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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 26-02-2025

NATIONAL NEWS

First Conference of the Women Peacekeeper held in New Delhi

The first Conference for Women Peacekeepers of the United Nations was held in New Delhi on 24 and 25 February 2025.

The Conference brought together 35 nations whose women troops are active in the United Nations Peacekeeping operation across the globe.

The United Nations was represented by the UN Under Secretary General, Department of Peace Operations,Jean- Pierre Lacroix and the UN Special Coordinator Christian Saunders.

India is the second largest contributor to the United Nations Peacekeeping operations.

The Conference was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs in association with the Union Ministry of Defence and the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) of the Indian Army.

The theme of the first Conference for Women Peacekeepers of the United Nations was “Women in Peacekeeping: A Global South Perspective" .

The main aim of the conference is to discuss and explore the evolving role of women in peacekeeping operations and discuss strategies to enhance their participation in the United Nations Peacekeeping operations.

Haryana Government's Witness Protection Scheme

The Haryana Government has rolled out the ‘Haryana Witness Protection Scheme 2025’ to ensure the safety and security of witnesses who play a crucial role in the justice system.

The primary aim of the scheme is to protect witnesses from threats, harassment, or intimidation that may arise during judicial proceedings.

By providing legal protection, including the possibility of relocating, changing identities, or offering other safeguards, the government seeks to strengthen the rule of law, encourage witnesses to testify without fear, and improve the overall functioning of the criminal justice system.

The scheme will be applicable to witnesses of offences punishable with death, life imprisonment, or imprisonment of seven years or more.

Additionally, it will cover punishments under Sections 74, 75, 76, 77, 78, and 79 of the BNS, as well

as under Sections 8, 10, 12, 14, and 15 of the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act, 2012.

Under the scheme, there will be three categories of witnesses based on threat perception.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

UNESCO Launched the "Imagine a World with More Women in Science" Campaign

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) has launched the "Imagine a World with More Women in Science" campaign to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science on February 11, 2025.

This initiative, supported by Canada's International Development Centre (IDRC), aims to promote greater representation and participation of women in STEM fields worldwide.

The campaign builds on UNESCO's 2024 Call to Action: Closing the Gender Gap in Science, highlighting how diverse perspectives drive innovation in science, technology, medicine, artificial intelligence, and beyond.

The movement is promoted using the hashtag #EveryVoiceInScience.

Women represent only one-third of the global scientific community.

In some countries, less than 10% of researchers are women.

A 2024 UNESCO report found that women hold just 22% of STEM jobs in G20 countries.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

NASA to Launch Lunar Lander 'Athena' with SpaceX Falcon 9

The US space agency, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), is preparing to launch its mission Moon on February 26, 2025.

The spacecraft Nova-C lander 'Athena' on a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket is scheduled for a lift-off from Florida's Kennedy Space Center from Launch Complex 39A.

This mission is a part of NASA's CLPS (Commercial Lunar Payload Services) initiative and Artemis campaign.

The Intuitive Machines IM-2 mission, carrying NASA science investigations and technology demonstrations to the Moon, will be streamed online.

Intuitive Machines' lunar lander will spend around one week in transit to the Moon following the launch.

As per NASA, the spacecraft will make a landing on the lunar surface possibly on March 6, 2025 or later.

This mission aims to develop a further understanding of the Moon's environment and help in future human missions to the lunar surface as part of NASA's Moon to Mars exploration approach.

BANKING

PNB Signs Memorandum of Understanding with Indo-Tibetan Border Police

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP), framing a strategic partnership to provide exclusive financial benefits and insurance coverage for ITBP personnel, pensioners, and their families.

The MoU was signed by P. Singh, General Manager, PNB, and S.C. Mamgain, Inspector General (Admn), ITBP, at the ITBP Headquarters, CGO Complex, and New Delhi.

Through this partnership, PNB has reaffirmed its dedication to supporting India's armed forces, particularly the 'Himveers' of ITBP, by framing customized financial products and services tailored to their needs.

Under the MoU, ITBP personnel will receive extensive insurance coverage and financial benefits.

PNB has also extended its Rakshak Account benefits to ITBP pensioners, framing a financial security

Association Of Mutual Funds In India Launches 3 New Investor Initiatives

The Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) has launched three strategic initiatives—Chhoti SIP, Tarun Yojana, and MITRA—aimed at enhancing financial inclusion, promoting investor awareness, and facilitating the retrieval of forgotten investments.

