DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 24-01-2025

NATIONAL NEWS

Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme Completes 10 Years

The government of India's Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme completed its 10th anniversary on 22 January 2025.

The main aim of the scheme was to improve the Sex Ratio at Birth in the country, stop female foeticide, and ensure the survival, protection, and education of the girl child.

Sex Ratio at Birth refers to the number of girls born for every 1000 male children born.

To mark the 10th anniversary of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme, the government of India will organise a series of events across the country focusing on educating, protecting, and empowering the girl child in India.

The program will continue from 22 January to 8th of March 2025, which is the International Women's Day.

The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development is the nodal ministry that implements the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme in collaboration with other ministries of the government of India.

The government of India has expanded the objectives of the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao scheme and made it a part of the Mission Shakti of the Union Ministry of Women and Child Development for the 15th Finance Commission period from 2021-2022 to 2025-2026.

India Prepares for eVTOL Air Taxi Revolution

The Centre has begun identifying trial sites for air taxis or electric-vertical take off and landing (eVTOL) aircraft.

eVTOL (Electric Vertical Take-Off and Landing) aircraft represent a cutting-edge solution to urban congestion.

These electric-powered aircraft can take off and land vertically, like helicopters, and transition to forward flight using tilt rotors.

eVTOLs are designed to offer sustainable and efficient alternatives to traditional transportation.

The Centre has initiated visits to states like Gujarat to identify potential trial sites for eVTOL testing.

A regulatory sandbox is being developed to allow safe testing of new eVTOL technologies in sites with no habitation, equipped with runways and charging facilities.

Kerala Passes Resolution Urging Centre To Scrap UGC Regulations

Kerala Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan presented a resolution in the Kerala Legislative Assembly, urging the Centre to withdraw the 2025 University Grants Commission (UGC) draft regulations and introduce new norms after engaging in discussions with state governments and academic experts.

The resolution was passed

In support, Higher Education Minister R Bindu mentioned that Kerala is coordinating with other states, including Tamil Nadu, which also passed a similar resolution earlier this month, highlighting concerns over increased powers for Governors in appointing Vice Chancellors.

Vijayan emphasized that universities function based on state laws, and imposing central regulations without consultation could undermine India's federal framework.

He reminded that under the 42nd Constitutional Amendment Act (1977), states hold significant responsibilities in establishing and overseeing universities, including funding most of their operations.

The draft UGC norms were criticized for excluding state governments from key appointments, such as Vice Chancellor positions, and for provisions that could commercialize higher education.

The Kerala assembly has unanimously called for the Central Government to reconsider the draft regulations and to hold consultations with all relevant stakeholders before finalizing new guidelines.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Solar Group Tests India’s First Indigenous Micro-Missile Drone System ‘Bhargavastra’

India has successfully tested its 1st indigenously developed micro-missile system, Bhargavastra, designed to counter the growing threat of swarm drones.

The tests were conducted at the Gopalpur Seaward Firing Ranges, the system successfully hit designated virtual targets over 5 kilometres away, offering a cost-effective and innovative solution to neutralize large-scale drone attacks.

Developed by Economic Explosives Ltd (EEL), a subsidiary of the Solar Group, Bhargavastra is equipped with advanced capabilities, including detecting small incoming drones at a range of over 6 kilometres.

It neutralizes threats using guided micro-munitions, ensuring precision and effectiveness.

The system is mountable on mobile platforms for rapid deployment and operates seamlessly across diverse terrains, including high-altitude areas, meeting the unique operational needs of India’s armed forces.

An additional soft-kill layer is being integrated to make the system a comprehensive solution for all UAV threats.

The system can also integrate with the armed forces' existing network for network-centric warfare.

Equipped with a Command-and-Control Centre using advanced C4I (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, and Intelligence)

Telangana Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Skyroot

Skyroot Aerospace has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Telangana government to set up an integrated private rocket manufacturing, integration, and testing facility.

The new project will involve an investment of around Rs 500 crore, making it one of the largest private-sector rocket manufacturing facilities in India.

The MoU was signed at the World Economic Forum summit in Davos, overseen by Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy and IT and Industries Minister D. Sridhar Babu.

The investment aligns with Telangana's strategic focus on boosting its space and aerospace sectors, with Hyderabad being positioned as a key hub for private sector space work.

Skyroot Aerospace is a Hyderabad-based space technology firm, and its partnership with the Telangana government is seen as a significant boost for the state's vision of "TelanganaRising" and "HyderabadRising".

BANKING

Shriram Life Insurance Introduces Shriram Life Sunishchit Laabh Plan

Shriram Life Insurance has launched Shriram Life Sunishchit Laabh, a non-participating individual savings plan that guarantees high returns of up to 668% of the total premium paid.

