

25 December 2024

Arvind Kejriwal launches Dr Ambedkar Samman Scholarship for Dalit students

Key Points:

- ❖ Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) chief Arvind Kejriwal has launched a new scholarship programme aimed at Dalit students in Delhi. The scheme, named the Dr Ambedkar Samman Scholarship, will cover all expenses for Dalit students wishing to pursue higher education abroad. The Delhi government would bear the entire cost of tuition, travel, and accommodation for those Dalit students who are accepted into foreign universities.



ISRO-European Space Agency Sign Deal For Cooperation In Astronaut Training

Key Points:

- ❖ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has entered into an agreement with European Space Agency (ESA) for cooperation on activities related to astronaut training, mission implementation, and research experiments. The agreement was signed by ISRO Chairman and Secretary, Department of Space (DOS) Dr S Somanath and ESA Director General Dr Josef Aschbacher.



- ❖ The agreement provides a framework for cooperative activities in human space

exploration and research, especially in areas such as astronaut training, support for experiment development and integration, using ESA facilities on the International Space Station (ISS), human and biomedical research experiment implementation as well as joint education and outreach activities.

- ❖ For the upcoming Axiom-4 mission in which ISRO's Gaganyatri and ESA's astronaut are crew members, both agencies are collaborating to implement shortlisted experiments by Indian Principal Investigators on ISS.

Snack Brand Epigamia Founder Rohan Mirchandani Dies

Key Points:

- ❖ Snack foods firm Epigamia's founder Rohan Mirchandani died at the age of 41. Mirchandani, an alumnus of NYU Stern and The Wharton School, founded Drums Food International in 2013. Under his leadership, Epigamia transitioned from a modest venture into a household name in urban India, offering a diverse range of health-focused products. The brand's reach extended to over 20,000 retail points across 30 cities, with plans for expansion into the Middle East by 2025-26.



Russian tennis player Daniil Savelev suspended for 2 years for doping

Key Points:

- ❖ Russian tennis player Daniil Savelev has been handed a two-year suspension for violating anti-doping regulations. The

International Tennis Integrity Agency (ITIA) announced that Savelev tested positive for the prohibited substance meldonium during a test conducted in July 2024. Consequently, he has been provisionally suspended since August of the same year, and his suspension will conclude in August 2026. At the time of the violation, Savelev had achieved a career-high world doubles ranking of 1,486 in August 2022.



National Farmer's Day

Key Points:

- ❖ Kisan Diwas, or National Farmer's Day, is observed annually on December 23 to honour the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, India's fifth Prime Minister and a dedicated advocate for farmers.
- ❖ This day is celebrated to express gratitude to the farmers who form the foundation of the country's economy. Theme 2024 – Empowering 'Annadatas' for a Prosperous Nation Kisan Diwas, or National Farmer's Day, is observed annually on December 23 to honour the birth anniversary of Chaudhary Charan Singh, India's fifth Prime Minister and a dedicated advocate for farmers.



Former SC Judge V Ramasubramanian Appointed as 9th NHRC Chairperson

Key Points:

- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu appointed former Supreme Court judge V Ramasubramanian as the 9th Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) on 23 December 2024.
- ❖ President Droupadi Murmu also appointed Priyank Kanoongo and Dr. Justice Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi (Retd.) as Members of the NHRC. The post of the NHRC Chairperson has been lying vacant since the completion of the term of the 8th Chairperson of NHRC, Justice (retd) Arun Kumar Mishra on 1 June 2024.
- ❖ Justice (retd) V Balasubramanian will succeed Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, who was performing the duty of acting chairperson of the NHRC. Under the provisions of the Protection of Human Rights Act 1993, the government of India established the National Human Rights Commission of India on 12 October 1993.
- ❖ Similarly, every state government has also set up the State Human Rights Commission under the provisions of the Protection of Human Rights Act 1993.



Appointment of the NHRC Chairperson and its Members

- ❖ According to the Protection of Human Rights Act 1993 as amended in 2019 the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission and its members are appointed by the President of India on the recommendation of a Selection Committee.

Selection Committee

- ❖ The Prime Minister heads the Selection Committee. Members are; the Union Home Minister; the Speaker of the Lok Sabha; the Deputy Chairman of the Rajya Sabha; the Leader of the Opposition of Lok Sabha and the Rajya Sabha.

