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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 26-12-2025

NATIONAL NEWS

National Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Hub Scheme to Promote Inclusive Entrepreneurship

The Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises has intensified efforts to promote entrepreneurship among Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities through the National Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Hub Scheme, in line with the goals of inclusive economic growth, social justice, and equitable participation in the Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises ecosystem.

The National Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe Hub is a flagship scheme of the Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises, implemented by the National Small Industries Corporation Limited, a Government of India enterprise.

The scheme focuses on capacity building, entrepreneurship promotion, financial support, skill development, and market access for Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe entrepreneurs.

The primary objective of the scheme is to develop entrepreneurial capacity among Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe communities and enable them to compete effectively in domestic and global markets, addressing long-standing challenges such as limited access to credit, weak market linkages, lack of exposure to public procurement, and gaps in technical and managerial skills.

A key feature of the scheme is its support for public procurement, where Ministries, Departments, and Central Public Sector Enterprises are mandated to procure at least four percent of their total purchases from Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe owned enterprises.

The scheme facilitates registration on the Government e-Marketplace, participation in tenders, and understanding of procurement procedures.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Doha Hosts 11th Conference of States Parties to the UN Convention Against Corruption

The 11th Conference of the State Parties (COSP-11) to the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC) was held from 15–19 December 2025 in Doha, Qatar.

It is the world's largest global anti-corruption conference, focusing on strengthening international anti-corruption frameworks and reviewing progress on the only legally binding universal anti-corruption instrument.

The 5-day conference was hosted by the State of Qatar in collaboration with the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).

The conference was presided over by Hamad bin Nasser Al-Misnad, Chairman of the Administrative Control and Transparency Authority (ACTA) of Qatar.

A major outcome of COSP-11 was the adoption of the "Doha Declaration 2025", titled "Strengthening international cooperation and technical assistance and seizing the opportunities provided by Artificial Intelligence (AI) systems in preventing and combating corruption."

The Doha Declaration 2025 urges member states to leverage digital technologies, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), to strengthen cross-border law enforcement cooperation against corruption.

It emphasizes improving the accuracy, efficiency and objectivity of national corruption risk assessments through digital tools and big data analysis.

The declaration highlights the role of expert digital networks, especially the UNODC Global Operational Network of Anti-Corruption Law Enforcement Authorities (GlobE Network), for secure and instant information exchange.

Apart from the Doha Declaration, COSP-11 adopted 11 additional resolutions addressing diverse anti-corruption issues.

These resolutions focus on enhancing transparency in political party funding, candidates for elected public offices, and electoral campaign financing, as well as the role of corruption in environmental crimes.

The 12th session of COSP (COSP-12) will be held in Uzbekistan in 2027.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Indian Army Partners with Netaji Subhas University of Technology

The Indian Army signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Netaji Subhas University of Technology (NSUT) to collaborate on software and AI-based defence solutions.

Under the MoU, NSUT students and faculty will participate in live problem-solving projects of the Indian Army, gaining hands-on experience in real operational challenges.

NSUT will support capacity building through Faculty Development Programmes (FDPs) and customised training programmes for Army personnel, strengthening indigenous innovation-driven defence preparedness.

The collaboration aims to enhance technology integration, AI applications, and self-reliance in

defence in line with Aatmanirbhar Bharat.

Meanwhile, the Indian Army is set to procure around 850 kamikaze drones (loitering munitions) under fast-track acquisition procedures from indigenous sources.

The proposal for 850 loitering munitions with launchers is at an advanced stage and is expected to be cleared by the Defence Acquisition Council (DAC).

The Indian Army plans to induct around 30,000 loitering munitions in the near future to equip all fighting forces.

Each Army infantry battalion will have one Ashni platoon, responsible for operating drones for enemy targeting and counter-insurgency operations.

BANKING

BharatPe and YES BANK Introduce ‘Pay Later with BharatPe’ Instant Credit on UPI

BharatPe, in partnership with YES BANK, launched ‘Pay Later with BharatPe’, an instant Credit on UPI product powered by NPCI.

The product aims to democratise access to credit across India, catering to both consumers and merchants, especially those new to credit.

The facility provides interest-free credit for up to 45 days, with limits refreshed upon repayment, and flexible 3–12 month EMI repayment options.

Users can track usage, limits, and repayments, manage EMIs, and pay securely via UPI, ensuring a safe, convenient, and fully integrated credit experience.

Only Five Startups Achieve Unicorn Status in 2025

Only five startups became unicorns in 2025, the same as in 2024, indicating a continued valuation reset in India’s startup ecosystem despite a recovery in growth-stage funding.

According to Venture Intelligence, $3.2 billion was invested in Series B and C rounds in 2025, up from $2.6 billion in 2024.

The five new unicorns in 2025 were Dhan, Jumbotail, Drools, Porter, and Juspay.

This is sharply lower than 2022, when 22 startups reached unicorn status during the pandemic-era valuation boom.

A unicorn company is a privately held startup valued at over $1 billion, a term coined by VC Aileen Lee.

RBI Grants Final Payment Aggregator Licence to Mswipe Technologies

Mswipe Technologies Private Limited received the final Payment Aggregator (PA) licence from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The licence allows Mswipe to provide both online and offline merchant payment acceptance under a single regulatory framework.

The PA approval authorises onboarding of merchants and aggregation of multiple payment instruments across online, offline and hybrid platforms.

The licence enables inward and outward cross-border transactions, strengthening international payment facilitation.

Omnichannel payment acceptance is supported through e-commerce websites, mobile applications (apps) and physical storefronts.

