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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 16-05-2025

NATIONAL NEWS

India Launches Its First 3nm Semiconductor Design Hubs

Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurated India's inaugural 3nm chip design centres, established by Renesas Electronics India, marking a pivotal advance in the country's semiconductor journey.

The facilities, located in Noida and Bengaluru, bolster India's push for self-reliance and position it on the global stage for cutting-edge chip design under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat

Noida and Bengaluru hubs are the first in India to work at the 3nm process node, a leap from previous 5nm and 7nm capabilities.

Over 270 institutions have access to EDA software, and a new semiconductor learning kit will train engineers in advanced chip design.

It is backed by industry partners like Applied Materials and Lam Research, and part of Indo-Japan cooperation on technology.

Renesas plans to extend its Indian footprint from architecture and verification to chip testing, leveraging schemes such as Design Linked Incentive (DLI) and Chips to Startup (C2S).

Maharashtra Launches Policy to Promote Use of Artificial Sand

The Maharashtra government has introduced a new policy mandating the use of manufactured sand (m-sand) in all government and semi-government construction projects.

Approved by the state cabinet, this move is aimed at curbing illegal river sand mining and promoting sustainable construction practices.

Use of m-sand is compulsory in all construction projects backed by government and semi-government agencies.

Permission granted to install 50 crusher machines in each district, totaling 1,500 across the state.

State land will be leased on a first-come, first-served basis to set up m-sand production units.

Producers of m-sand will receive MSME status, aiding in business promotion and support.

M-sand royalty set at ₹200 per brass, much lower than the ₹600 charged for natural sand.

Existing stone crushers must convert to m-sand production within 3 years, or face license cancellation.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Denmark Launches The World’s First Commercial-Scale E-Methanol Plant

The World's first commercial-scale e-methanol plant has begun operations in Denmark.

The plant is located in Kasso, southern Denmark, with an estimated investment of €150 million (approximately $167 million).

The plant will produce 42,000 metric tons (53 million liters) of e-methanol per year.

The plant is jointly owned by European Energy (Denmark) and Mitsui (Japan).

Maersk, a shipping giant, will buy part of the e-methanol for its fleet of container ships, using it as a low-emission fuel.

The shipping industry is seeking zero-emission fuels like e-methanol and green ammonia to meet International Maritime Organization's (IMO) targets for eliminating carbon emissions by 2050.

The plant expects price parity with fossil methanol around 2035, as production scales up.

The e-methanol is produced using renewable energy and CO2 captured from biogas plants and waste incineration.

European Energy plans to expand the Kasso facility and has a pipeline of similar plants in Europe, Australia, Brazil, and the United States.

BANKING

QNB Becomes First Middle East and Africa Bank to Open Branch in India’s GIFT City

QNB (Qatar National Bank), the largest financial institution in the Middle East and Africa (MEA), has become the first bank from the region to open a branch in India’s GIFT City, Gujarat’s premier international financial hub and special economic zone.

The bank’s GIFT City branch plans to support Indian corporates seeking global banking partners to drive their expansion.

QNB's international network spans 28 markets across three continents.

QNB India first entered India in 2017 and has since rapidly expanded to serve the international banking needs of Indian corporates and institutions.

QNB India operates as a Scheduled Commercial Bank, offering full-fledged banking services nationwide, with a focus on structured trade credit solutions.

PayU Receives Final RBI Approval to Function as Online Payment Aggregator

PayU, backed by Prosus, has received final approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as an online payment aggregator.

PayU had previously received an in-principle approval from the RBI in April 2024, enabling it to begin onboarding merchants onto its platform.

The fintech firm joins a list of over 50 online payment aggregators, including Cashfree Payments, Razorpay, CCAvenue, and BillDesk.

The Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007 regulates this approval, allowing PayU to operate within India's payments ecosystem.

PayU's approval comes after it was asked by the RBI to reapply for a payment aggregator licence in January 2023 due to concerns over its corporate structure.

In August 2023, PayU sold part of its financial technology business to Rapyd for $610 million, excluding operations in India, Turkey, and Southeast Asia.

In 2025, the RBI has granted final approval to nine companies to operate as online payment aggregators.

DEFENCE

Olympic Gold Medalist Neeraj Chopra Made A Lt.Col Of The Indian Army

The Indian Army has conferred the honourary rank of Lieutenant Colonel on 2020 Tokyo Olympic Gold medallist javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra.

