

16th January 2025

Surat, Nilgiri, Vagsheer

The Indian Prime Minister dedicated the warships INS Surat, INS Nilgiri and submarine INS Vagsheer to the nation at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai on 15 January.

Key Points:

- ❖ **Significance:** The launch of these two warships and a submarine is a significant step towards the country becoming a global leader in defence manufacturing and maritime security.
- ❖ **INS Surat:** The fourth and final ship of the P15B guided missile destroyer project, INS Surat is one of the largest and most sophisticated destroyers in the world.
 - It has **75 per cent indigenous content** and is equipped with a state-of-the-art weapon-sensor package and advanced network-centric capabilities.
- ❖ **INS Nilgiri:** The first ship of the P17A stealth frigate project, INS Nilgiri is designed by the Warship Design Bureau of the Indian Navy.
 - It incorporates advanced features for improved survivability, seaworthiness and stealth capability, marking the next generation of indigenous frigates.
- ❖ **INS Vagsheer:** The sixth and last submarine of the P75 Scorpene project, INS Vagsheer represents India's growing expertise in submarines and has been built in **collaboration with the Naval Group of France**.


- ❖ **Sri Sri Radha Madanmohanji Temple**
- ❖ The Prime Minister inaugurated the Sri Sri Radha Madanmohanji Mandir, an **ISKCON project at Kharghar in Navi Mumbai**.

- ❖ Spread over **nine acres**, the project includes a multi-deity temple, a Vedic education centre, a proposed museum and auditorium, healing centre, etc.

Utkarsh

Utkarsh vessel was launched by the Indian Navy on 13 January 2025 at L&T, Kattupalli, Chennai.

Key Points:

- ❖ It is the second of the two multi-purpose ships being built by M/s L&T Shipyard.
 
- ❖ The ship has been named 'Utkarsh' which means '**Superior in Conduct**'.
- ❖ **Background:** The contract for two multi-purpose ships was signed between the Ministry of Defence and M/s L&T Shipyard on 25 March 2022.
- ❖ **Features:** These multi-purpose ships will be capable of towing ships, launching and recovering various targets, operating unmanned autonomous vehicles and acting as a test platform for various indigenous weapons and sensors under development.
- ❖ **Length:** The 106-metre long ships are designed to achieve a maximum speed of 15 knots.
- ❖ **Significance:** This effort is in line with the Indian Navy's efforts towards indigenous shipbuilding and reflects the country's progress in indigenous shipbuilding, in line with the Government of India's vision of **Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India initiatives**.

CISF Battalion

It has been announced that two battalions will be added to the CISF fleet.

Key Points:

- ❖ The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has approved the formation of two new battalions as part of efforts to strengthen CISF.
- ❖ Each battalion will have **1025 personnel**.
- ❖ With these two battalions, CISF, which started with about 3000 personnel on 10 March 1969, will become a force of about **two lakh personnel**.
- ❖ With these two battalions, the number of battalions in CISF will increase from 13 to **15**.
- ❖ CISF provides security to more than 350 institutions in the country, including Parliament, Delhi Metro, airports and nuclear plants.

National Turmeric Board

The Union Minister of Commerce and Industry inaugurated the National Turmeric Board in New Delhi.

Key Points:

- ❖ **Target:** With its establishment, a target has been set to double the production of turmeric to 20 lakh tonnes in the next five years.
- ❖ **Chairman:** Palle Ganga Reddy has been appointed as the first chairman of the board.
- ❖ **Headquarters:** The headquarters of the National Turmeric Board has been set up in **Nizamabad**, Telangana.
- ❖ **Special Focus:** The Turmeric Board will pay special attention to the welfare of turmeric farmers in 20 states including Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Meghalaya.

- ❖ Turmeric is called the '**Golden Spice**'.
- ❖ India is the largest turmeric producer, consumer and exporter in the world.
- ❖ In the year 2023-24, turmeric was cultivated in 3.05 lakh hectares of area in India, producing 10.74 lakh tonnes. And about **30 varieties** of turmeric are produced in India.
- ❖ India's share in world trade is more than **62%**.
- ❖ In the financial year 2023-24, **India exported 1.62 lakh tonnes of turmeric and turmeric products worth \$ 226.5 million**.

New Appointment process of Election Commissioners

Recently some changes have been announced in the appointment process of the Election Commissioner.