These efforts align with the Securities and Exchange Board of India's (SEBI) mission to democratize mutual fund investments and broaden participation across diverse demographics.

These initiatives reflect AMFI's commitment to making mutual funds a viable and accessible investment avenue for every Indian, thereby strengthening financial inclusion and investor protection.

Chhoti SIP: This initiative introduces a Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) starting at ₹250, making mutual fund investments more accessible, especially for first-time investors and individuals from underserved communities.

Tarun Yojana: Aimed at integrating financial literacy into school curricula, Tarun Yojana seeks to

equip young minds with foundational knowledge of investment principles, fostering early financial education.

MITRA (Mutual Fund Investment Tracing and Retrieval Assistant): This platform assists investors and their legal heirs in identifying and recovering inactive or forgotten mutual fund holdings, ensuring rightful asset ownership.

Paytm Launches Solar Soundbox

Paytm Solar Soundbox is an eco-friendly solution that harnesses a low-cost alternative energy source, enabling merchants in rural, remote, and electricity-deprived areas to seamlessly integrate into the digital ecosystem.

It aims to empower merchants in urban and rural areas with digital payment solutions and Supports India's vision of a cashless and sustainable economy.

It also enhances accessibility, reliability, and efficiency in digital transactions.

DEFENCE

Indian Coast Guard Conducts Successful ‘Sagar Kavach’

The two-day coastal security exercise 'Sagar Kavach' in West Bengal concluded on February 22, 2025 coordinated by the Coast Guard Region North East with the State Coastal Security Operation Centre (SCSOC) serving as the nerve center.

The exercise validated the coastal security SOPs through various drills along the 158 km coastline, simulating scenarios such as hijacking of fishing boats, smuggling of contraband, IED planting, and attacks on vital coastal assets.

Active patrolling was conducted by Indian Coast Guard, Navy, West Bengal Police, CISF, BSF, Customs, district police, and the Forest Department, while fishermen’s watch groups were activated as the ‘Eyes and Ears’ of security forces.

Special operations included CISF and Quick Response Teams of the Coast Guard and police, alongside coordinated Sea and Air surveillance.

Given evolving threats such as terrorism, smuggling, illegal immigration, and poaching, the exercise aimed to validate SOPs and enhance coordination among agencies.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Manohar International Airport Wins Prestigious 'Sarvashrestha Suraksha Puraskar'

Manohar International Airport (GOX), operated by GMR Goa International Airport Ltd. (GGIAL), has become the first Indian airport to win the 'Sarvashrestha Suraksha Puraskar (Golden Trophy)' at the NSCI Safety Awards 2024 in the 'Service Sector' category.

The award highlights the airport's exemplary Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) performance.

It was recognized for reducing workplace injuries, implementing best safety practices, and maintaining a zero-incident record.

It was awarded by the National Safety Council of India (NSCI), under the Ministry of Labour, Government of India.

SPORTS

2025 Uganda Badminton Tournament

Indian Badminton players won three titles at the Uganda International Challenge 2025 Badminton Championship. India won the men's singles, mixed doubles and the men's doubles title.

The $17.5000 Ugandan International Challenge 2025 Badminton Championship was held at the Lugogo Indoor Arena in Kampala,Uganda.

The winner of the men's and women's singles got $2,100 each. The prize money for the doubles - women's, men's and mixed- winners got $1,400 in each event.

World no 106 ranked Indian Manraj Singh defeated Azerbaijan's Dicky Dwi Pangestu 21-10, 17-21, 21-18 in the final. Manraj who was seeded seventh in the Ugandan event took just over an hour to defeat Dicky Dwi Pangestu.

In the Men's Doubles final top seed Indian pair of Dingku Singh Konthoujam and Amaan Mohammad defeated the Indian pair of Akshan Shetty and Sankar Prasad Udayakumar 14-21, 21-15, 21-17 in the finals.

The third title for India at the tournament was won in the mixed doubles event.

The Indian pair of Ishaan Bhatnagar-Srinidhi Narayanan were declared winners after Dhruv Rawat-Maneesha K retired due to injury. American Ishika Jaiswal won the women's singles title by defeating Nesihan Arin of Turkiye 21-15, 19-21, 22-20 in the final

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