National Statistical Office (NSO) stated, "Real GDP has been estimated to grow by 6.4% in FY2024-25 as compared to the growth rate of 8.2% in Provisional Estimate (PE) of GDP for FY2023-24."
- ❖ The estimates come ahead of the Union Budget 2024-25 and emphasize the importance of continued investments in infrastructure projects and sustained focus on agriculture.
- ❖ India's economy grew at 5.4% in the second quarter (July-September) of 2023-24, reflecting a slowdown compared to the previous quarter. This prompted the RBI to revise its annual growth projection for the year to 6.6%, down from 7.2%.

Appointment

Asian Games gold medallist Bahadur Singh Sagoo elected as new Athletics Federation of India President



About News:-

- ❖ Bahadur Singh Sagoo has been elected as the new president of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI) on Tuesday.
- ❖ The Asian Games shot put medallist replaced the outgoing Adille Sumariwalla as the president of the Indian athletics federation. Sagoo was elected as the new president during the Annual General Assembly Meeting of the federation in Chandigarh.

Key Points:-

- ❖ With the arrival of Sagoo, Sumariwalla's stint as the AFI president, which lasted for more than a decade will conclude. The 67-year-old became the AFI president in 2012.

- ❖ Sagoo is a one-time Asian medallist and two-time national champion. The 51-year-old won a gold medal in the 2002 Busan Asian Games in the shot put. He also competed in the 2000 and 2004 Olympics. His best attempt of 20.40m came in 2004 in Koncha-Zaspa, Kyiv.
- ❖ Meanwhile, Sandeep Mehta who held the position of senior joint secretary was elected as the secretary of the body during the AGM.
- ❖ During Sumariwalla's reign, India rose to new heights in athletics. Neeraj Chopra stood out among those athletes. He won back-to-back Olympic medals in the javelin throw event. In the Tokyo edition, he won the historic gold for India. In the Paris edition, he followed it up with a silver medal.
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- ❖ The news Athletics boss will have his hands full with India set to host the World Athletics Continental Tour level event for the first time on August 10.

Defence

15th edition of Aero India to be held from Feb 10-14 in Bengaluru

About News:-

- ❖ The 15th edition of Asia's biggest aero show - Aero India 2025 - will be held at the Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru, Karnataka from February 10 to 14, 2025.
- ❖ With the broad theme 'The Runway to a Billion Opportunities', the event will provide a platform for forging partnerships between foreign & Indian firms and the discovery of newer avenues in the global value chain to accelerate the indigenisation process.



Key Points:-

- ❖ The first three days of the event (February 10th, 11th & 12th) will be business days, while the 13th & 14th have been set as public days to allow people to witness the show. The event includes both air displays and static exhibitions of a large array of military platforms from the aerospace sector.
- ❖ The event comprises a curtain raiser event, inaugural event, Defence Ministers' Conclave, CEOs' Round-Table, Manthan start-up event, breath-taking air shows, a large exhibition area comprising India Pavilion and a trade fair of aerospace companies.
- ❖ To facilitate dialogue towards a strategic partnership with friendly countries, India will host the Defence Ministers' Conclave on the theme 'BRIDGE -Building Resilience through International Defence and Global Engagement'. It encapsulates the dynamic geopolitical conditions and the path to mutual prosperity, which can be BRIDGED through cooperation among nations with a shared vision of security and development.
- ❖ Several bilateral meetings are planned at the levels of Raksha Mantri, Raksha Rajya Mantri, Chief of Defence Staff and Secretary among others on the sidelines of the event. The focus will be on bolstering the defence and aerospace ties with friendly countries by exploring newer avenues to take the partnership to the next level.
- ❖ The CEOs' Round Table is expected to provide a favourable platform to foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) for manufacturing in India. Global CEOs, CMDs of domestic PSUs and premier private defence & aerospace manufacturing companies from India will be participating in the event.
- ❖ The India Pavilion will showcase India's commitment to its Make-in-India initiative by showcasing indigenous defence manufacturing capabilities and cutting-edge technologies ready for the global stage, including prospects. Promotion of Indian start-ups is a focus area at Aero India 2025 and a wide spectrum of state-of-the-art technologies/products developed by them will be showcased at an exclusive iDEX pavilion.

- ❖ In addition, dynamic aerobatic displays and live technology demonstrations will provide an immersive experience, showcasing the potential of modern aerospace platforms and technologies. Several seminars on various important themes are also planned as part of the event.
- ❖ Aero India has already carved a niche for itself globally as a premier aerospace exhibition with 14 successful editions organised since 1996 in Bengaluru. The last edition achieved remarkable milestones as it attracted over seven lakh visitors, dignitaries from 98 countries and 809 exhibitors including businesses, investors, start-ups & MSMEs. Over 250 partnerships, including 201 MoUs, major announcements, product launches and technology transfers worth more than Rs 75,000 crore, were witnessed. The 2025 edition aims to surpass these achievements and promises to be even bigger in scope and grandeur.