Mswipe Technologies also holds an in-principle Prepaid Payment Instrument (PPI) licence and a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) licence, obtained in 2022.

With this approval, Mswipe joins a select group of fully authorised Payment Aggregators including Paytm, Razorpay, Pine Labs, Easebuzz, PayU and Airpay.

DEFENCE

Indian Navy Receives ‘Anjadip’, Third Anti-Submarine Warfare Shallow Water Craft

‘Anjadip’, the third of eight ASW Shallow Water Craft (ASW SWC), was delivered to the Indian Navy on 22 December 2025 at Chennai.

The ship has been indigenously designed and built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata, in partnership with L&T Shipyard, Kattupalli under a Public-Private Partnership (PPP)

ASW SWC vessels are constructed as per the Classification Rules of the Indian Register of Shipping (IRS), highlighting collaborative defence manufacturing.

With a length of about 77 metres, these are the largest Indian Naval warships propelled by Waterjets.

Anjadip is equipped with Lightweight Torpedoes, indigenously designed Anti-Submarine Rockets, and shallow water SONAR, enabling effective detection and engagement of underwater threats.

The ship will enhance the Navy’s anti-submarine warfare, coastal surveillance, and mine-laying capabilities.

The vessel is named after Anjadip Island off the coast of Karwar, Karnataka, and is a reincarnation of the erstwhile INS Anjadip, a Petya-class corvette decommissioned in 2003.

The delivery marks a key milestone in indigenous shipbuilding, aligned with the Government's vision of 'Aatmanirbhar Bharat', with over 80% indigenous content.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

HarperCollins Publishers India to Release Book on Salman Khan

HarperCollins Publishers India has announced the publication of a new book titled "Salman Khan: The Sultan of Bollywood", authored by award-winning journalist and writer Mohar Basu.

The book is scheduled for release, coinciding with the birthday of Salman Khan, one of Hindi cinema's most influential and enduring superstars.

The book traces Salman Khan's cinematic journey, focusing on his iconic screen characters, memorable dialogues, chart-topping songs, and box office-defining films.

It blends fan anecdotes, film industry insights, and rare photographs, providing a detailed account of how Salman Khan emerged as the quintessential mass hero of Bollywood.

The narrative highlights popular roles such as Prem, Bajrangi, and Tiger, showcasing his dominance across romance, comedy, and action genres, a rare achievement in Hindi cinema.

Author Mohar Basu described the book as a tribute to the old-school magic of cinema, when the arrival of a superstar could electrify single-screen theatres.

She emphasised that Salman Khan represents the uninhibited joy of movie-going, a quality that has become increasingly rare in contemporary cinema.

According to the author, the book explains why Salman Khan has remained a ritualistic and festival-linked presence for audiences for nearly three decades, particularly during festival releases and first-day-first-show screenings.

SPORTS

Smriti Mandhana Becomes First Asian Batter to Cross 4,000 Runs in Women's Twenty20 Internationals

Indian Vice Captain Smriti Mandhana marked her return to international cricket by creating history in the first Women's Twenty20 International against Sri Lanka at Visakhapatnam.

She became the first Indian and first Asian batter to cross 4,000 runs in Women's Twenty20 Internationals, reaffirming her status as one of the leading batters of the modern era.

During the match, Mandhana scored 25 runs off 25 balls, a crucial innings that helped her reach 4,007 runs from 154 Women's Twenty20 International matches.

With this feat, she became only the second player in Women's Twenty20 International history to cross the 4,000-run mark.

Suzie Bates of New Zealand remains the highest run-scorer in the format with 4,716 runs in 177 matches.

Mandhana now stands second on the all-time Women's Twenty20 International run-scorers list, highlighting her consistency and longevity at the top level.

124th Amateur Golf Championship of India

Indian amateur golf witnessed a major milestone as Sukhman Singh clinched the Indian Golf Union 124th Amateur Golf Championship of India with a dominant performance.

The championship was held at the Tollygunge Club, Kolkata, one of the oldest golf courses in India.

In the 36-hole matchplay final, Sukhman Singh defeated Harman Sachdeva of Haryana.

The match remained tied until the sixth hole, after which Sukhman steadily gained control.

He went 4 Up after 12 holes and maintained a 2 Up lead at the halfway stage, consistently pressuring his opponent.

Sukhman later built a commanding 7 Up lead with seven holes remaining, leading to the match being concluded after 29 holes.

The victory is significant due to Sukhman Singh's sporting legacy, as his father Simarjeet Singh is a former India Number One amateur golfer and a multiple-time amateur champion.

IMPORTANT DAYS

National Consumer Rights Day 2025

National Consumer Rights Day 2025 is observed on 24 December to create awareness about the rights and protection of consumers in India.

The theme for 2025 is "Efficient and Speedy Disposal through Digital Justice", highlighting India's focus on technology-enabled, accessible, and timely consumer grievance redressal mechanisms.

Consumers play a central role in the economy as most buying and selling decisions are driven by consumer demand, making consumer awareness and protection essential.

In India, consumer rights received formal recognition with the enactment of the Consumer

Protection Act, 1986, which aimed to protect consumers from unfair trade practices, sale of substandard goods, fraud, and deficiency in services.

With rapid economic transformation, changes in shopping behaviour, travel patterns, digital commerce, and service delivery, the existing consumer protection framework required modernisation.

To address these changes, the Consumer Protection Act, 2019 was passed by the Parliament of India on 6 August 2019, replacing the 1986 Act and strengthening consumer rights in a dynamic and digital economy.

The Right to Information Act complements the Consumer Protection Acts by promoting transparency and accountability in governance, which has significant implications for consumer empowerment.