Composition of the NHRC

- ❖ The NHRC consists of a Chairperson who has been a retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or a retired Judge of the Supreme Court. Other members are; Judge of the Supreme Court- serving or retired; Chief Justice of a High Court- serving or retired; Three Members out of which at least one shall be a woman, of persons having knowledge or practical experience in matters relating to human rights.
- ❖ The Chairperson or the Members of the National Human Rights Commission holds office for a term of three years or until they attain the age of 70 years, whichever is earlier.

Himachal, U'Khand high courts get new chief justices

- ❖ Justice GS Sandhawalia was on Monday appointed as the chief justice of the Himachal Pradesh high court (HC), while justice Narender G was appointed as the head of the Uttarakhand high court, the law ministry said.
- ❖ On September 24, the Supreme Collegium had recommended for appointment of Justice Narendar, as the Chief Justice of the High Court of Uttarakhand consequent upon the retirement of Ms Justice Ritu Bahri on October 10, 2024.



Dr Hari Babu Kambhampati, To Be The New Governor Of Odisha

Key Points:

ଓଡ଼ିଶାର ନୂଆ ରାଜ୍ୟପାଳ ନିଯୁକ୍ତ ହେଲେ ହରିବାବୁ କମ୍ବମ୍ପତି । ଏହାପୂର୍ବରୁ ମିଜୋରାମର ରାଜ୍ୟପାଳ ଥିଲେ । ରଘୁବର ଦାସଙ୍କ ସ୍ଥାନ ନେବେ ହରିବାବୁ । ପୂର୍ବରୁ ଆନ୍ଧ୍ରରେ ବିଜେପି ରାଜ୍ୟ ସଭାପତି ଥିଲେ । ୨୦୧୪ରେ ବିଶାଖାପାଟଣାରୁ ଲୋକସଭାକୁ ନିର୍ବାଚିତ ମଧ୍ୟ ହୋଇଥିଲେ ।

ଉଲ୍ଲେଖ ଥାଉ କି ଜୁଲାଇ, ୨୦୨୧ରେ ତାଙ୍କୁ ମିଜୋରାମ ରାଜ୍ୟପାଳ ଭାବେ ନିଯୁକ୍ତି ମିଳିଥିଲା । ୨୦୧୪ ମସିହାରେ ଲୋକସଭା ନିର୍ବାଚନରେ ସେ ବିଜେପି ଟିକେଟରେ ବିଶାଖାପାଟଣାରୁ ନିର୍ବାଚନ ଲଢ଼ିଥିଲେ ।

ସେ ଆନ୍ଧ୍ରପ୍ରଦେଶର ପୂର୍ବତନ ମୁଖ୍ୟମନ୍ତ୍ରୀ ଝାଞ୍ଜି ଏସ ଜଗନ ମୋହନ ରେଞ୍ଜିଙ୍କ ମାତୃତା ରାଜଶେଖର ରେଞ୍ଜିଙ୍କ ପତ୍ନୀ ଝାଞ୍ଜି ଏସ ବିଜୟାଙ୍କୁ ପରାସ୍ତ କରିଥିଲେ ।

- ❖ The governor is the chief executive head of the state. The **office of the Governor is adapted from the Canadian model.**
- ❖ As per Convention, he should not belong to the state where he is appointed so that he is free from local politics. Also, the president is required to consult the chief minister of the state concerned to ensure the smooth functioning of the constitutional machinery of the state.
- ❖ The governor is **neither directly elected by the people nor indirectly elected by a specially constituted electoral college** as is the case with the president. He is **appointed by the president by warrant under his hand and seal.** He holds office at the pleasure of the President and may be removed by the President at any time. He is a nominee of the Central government.



Constitutional Provisions Related to the Governor

- ❖ Article 153: There shall be a Governor for each state. A single person can be appointed as the Governor for two or more states (recommended by the Sarkaria Commission). The Governor is appointed by the President and is a nominee of the Central Government.

- ❖ Articles 157 and 158: Specify the eligibility requirements for the post of Governor. Article 163: There is a Council of Ministers with the Chief Minister at the head to aid and advise the Governor in the exercise of his functions, except in some conditions where discretion is allowed.

