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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 20-12-2025

NATIONAL NEWS

Ponduru Khadi from Andhra Pradesh Receives Geographical Indication Tag

Ponduru Khadi, a traditional handspun and handwoven cotton fabric from Andhra Pradesh, has been granted the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

The recognition comes nearly 100 years after Mahatma Gandhi praised Ponduru Khadi for its exceptional fineness and craftsmanship, highlighting its historical importance during the freedom movement.

Ponduru Khadi is known for its extremely fine texture, strength, and durability.

It is produced using locally grown cotton and traditional spinning techniques, including a special wooden charkha and the use of rice starch to strengthen the yarn.

The fabric gained prominence during India's freedom struggle, when Mahatma Gandhi promoted it as a symbol of self-reliance and Swadeshi.

A Geographical Indication (GI) tag is an intellectual property right granted to products originating from a specific geographical area and having distinct qualities or reputation linked to that region.

Ponduru Khadi joins other GI-tagged Indian textiles such as Banarasi silk, Kanchipuram silk, Pochampally Ikat, and Chanderi fabric.

Its inclusion further strengthens Andhra Pradesh's cultural and artisanal identity and promotes the preservation of indigenous crafts.

MY Bharat Introduces Special Web Portal for Republic Day 2026

As part of the Republic Day Celebrations–2026 (RDC-26), the Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has launched a dedicated webpage on the MY Bharat Portal.

The initiative aims to conduct national-level youth competitions across India.

The competitions include Essay Writing, Painting, and Slogan/Signature Competitions.

The programme is designed to promote patriotism, creativity, and civic engagement among the youth of the country.

Interested participants can register and participate online through the MY Bharat Portal.

The official participation portal is https://mybharat.gov.in/pages/republic_day_2026.

Prize money has been provisioned for top-performing participants.

Selected youth will receive an opportunity to participate in the Republic Day Celebrations–2026 Parade.

The initiative strengthens youth participation in national celebrations and fosters a sense of national pride and responsibility.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

India and Ethiopia Sign Three MoUs to Strengthen Bilateral Cooperation

India and Ethiopia signed three Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Addis Ababa, marking his first-ever official visit to Ethiopia.

The visit highlights India’s growing diplomatic engagement with Africa, especially the Horn of Africa region.

One MoU was signed on cooperation in customs administration, aimed at improving information sharing, preventing customs-related offences, facilitating smoother trade and logistics, and enhancing transparency in cross-border trade, thereby boosting bilateral trade efficiency.

The second MoU provides for the establishment of a data centre at the Embassy of Ethiopia, which will strengthen digital infrastructure, improve data security and management, and support e-governance and diplomatic communication, aligning with India’s expertise in digital public infrastructure.

The third MoU focuses on cooperation in United Nations peacekeeping operations, seeking to enhance coordination and training, share best practices, and strengthen global peace and security, reflecting the shared commitment of both countries to multilateralism.

India and Ethiopia share long-standing historical relations, marked by people-to-people contacts, educational exchanges, and development cooperation in areas such as education, health, and capacity building.

The strong personal rapport between PM Narendra Modi and PM Abiy Ahmed Ali has provided fresh momentum to bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the two countries.

BANKING

Common Logo Unveiled for Regional Rural Banks

On the principle of “One State One RRB”, the Department of Financial Services (DFS) under the Ministry of Finance consolidated 26 Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) across 11 States/UTs, effective from 01 May 2025.

The RRB consolidation reform aims to create stronger, more efficient, and financially sustainable RRBs.

After the amalgamation, 28 RRBs continue to operate across India.

These 28 RRBs serve rural areas through an extensive network of over 22,000 branches in more than 700 districts.

To create a single and unified brand identity, the Government unveiled a common logo for all 28 RRBs.

The common RRB logo strengthens institutional identity, visibility, and recognition of RRBs nationwide.

The logo reflects themes of progress, growth, and development in rural and remote areas.

Upward Arrow (Symbol of Progress): Represents growth, development and advancement in rural economies.

Hands (Symbol of Nurturing): Conveys care, support and a helping hand to rural communities.

Flame (Symbol of Enlightenment) : Signifies warmth, knowledge and empowering rural populations.

The dark blue colour in the logo represents finance, stability, and trust.

The green colour in the logo signifies life, sustainability, and growth, reflecting service to rural India.

The common branding initiative is expected to give RRBs a modern, distinct, and easily recognizable identity across the country.

The initiative symbolizes the collective commitment of RRBs towards financial inclusion and rural development.

The reform aligns with the Government’s objective of strengthening rural banking infrastructure and deepening last-mile financial access.

State Bank of India Inks €150 Million Deal with KfW

State Bank of India (SBI) signed a €150 million Line of Credit (LoC) (≈ ₹1,360 crore) with KfW Development Bank, Germany, to finance climate-friendly energy generation projects in India.

The agreement was signed at KfW Headquarters, Frankfurt (Germany), reinforcing Indo-German cooperation in sustainable development finance.

The €150 million LoC continues the long-standing SBI–KfW collaboration focused on renewable energy and green infrastructure.

The facility enables financing for a broader range of climate-oriented projects, including advanced and innovative renewable technologies.

The initiative supports accelerated renewable energy adoption, low-carbon infrastructure, and India's clean energy transition.

It leverages international expertise and low-cost funding, strengthening India's green energy ecosystem.