This was notified in “The Gazette of India”, an official document of the Government of India.

Neeraj Chopra was commissioned as a Junior Commissioned Officer in the Rajputana Rifles Regiment of the Indian Army in 2017, with the rank of 'Naib Subedar'. He was later promoted to Subedar in 2021. After his exploits in the Tokyo Olympics, he was promoted to Subedar Major in 2022.

Now he has been promoted to the honourary rank of Lieutenant Colonel.

He was commissioned in the Indian Army after his impressive performance in Javelin at the national

and international levels.

In 2012, he became the under-16 national champion, and in 2014, he won his first international medal, a silver medal in the 2014 Bangkok Youth Olympics Qualification event.

In 2016, he won the gold medal at the South Asian Games in Guwahati, Assam.

After joining the Indian Army in 2017, Neeraj Chopra joined the 'Mission Olympic Wing', which trains athletes in 11 disciplines for various national and international events.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

CEO of Open Network for Digital Commerce

ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce) has appointed Vibhor Jain as the acting Chief Executive Officer (CEO) with immediate effect.

Prior to this, Vibhor Jain served as the Chief Operating Officer (COO) and was part of the 8-member executive committee.

All executive powers will now transition to the acting CEO, marking the end of the committee's interim role.

ONDC is in the process of identifying a new Managing Director and CEO.

The responsibilities formerly overseen by the executive committee will now be integrated under the purview of the acting CEO.

ONDC has achieved a major milestone by surpassing 200 million transactions in under three years since its inception

Chairperson of Internet and Mobile Association of India

M N Srinivasu, co-founder of BillDesk, was appointed as the chairperson of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) following the governing council elections.

Srinivasu succeeds Harsh Jain, co-founder and CEO of Dream Sports.

Harshil Mathur, co-founder and CEO of Razorpay, was elected vice-chairperson.

Sameer Nigam, founder and CEO of PhonePe, has taken over as the treasurer of IAMAI.

Previously, Rajesh Magow, co-founder of MakeMyTrip, served as vice-chairperson, and Satyan Gajwani, vice-chairperson of Times Internet, was the treasurer.

The appointment of the new leadership reflects the growing influence of the emerging fintech sector in India.

The new 24-member governing council and executive council of IAMAI will serve for the next two

years until 2027.

SPORTS

7th Khelo India Youth Games 2025 Medal Tally

Maharashtra maintained its dominance in the Khelo India Youth Games by finishing at the top of the medals tally at the 7th Khelo India Youth Games 2025, held in Bihar.

Maharashtra won 158 medals—58 gold,47 silver, and 53 bronze. Haryana was at the second place while Rajasthan was third.

The 7th Khelo India Youth Games 2025 were held in Bihar from 4 to 15 May 2025. Around 5,000 young athletes from all the States and Union Territories of India competed in 26 competitive sports and one demo sport of esports.

Gajsimha was the mascot of the games, and three events -gymnastics, shooting, and cycling were held in New Delhi, while Patna, Rajgir, Begusarai, Gaya and Bhagalpur hosted the other events.

Maharashtra has traditionally dominated the Khelo India Youth Games since its first edition in 2018.

It has topped the medal tally five times: 2019,2020,2023, 2024 and 2025.

MISCELLANEOUS

A Decade Later, Google Unveils Redesigned ‘G’ Logo in Classic Colors

Google’s new ‘G’ logo appears nearly identical to its previous version, but with a subtle change: the four primary colors — red, yellow, green, and blue — now blend into each other in a soft gradient.

The redesign was first spotted on the iOS app and later in the 8 beta release on Android.

While not fully rolled out, the new logo has started appearing on Pixel devices and is expected to spread across the broader Google ecosystem in the coming weeks.

This is not a radical rebrand.

The Product Sans font remains unchanged since 2015.

The redesign is focused on nuance and harmony, signaling evolution rather than a complete reinvention.

The change reflects the maturing of Google’s ecosystem, integrating AI more deeply, especially with Gemini, Google’s generative AI assistant, at the center of the brand's future.

The Gemini logo also uses gradients, specifically a blue-to-purple flow, aligning with the new ‘G’

The return of gradients, once avoided during the "flat-design" era of the 2010s, signifies function meeting nostalgia for Google.

The importance of visual identity updates in maintaining brand resonance, especially for Gen Z who differentiate between authentic and outdated

The visual refresh shows that Google’s brand is evolving and adapting, although the logo change is unlikely to be the main reason people download the app.

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