Conditions of the Governor's Office:

- ❖ He is entitled without payment of rent to the use of his official residence (the Raj Bhavan). He is entitled to such emoluments, allowances, and privileges as may be determined by Parliament.
- ❖ When the same person is appointed as the governor of two or more states, the emoluments and allowances payable to him are shared by the states in such proportion as determined by the president. His emoluments and allowances cannot be diminished during his term of office.
- ❖ **Oath:** Before entering his office, the governor has to make and subscribe to an oath or affirmation. In his oath, the governor swears to faithfully execute the office to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution and the law to devote himself to the service and well-being of the people of the state.
- ❖ The oath of office to the governor is administered by the chief justice of the concerned state high court and in his absence, the senior-most judge of that court available.

Privileges:

- ❖ Under Article 361, he enjoys personal immunity from legal liability for his official acts. During his term of office, he is immune from any criminal proceedings, even in respect of his personal acts. He cannot be arrested or imprisoned.
- ❖ However, after giving two months' notice, civil proceedings can be instituted against him during his term of office in respect of his personal acts.

Salman Khan joins hands as Brand Ambassador to promote inaugural Kho Kho World Cup

Key Points:

- ❖ The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) has officially appointed Bollywood superstar Salman Khan as the brand ambassador for the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup, which will be held in New Delhi from January 13 to 19, 2025. This event will see the participation of teams from 24 countries and is set to boost the global profile of Kho Kho.
- ❖ The event will feature 21 men's teams and 20 women's teams, representing 24 countries. The tournament aims to showcase the sport's widespread appeal, with an exciting lineup of men's and women's teams competing for the first time on the world stage.
- ❖ The Kho Kho World Cup will see 21 Men's and 20 Women's teams competing in the week-long tournament, seeing participation of 24 nations traveling for the tournament to India. President of KKFI – Sudhanshu Mittal.



Mobile users can now opt for voice and SMS recharges without data charges

Key Points:

- ❖ The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has mandated telecom companies to offer recharge plans exclusively for voice calls and messages without any compulsion to buy internet data. The TRAI announced these changes in the Telecom Consumer Protection (12th Amendment) Regulation 2024 on Monday.

- ❖ The move is aimed at providing tailored options for millions of consumers who do not need data for various reasons.
- ❖ According to the reports, in India, nearly 150 million people are 2G users, dual-SIM owners, elderly individuals and rural residents.
- ❖ The move will allow users to pay only for the service they need rather than paying for the data they don't need.
- ❖ Furthermore, new rules also mandated telecom operators to extend the validity of special recharge coupons from the present 90 days to as long as 356 days.
- ❖ "...the service provider shall offer at least one Special Tariff Voucher exclusively for voice and SMS with validity period not exceeding three hundred and sixty-five days," TRAI mentioned in the Telecom Consumers Protection (Twelfth Amendment) Regulations, 2024. 150 million users don't need data recharges. According to the TRAI, the data from telecom operators reveals that a whopping 150 million users in India still use feature phones that highlights the need for non-data specific recharge options.
- ❖ TRAI's consultation revealed that many users, including senior citizens, families with home broadband, and non-tech-savvy individuals, prefer voice and SMS without bundled data. This feedback led to mandating voice-and-SMS-only plans.

କଣ ବଦଳିଲା ନୂଆ ନିୟମ ?

ଦୁହାଁପାଢ଼ି ଯେ ଦର୍ଶନୀୟ ଟେଲିକମ୍ କମ୍ପାନୀଗୁଡ଼ିକୁ ଯୁଗ୍ମବର୍ଣ୍ଣ ଅତି କମରେ ଏକାଡ଼ି ଏକ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଗାଢ଼ିପ ଲାଗୁକରି ଦେବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ, ଯାହା କେବଳ ଉପର କଲ୍ ଏବଂ ଏସ୍‌ଏମ୍‌ଏସ୍ ସେବା ପାଇଁ ରହିବ ।