The plan offers flexible entry options for individuals aged 30 days to 60 years, with a minimum ticket size starting at 30,000 annually, Rs. 15,500 half-yearly, Rs. 8,000 quarterly, and Rs. 3,000 monthly.

It features flexible maturity income payout options, including tax-free payouts for up to 40 years (until a maximum age of 101), ensuring long-term income even during retirement.

The plan also offers death benefits up to 160 times the annualized premium, and customers can modify the payout modes during the policy term.

Ideal for retirement planning, children's education, family protection, or creating a long-term financial safety net, the plan also includes loyalty rewards and optional riders.

Shriram Life Insurance provides term, endowment, ULIPs, and annuities at affordable premiums for

both rural and urban middle-class customers, with an in-force policyholder base of over 12 lakh.

TATA AIG Launches CyberEdge

TATA AIG General Insurance Company, a leading general insurance provider, has introduced CyberEdge, a new cyber insurance solution designed to protect businesses of all sizes against a wide array of cyber risks.

The policy offers robust financial and operational support, covering forensic investigations, legal fees, data recovery, extortion payments, and losses from business interruptions.

With a strong commitment to enhancing cybersecurity resilience, CyberEdge aims to capture 25% of the cyber insurance market in the coming 5years.

A recent report by Prahar highlighted that 79 million cyberattacks were recorded in India in 2023 and the threat landscape is rapidly evolving.

It provides immediate access to Tata AIG's panel of incident response experts 24/7/365 during a cyber incident.

IDFC First Bank Partners with RuPay to Unveil FIRST EA₹N RuPay Credit Card

IDFC FIRST Bank, in collaboration with RuPay, has launched the transformative UPI-enabled RuPay Credit Card named 'FIRST EA₹N'.

This innovative product is a Fixed Deposit (FD)–backed virtual credit card designed to democratize credit access while offering rewarding benefits for users.

The FIRST EA₹N RuPay Credit Card enables customers to seamlessly access credit via UPI, a feature that stands out in the financial services industry.

Backed by an FD, the card ensures universal eligibility, eliminating barriers for those who might face difficulties obtaining traditional credit cards.

Customers can apply online and instantly access the card, enabling convenient and rewarding transactions.

Cardholders can use the card for UPI transactions at over 60 million UPI-enabled merchants across India.

The virtual credit card is issued instantly, allowing immediate use with UPI integration.

The FD-backed model ensures availability for all customers, providing credit access to individuals new to credit products.

RANKS, INDICES & REPORTS

Global Firepower Index 2025

India has been ranked as having the 4th most powerful military in the world after the United States of America, Russia and China by the Global Firepower Index 2025.

Bhutan was ranked at the bottom of the index at 145th position. Pakistan which was ranked 9th in 2024 dropped to 12th position in the 2025 ranking.

There has been no change in the ranking of the top four countries in the world as compared to 2024 Global Firepower Index.

The Global Firepower Index has been released by a website Globalfirepower.com annually since 2006.

India was ranked at the 4th position with a score of 0.1184. A score of 0.0000 is an ideal score which denotes perfect military strength which no country possesses.

The top ranked country, the United States of America, got a score of 0.0744.

India was ranked number 1 in the world in the Population Reaching Military age annually.

India was ranked second in the world in population,available manpower,vehicles, roadways etc.

India secured poor rank in oil consumption, natural gas consumption,coal consumption, external borders and external debts.

India was ranked 145th in the world in terms of Helicopter Carrier strength and Mine warfare capability in sea.

SPORTS

Indian Open Badminton

2024 Paris Olympic gold medal winner Denmark's Viktor Axelsen and South Korea’s An Se-young respectively won the men’s and women’s singles title of the 2025 India Open Badminton Tournament.

The Indian Open Badminton Tournament was held in New Delhi.

Viktor Axelsen who was appearing in the final of the Indian Open for the sixth time in the last 10 years defeated Lee Cheuk Yiu of Hong Kong China 21-16, 21-8 to win his third India Open Title.

Paris Olympic gold medal winner An Se-young of South Korea had little trouble in defeating Pornpawee Chochuwong of Thailand in the final by 21-12, 21-9 in just 39 minutes.

In the men’s doubles the Malaysian pair of Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin defeated the South Korean

pair of Kim Won-ho and Seo Seung-jae 21-15, 13-21, 21-16 to win the men's doubles title.

In the women's doubles, the Japanese duo of Arisa Igarashi and Ayaka Sakuramoto defeated the South Korean pair of Kim Hye-jeong and Kong Hee-yong 21-15, 21-13 to win the women's doubles title.

The mixed doubles title was won by the Jiang Zhenbang and Wei Yaxin pair of China by defeating Thom Gicquel and Delphine Delrue of France by 21-18, 21-17 in the final.

SSB Shankar School of Banking
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Information is a Blessing
A Shankar IAS Academy Initiative