DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 22-01-2025

NATIONAL NEWS

NHA Urges Registration of ABHA IDs for Enhanced Digital Health System

The National Health Authority (NHA) has requested the National Medical Commission (NMC) to instruct all medical colleges, government, and private hospitals to actively register patients for the Ayushman Bharat Digital Health Account (ABHA ID).

This initiative is a key part of India's digital health transformation under the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM).

Digital health data is protected under the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, with rules notified on January 3, 2025.

ABHA ID is a 14-digit unique number enabling patients to access their health records, prescriptions, and consultation details across multiple healthcare providers.

It links healthcare benefits, including public health programs and insurance schemes, offering seamless access to health records.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Bank of Japan Poised to Increase Interest Rates

Kazuo Ueda, Governor of the Bank of Japan (BOJ), will evaluate the need to raise interest rates during the upcoming meeting.

While most central banks, like the Federal Reserve, are focusing on rate cuts, the BOJ is considering raising rates as part of its efforts to move toward conventional policy settings after decades of low inflation and weak economic growth.

Japan is close to achieving stable inflation and has seen solid wage growth, creating favorable conditions for the BOJ to increase borrowing costs toward levels seen in other major economies.

Around 90% of economists surveyed by Bloomberg believe that current economic conditions and prices warrant a rate hike from the current 0.25%.

Traders have priced in a January rate hike in the overnight swaps market, showing heightened market expectations for the BOJ to act.

BANKING

NPCI International Teams Up with Magnati to Boost UPI Acceptance in UAE

NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL), the international arm of India's National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has partnered with UAE-based payment solution provider Magnati to expand QR-based Unified Payments Interface (UPI) merchant payments in the Middle East.

The partnership aims to enhance UPI-based payments via point-of-sale (POS) terminals in the UAE, primarily for Indian travelers.

The goal is to enable more merchants in the UAE to accept UPI as a payment method, thus catering to the 12 million Indian tourists traveling to Dubai and the UAE annually.

The partnership will first focus on offering UPI acceptance at Dubai Duty Free to improve the shopping and payment experience for Indian tourists.

The initiative is expected to extend UPI acceptance to key merchant categories like retail, hospitality, transport, and supermarkets in the UAE.

This partnership demonstrates India's leadership in digital payment innovation.

It sets a benchmark for cross-border payment interoperability and strengthens economic and cultural ties between India and the UAE.

ECONOMY

India Targets $1 Trillion Export by 2030 with $250 Billion from Engineering Sector

Commerce Secretary Sunil Barthwal outlined the Indian government's ambitious export goals, with a target of $1 trillion in exports by 2030.

This includes $250 billion from the engineering sector, which comprises areas like automobiles, equipment, and other related industries.

The engineering sector currently contributes 25% of India's total exports.

Barthwal emphasized that this sector will play a critical role in achieving the $1 trillion export target, with a focus on expanding exports from engineering-based industries.

India’s transition to cleaner energy technologies is expected to drive demand for net-zero carbon technologies, opening up new avenues for exports.

Ongoing projects include the modernization of ports, airports, railways, and broadening of roads, which will support export growth.

Government Sets Target to Form 10,000 Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs)

The Indian government aims to establish 10,000 new Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) by the end of FY25, five years after the launch of the central sector scheme for their formation.

This initiative, which began in 2020 with a budget of Rs 6,865 crore, has already seen the registration of 9,268 FPOs as cooperatives and producers' companies, with 732 more registrations

The initiative aims to boost farmers’ income by aggregating agricultural produce, improve market access and reduce cost of cultivation by acting as bulk suppliers of various agri-inputs.

Financial assistance of up to Rs 18 lakh per FPO for three years is provided under the scheme. Additionally, matching equity grants up to Rs 2,000 per farmer member with a limit of Rs 15 lakh per FPO are available.

Over 8,600 FPOs are using the government’s Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) platform to sell agricultural products like rice, pulses, millets, honey, spices, and value-added products.

Farmers also purchase agricultural inputs like seeds, pesticides, and herbicides through ONDC.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Professor Urbasi Sinha Awarded Gates-Cambridge Impact Prize 2025

Professor Urbasi Sinha, a distinguished faculty member at the Raman Research Institute (RRI) in the Light and Matter Physics theme, has been honored with the Gates-Cambridge Impact Prize 2025 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation in Cambridge, UK.

Professor Sinha has spearheaded groundbreaking advancements in quantum communication, computing, and optics.

Under her leadership, her lab was among the first in India to develop and utilize heralded and entangled photon sources, marking a significant milestone in India’s quantum research.

As a key figure in India’s National Quantum Mission, Professor Sinha plays a vital role in driving the country's ambitions to lead in quantum technologies

Her efforts are aligned with India's strategic objectives to enhance technological competitiveness in the quantum space.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force

The Centre has appointed Gyanendra Pratap Singh as the Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF), according to a Personnel Ministry order issued on January 18, 2025.

Singh, a 1991-batch IPS officer from the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, was serving as the Director General of Police (DGP) of Assam before his new appointment.

Singh will serve in this role until his superannuation on November 30, 2027, or until further orders.

Singh will take charge from Vitul Kumar, the Special DG of CRPF, who had been officiating as the DG since December 30, 2024, after the retirement of the previous force chief, Anish Dayal Singh.

Singh has had a distinguished career, having worked with the Special Protection Group (SPG) and serving on central deputation with the National Investigation Agency (NIA) as Inspector General.

SPORTS

Karnataka Won Vijay Hazare Trophy

Karnataka men’s senior cricket team won its 5th Vijay Hazare Trophy by defeating Vidarbha in the final by 36 runs.

The final of the 2024-25 Vijay Hazare Trophy was played at the Kotambi Stadium in Vadodara,Gujarat. The win at Vadodara also ended the five year title drought for Karnataka in domestic cricket.

Vijay Hazare Trophy is organised by the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)

The victory over Vidharbha in Vadodara was the overall 5th title for the Karnataka team in the Vijay Hazare tournament.

Karnataka had previously won the title in 2013-14, 2014-15 ,2017-18 and 2019-20 season.

Player of the Final- Ravichandran Smaran of Karnataka

Player of the Tournament - Karun Nair of Vidarbha

India Clinches Double Gold at Inaugural Kho Kho World Cup 2025

India made history by winning both the men’s and women’s titles at the first-ever Kho Kho World

Cup 2025, held at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium.

The Indian teams triumphed over Nepal with commanding victories: the men's team won 54-36, and the women's team dominated 78-40.

Captain Priyanka Ingle led the Indian women's team with exceptional strategy and synchronization.

England is likely to host the 2027 Kho Kho World Cup, as announced by men's Coach Ashwini Kumar.

Both captains and coaches emphasized the significance of this victory in promoting kho kho as a global sport.

OBITUTARY

'Twin Peaks' Creator and Filmmaker David Lynch

David Lynch, the iconic director renowned for his surreal and haunting vision of America, has passed away.

Lynch was a central figure in shaping counterculture cinema, especially in the 1980s and 1990s, with films such as Blue Velvet, Wild at Heart, and Mulholland Drive.

His influence extended to television, where he co-created the groundbreaking series Twin Peaks alongside Mark Frost.

Lynch gained mainstream recognition with The Elephant Man (1980), which was nominated for eight Academy Awards. However, his version of Dune (1984) did not meet his expectations, and he was vocal about his frustration with not having creative control.

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