ଏହି ପ୍ରାନ୍ତର ସୈଧତା ୩୬୫ ଦିନ ପର୍ଯ୍ୟନ୍ତ ଯୋଗପାରିବ । ପୂର୍ବରୁ ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଡିଜିଟାଲ୍ କୁପନର ସମୟସୀମା ୯୦ ଦିନରେ ସୀମିତ ଥିବା ବେଳେ ଏବେ ଏହାକୁ ୩୬୫ ଦିନକୁ ବୃଦ୍ଧି କରାଯାଇଛି । କେବଳ ଏତିକି ନୁହେଁ ଟେଲିକମ୍ କମ୍ପାନୀମାନେ ଯେକୌଣସି ପରିମାଣର ସ୍ୱତନ୍ତ୍ର ଡିଜିଟାଲ୍ ଲାଗୁକରି ଗାଢ଼ି କରିପାରିବେ, ବରଂ ସେମାନଙ୍କୁ ଅତି କମରେ ୧୦ ଟଙ୍କାର ଲାଗୁକରି ମଧ୍ୟ ଗାଢ଼ି କରିବାକୁ ପଡ଼ିବ ।

TRAI's move may harm Jio and Airtel's interests

- ❖ TRAI's initiative favours consumer choice but runs counter to the interests of telecom

giants like Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel, which are focused on encouraging users to shift from 2G to 4G or 5G.

- ❖ These companies aim to boost Average Revenue Per User (ARPU) by offering bundled packages of unlimited data and voice services.
- ❖ Reliance Jio earlier termed 2G as a barrier to India's digital growth and had called for its phase-out. Mukesh Ambani recently pointed out how 5G adoption will free up 4G capacity, thereby attracting the remaining 2G users to 4G.
- ❖ Under Sunil Mittal, Bharti Airtel is aggressively migrating 2G users to 4G, while Vodafone Idea is expanding its 4G network to speed up the shift.

IREDA Bags Triple Honours at 14th PSE Excellence Awards

Key Points:

- ❖ Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) has been honoured with three awards at the 14th PSE Excellence Awards ceremony, organized by the Indian Chamber of Commerce (ICC) in New Delhi.
- ❖ The company won Gold Awards in the Mini Ratna category for "Corporate Governance" and "Corporate Social Responsibility & Sustainability." Additionally, IREDA received the Silver Award for "Operational Performance Excellence."
- ❖ The awards were presented by Dr. Bhaskar Chatterjee, Former Secretary, Department of Public Enterprises, and Shri Apurv Kumar Mishra, Member, Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister.



Recent Award

- ❖ Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi' award for leadership – External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar ➤ Bhutan's royal honour – Renowned Indian educationist Arun Kapur
- ❖ Jamsetji Tata Award by Indian Society for Quality (ISQ) – Kiran Mazumders
- ❖ J C Daniel Award for 2023 – J C Daniel Award ➤ Social Security Good Practices at Asia-Pacific forum in Saudi – EPFO

DoCA to launch apps to empower consumers to identify dark patterns on website

Key Points:

- ❖ The Department of Consumer Affairs will launch the 'Jago Grahak Jago App,' and 'Jagruti App,' for public use on National Consumers Day 2024. These apps will empower consumers with tools to identify dark patterns on e-commerce platforms.
- ❖ Also, the Central Consumer Protection Authority is being strengthened with the 'Jagruti Dashboard' which is used to generate real-time reports on e-commerce URLs for the presence of dark patterns, enhancing the capability to monitor and regulate online consumer interactions effectively.

Indians can travel to Malaysia without a visa for 30 days until Dec 2026

Key Points:

- ❖ Malaysia has extended its visa exemption for Indian nationals until December 31, 2026, allowing them to visit the country

without a visa for up to 30 days. This announcement was made by Datuk Awang Alik Jeman, the Secretary-General of the Home Ministry, who emphasized that the extension aligns with Malaysia's 2025 ASEAN chairmanship and, the preparations for Visit Malaysia Year 2026.



National Consumer Rights Day

Key Points:

- ❖ National Consumer Rights Day is observed on December 24 every year in India to raise awareness about consumer rights and advocate for consumer protection. The day commemorates the enactment of the Consumer Protection Act, 1986, which provides a framework for protecting consumers from unfair trade practices.
- ❖ It aims to educate consumers about their rights, including the right to safety, information, choice, and redress in cases of grievance.



Republic Day Parade 2025: Tableaux theme is 'Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas'

Key Points:

- ❖ The theme for showcasing tableaux at the upcoming Republic Day Parade is 'Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas', and 15 states and UTs have been selected for presenting them on the Kartavya Path on January 26.

- ❖ These states and UTs are — Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Dadar Nagar Haveli & Daman and Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal.
- ❖ In addition, 11 ministries and department of the Union government have also been selected for the 2025 Republic Day celebrations.



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