IDFC First Bank Introduces USD and EUR Global Savings Account

IDFC First Bank, a private sector bank, launched the 'IDFC First Global Savings Account' for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to hold foreign currency earnings in USD and EUR.

The account is offered through the International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) at GIFT City, Gandhinagar (Gujarat), strengthening India's offshore banking ecosystem.

It allows NRIs to maintain savings in United States Dollar (USD) and Euro (EUR) without mandatory conversion into Indian Rupees.

Key benefits include zero fees on overseas transfers and 100% repatriation of both principal and interest to overseas accounts.

The account offers an interest rate of around 4.75% per annum on USD balances, making it attractive compared to regular NRI savings options.

There is no minimum balance requirement, increasing accessibility for global Indian customers.

Interest earned enjoys Tax Deducted at Source (TDS) exemption, enhancing post-tax returns for NRIs.

The account can be opened and operated digitally, eliminating the need for branch visits or physical paperwork.

NRIs can also invest in foreign currency Fixed Deposits (FDs) in USD or EUR through the same account.

DEFENCE

Indian Navy Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti visits Maldives

Vice Admiral Tarun Sobti, Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff (DCNS), Indian Navy, visited Maldives from 15–17 December 2025 to attend the closing ceremony of Exercise Ekatha 2025.

Exercise Ekatha, established in 2017, is an annual bilateral maritime exercise between the Indian Navy and the Maldives National Defence Force (MNDF).

The 8th edition of Ex Ekatha 2025 focused on enhancing interoperability and operational synergy between the two navies.

Key activities included technical and combat diving, boarding operations, firing drills, demolition and explosive handling, asymmetric warfare tactics, and heli-borne special operations.

During the visit, VAdm Tarun Sobti met Major General Ibrahim Hilmy, Chief of Defence Force (CDF), MNDF, in Malé.

Discussions covered regional maritime security challenges, training cooperation, counter–drug trafficking efforts, and review of ongoing defence projects.

The DCNS handed over operational spares for MNDF Coast Guard Ship Huravee onboard INS Sharda at Malé on 15 December 2025.

The engagement aligns with India’s strategic vision of MAHASAGAR (Mutual and Holistic Advancement for Security and Growth for all in the Region) and the Neighbourhood First Policy.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Prime Minister Narendra Modi Conferred Ethiopia’s Highest National Honour

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was conferred Ethiopia’s highest civilian honour, the Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia, during his official visit to Addis Ababa.

With this, PM Modi became the first global Head of State or Head of Government to receive this prestigious award.

This honour is the 28th international State award conferred upon PM Modi, reflecting India’s growing global stature, especially in Africa and the Global South.

The Great Honour Nishan of Ethiopia is awarded for exceptional contributions towards strengthening Ethiopia’s international partnerships and global standing.

The award was formally conferred by Ethiopian Prime Minister Dr Abiy Ahmed Ali, who hosted PM Modi and led the ceremonial proceedings.

With this recognition, PM Modi became the first global leader to receive Ethiopia’s highest honour and joined the list of most internationally recognised Indian leaders.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Sai Jadhav Becomes First Woman Officer to Graduate from Indian Military Academy

Sai Jadhav (23 years) from Kolhapur, Maharashtra created history by becoming the first woman officer to pass out from the Indian Military Academy (IMA), Dehradun.

Her achievement ended a 93-year-old male-only tradition at IMA, which was established in 1932.

Since its inception, over 67,000 cadets have graduated from IMA, and Sai Jadhav is the first woman among them.

She has been commissioned as a Lieutenant in the Territorial Army (TA), becoming the first woman officer from IMA to join the TA.

At present, 8 women officer cadets are undergoing training at IMA as part of the first women batch selected through the National Defence Academy (NDA) in 2022.

Sai Jadhav joined IMA with special permission and successfully completed six months of rigorous training, meeting the same standards as male cadets.

She will participate in the Passing-Out Parade in June 2026 at the Chetwode Building, an honour reserved for IMA graduates.

Following her commissioning into the Indian Army (IA), she became the fourth generation in her family to serve the nation, after her great-grandfather (British Army), grandfather (Indian Army) and father Sandeep Jadhav (currently serving).

OBITUTARY

Padma Shri Awardee and Veteran Journalist Prafulla Govinda Baruah

Prafulla Govinda Baruah, veteran journalist and Padma Shri awardee (2018), passed away at the age of 93 in Guwahati, Assam.

He was born on 26 July 1932 in Dibrugarh, Assam Province (British India).

He was the Chairman Emeritus and Editor of The Assam Tribune, one of Northeast India’s leading English newspapers.

He formally entered the journalism profession in 1962, marking the beginning of a distinguished media career.

He became Managing Director (MD) of The Assam Tribune Group in 1966 and later served as Editor

from 1997.

He was awarded the Padma Shri in 2018 for his contributions to Literature and Education, particularly in Assam.

He promoted Assamese literature through the publishing house ‘Sahitya Prakash’ and founded the monthly literary magazine ‘Goriyasi’.

He established the socio-cultural organisation ‘Jyotirupa’ to nurture talent in drama and performing arts.

He played a key role in establishing Radha Govinda (RG) Baruah College in Guwahati, contributing to higher education in Assam.

He organised Assam Prakalpa seminars to encourage dialogue on economic development and policy issues of the state.

He was felicitated by Asam Sahitya Sabha and honoured by the Kamala Saikia Trust for ethical and principled journalism.

He also received an appreciation citation from Dr. B. Borooah Cancer Institute for his efforts in cancer awareness initiatives.

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