Key Points-

- ❖ As per Sections 6 and 7 of the Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners (**Appointment, Conditions of Service and Tenure**) Act, **2023**, for the first time, the Law Ministry will constitute a search committee headed by the Law Minister to prepare a **panel of five names to be proposed to the selection committee**.
- ❖ The selection committee comprising the **Prime Minister, a Cabinet minister and the Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha** can select from this panel or consider "any other person" from outside.
- ❖ Traditionally, the successor of the Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) is the next most senior Election Commissioner.

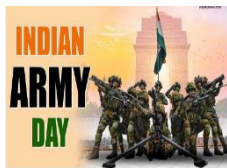
- ❖ Current Chief Election Commissioner Rajiv Kumar is stepping down on February 18.
- ❖ The Election Commission currently comprises the Chief Election Commissioner and two Election Commissioners - **Gyanesh Kumar and Sukhbir Singh Sandhu**.
- ❖ Though **Gyanesh Kumar** remains a potential candidate for the top post, the Act gives the selection committee the option to consider names from outside the Election Commission as well.

Important Days

15 January

India Army Day

- ❖ Army Day is celebrated every year on **15 January** in India to honour the armed forces and their immense sacrifices for the country.
- ❖ The day commemorates the taking over of the Indian Army as the first Commander-in-Chief by **General KM Cariappa in 1949**.
- ❖ The **77th Army Day** is celebrated in 2025.
- ❖ This year the Indian Army Day parade was held in **Pune**. This is the third occasion when the Army Day parade was held in a city other than New Delhi.
- ❖ The theme for the year 2025 is 'Samartha Bharat, Saksham Sena', which reflects the Indian Army's commitment towards national strength and defence capabilities.



Sports

Kho Kho World Cup 2025

- ❖ The opening ceremony of Kho-Kho World Cup 2025 took place at the **Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium, New Delhi**.

Key Points:

- ❖ The Kho Kho competition is supported by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA).
- ❖ The inaugural edition will see the participation of 20 men's and 19 women's teams.
- ❖ **Team Groups:** The Indian men's team is in Group A along with Nepal, Peru, Brazil and Bhutan, while the women's team is in Group A along with Islamic Republic of Iran, Malaysia and Republic of Korea. The top two teams from each group will qualify for the quarter-finals.
- ❖ Kho Kho, along with other indigenous Indian sports like Kabaddi and Mallakhamb, was showcased during the **1936 Berlin Olympics**.

Important News- Other States

Odisha

- ❖ Odisha has become the **34th state** to implement the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY).
- ❖ AB PM-JAY will be implemented in conjunction with the existing **Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana** in Odisha.
- ❖ It will provide a cover of **Rs 5 lakh per year to each family**, with an additional Rs 5 lakh for female members.
- ❖ A total of around **1.03 crore families** will be covered under this integrated scheme, with 67.8 lakh families to be assisted by the central government.

Maharashtra

- ❖ The **10th Ajanta Verul International Film Festival** will be held from 15th to 19th January at Chhatrapati Sambhajnagar.
- ❖ The festival is being organised in collaboration with the Government of India and the Government of Maharashtra and the festival has received **special support from Prozone Mall**.

Important News-Worldwide

Russia

- ❖ Russia has sent the reactor vessel for the sixth power unit at the Kudankulam plant from the Novorossiysk port to the construction site.
- ❖ The 320-tonne equipment, manufactured by Rosatom's machine-building division Atomash, was shipped in late 2024.
- ❖ The Kudankulam plant in Tamil Nadu, which will have six reactors with a total installed capacity of 6,000 MW, is **India's largest nuclear power plant** and a flagship project of Russian-Indian energy cooperation.

- ❖ The production cycle for manufacturing the VVER-1000 reactor vessel from the start of production is two years.

Spain

- ❖ The Indian Foreign Minister said the year **2026** will be marked as a '**double year**' to celebrate advancements in culture, tourism and artificial intelligence between India and Spain.
- ❖ India and Spain currently have an annual trade of **US\$10 billion**, covering sectors such as railways, clean technology, drones and space exploration.

Miscellaneous

- ❖ According to a Crisil Intelligence report, India's gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate is estimated to improve to 6.7% in the financial year (FY25).
- ❖ C-DOT, the premier telecom R&D centre of the Department of Telecommunications signed an agreement with IIT Delhi for development of Building Blocks for THz Communication Front Ends for 6G.

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