Miscellaneous

Union Minister of Food Processing Industries to Inaugurate 8th Edition of the Indusfood 2025

About News:-

- ❖ Shri Chirag Paswan, Union Minister of Food Processing Industries will inaugurate the 8th Edition of the Indusfood 2025 at India Exposition Mart Ltd, Gautam Budh Nagar, Greater Noida on 8th January 2025. Indusfood is Asia's premier annual F&B trade exhibition organized by the Trade Promotion Council of India with the support of the Department of Commerce, The Government of India is set to mark yet another milestone in 2025 – marking its debut as an integrated farm-to-fork trade show.



Key Points:-

- ❖ Indusfood 2025 will be hosting 2,300 exhibitors from over 30 countries with exhibition space of over 120,000 sq. m. in this edition. The integrated trade fair will host over 7,500 international buyers and 15,000 Indian buyers/trade visitors, who are expected to be present during the show.
- ❖ Apart from the 8th edition of the Indusfood F&B trade fair at India Expo Mart, Greater Noida from January 8-10, TPCI is also organising the fourth edition of Indusfood Manufacturing (covering food processing technology, packaging technology, ingredients and hospitality technology) and the inaugural edition of Indusfood Agritech (showcasing agricultural technology, fisheries technology, dairy & poultry farming technology). The latter two events are scheduled for January 9-11, 2025 at Yashobhoomi Dwarka, New Delhi.
- ❖ The event format of Indusfood 2025, with these three concurrent trade fairs, has been meticulously designed to foster seamless cross-domain synergies across the farm-to-fork value chain. It offers unparalleled networking opportunities, facilitates meaningful business expansion, and provides invaluable market insights through targeted knowledge-sharing sessions. This integrated approach ensures that participants can discover innovative solutions, forge strategic partnerships, and stay ahead in the evolving global F&B landscape.
- ❖ The 2025 edition will witness participation from 35 international chefs and 100 Indian delegates, alongside professionals from Delhi NCR. With a diverse international audience, including hosted buyers from over 100 countries, the event provides Indian food companies with an unparalleled opportunity to reach native populations in these markets, moving beyond just the Indian diaspora.

- ❖ Indusfood 2025 is also proud to host the prestigious Asia President's Forum for the very first time in India, in partnership with the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA). This landmark event will bring together over 30 presidents of national chef associations from across Asia. Two mega summits focusing on the food manufacturing and agritech sectors are to be held on the sidelines of the show.

Sport

Kiran Jadhav Wins 10m Air Rifle Gold at Lakshya Cup

About News:-

- ❖ Kiran Jadhav of the Navy outclassed fancied names in the fray to bag the 10m air-rifle gold in the 15th Lakshya Cup invitational tournament here.

Key Points:-

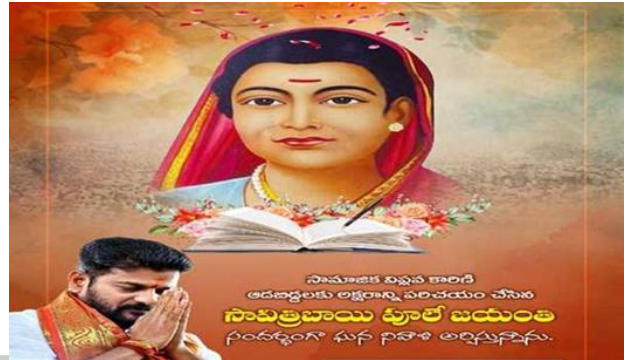
- ❖ The 29-year-old Jadhav totalled 251.7 points to emerge victorious for the first time after consistently making the final every year since 2018.
- ❖ Jadhav pipped Gajanan Khandagale of Maharashtra, who tallied 250.9, to the second place while Mohit Gowda, also of Maharashtra, finished third with 229.3 points. Paris Olympics finalist Arjun Babuta of Railways was the favourite to win the title here but he ended up at fourth with 208.2 points.
- ❖ However, reigning men's and women's national air rifle champions, Shahu Mane and Ananya Naidu, failed to qualify for the finals.
- ❖ Mane of Railways shot 629.0 and 626.4 points, respectively in the qualification rounds.
- ❖ With the top eight shooters entering the title round, the eighth qualifier was Gowda with 630.5 points.



- ❖ Among the Olympians who did not make it to the finals were Divyansh Singh Panwar of Rajasthan (629.0) and Sandeep Singh of the Army Marksmanship Unit (623.3).

Important Day

Telangana to celebrate Savitribai Phule's birth anniversary as 'Women Teacher's Day'



About News:-

- ❖ The Telangana government has decided to celebrate the birth anniversary of Savitribai Phule as a state function on 3rd January as 'Women Teacher's Day' every year to pay tribute to her contributions to women's education.
- ❖ Savitribai Phule was a social worker, poet, and teacher and worked actively towards women's freedom and situation in Indian society.

Key Points:-

- ❖ She opened India's first school for girls in 1848 in Pune and became India's first woman teacher and first Indian headmistress.
- ❖ She published her first collection of poems, named Kavya Phule ('Poetry's Blossoms') in 1854 and also published Bavan Kashi Subodh Ratnakar ('The Ocean of Pure Gems'), in 1892. Note: Pune University, Pune(Maharashtra), is named after Savitribai Phule as a tribute to her efforts for women's education in India.

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