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DAILY CURRENT AFFAIRS 31-01-2026

NATIONAL NEWS

AI Solution 'Pancham' Chatbot to Ensure Direct Digital Connect

During 77th Republic Day, Union Minister of State for Panchayati Raj S. P. Singh Baghel honoured elected Panchayat representatives invited as Special Guests for the Republic Day celebrations in New Delhi.

Several key initiatives and publications were launched, including PANCHAM chatbot, PESA Rankings 2024–25, 17th Gramoday Sankalp magazine, Compendium of Basic Statistics on PRIs–2025, and the Expert Committee Report on Service Delivery at Panchayat Level.

The Minister highlighted that after ten years, the SVAMITVA scheme tableau will be showcased at the Republic Day Parade.

He highlighted digital initiatives such as the PANCHAM chatbot, SabhaSaar tool for automated Gram Sabha minutes launched on 15 August 2025, and AI-based village drainage mapping in Varanasi district.

The Ministry launched PANCHAM – Panchayat Assistance and Messaging Chatbot on 25 January 2026 as a flagship digital initiative.

PANCHAM is designed to assist Panchayat representatives and functionaries with guidance, workflows, and easy access to governance information.

It establishes a direct digital connection between the Government of India and over 30 lakh Panchayat representatives and functionaries.

The chatbot enables two-way communication, faster issue resolution, improved feedback, and better decision-making.

PANCHAM supports responsive and accountable governance by strengthening grassroots–government coordination.

The initiative complements existing digital systems, with over 95% of Gram Panchayats already using digital planning and accounting platforms.

Overall, the initiative reflects the Ministry's focus on digital governance, innovation, and AI-driven empowerment of Panchayats.

New Aadhaar App Dedicated To The Nation

Minister of State for Commerce and Industry and Electronics and IT Jitin Prasada dedicated the new Aadhaar App to the nation.

The app has been developed by the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI).

It is a next-generation, privacy-first mobile application for Aadhaar number holders.

The app enables users to securely carry, show, share and verify their Aadhaar digitally.

The app gives residents greater control, consent and convenience over their identity data.

The app supports multiple real-life use cases such as hotel check-ins via QR code, optional face verification, age verification for cinema tickets, hospital visitor verification and gig worker verification.

It includes features like face verification for proof of presence, single-click biometric lock and unlock, and viewing of authentication history.

A QR-based contact card is provided for easy sharing of contact details.

The app allows management of up to five Aadhaar profiles on one device, enabling the concept of "One Family – One App."

Users can update their address and registered mobile number through the app, with more services planned.

Residents can share only required identity fields through customised QR codes generated by requesting entities.

Aadhaar numbers are not stored by verifiers and only digitally signed credentials are shared.

The app aligns with the Digital Personal Data Protection (DPDP) Act by ensuring data minimisation.

The launch reinforces India's digital public infrastructure vision of being resident-centric, inclusive and trust-based.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Brazilian Play Passado Presente Zenturo to Make International Debut in India and Russia in 2026

The Brazilian theatre production Passado Presente Zenturo was scheduled for its international debut in 2026, with performances in India and Russia, marking a major milestone for Brazil's contemporary theatre.

The play was selected for the 25th Bharat Rang Mahotsav, one of the world's leading theatre festivals, organised by the National School of Drama (NSD) under the Ministry of Culture, India.

During the Indian leg, the production was staged in Bengaluru on 5 February 2026 and New Delhi on 7 February 2026.

After its India tour, the play was set to represent Brazil at the 5th GITIS FEST in Moscow in April 2026, enhancing international cultural exchange.

The production was directed by André Haidamus, featured a cast of ten performers, with lighting by Camila Andrade and sound/video design by Cássio Gondim.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

Microsoft Launches Maia 200 AI Chip to Strengthen Integrated AI Ecosystem

Microsoft has introduced the second generation of its in-house artificial intelligence processor, “Maia 200”, along with a new suite of AI-focused software tools, strengthening its push to build an integrated AI ecosystem.

The Maia 200 AI chip builds on Microsoft’s first Maia chip, which was originally introduced in 2023.

The Maia 200 is manufactured by Taiwan Semiconductor Manufacturing Company (TSMC) using advanced 3-nanometer (3-nm) process technology.

The chip incorporates high-bandwidth memory, enhancing its ability to handle data-intensive AI workloads.

The Maia 200 AI processor is now operational at a Microsoft data centre in Iowa, marking its first live deployment.

Microsoft has plans to expand deployment of the Maia 200 to additional data-centre facilities.

Compared to its predecessor, Maia 200 offers higher compute capability, increased memory bandwidth, and better energy efficiency.

These improvements enable faster and more cost-effective artificial intelligence workloads, making the Maia 200 a key component of Microsoft’s AI infrastructure strategy.

BANKING

RBI May Postpone Mandatory Climate Risk Reporting for Banks

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has put on hold plans to require domestic banks to disclose and manage climate-related risks.

Globally, understanding climate-related risks and green investments is key to transitioning to a low-carbon economy, with countries like the United Kingdom (UK) and Japan making disclosures mandatory for financial institutions.

RBI's proposed climate disclosure norms, under discussion with banks since 2022, would have required regular disclosure of climate-related risks in loan portfolios, along with mitigation strategies and targets.

Draft rules published in 2022 proposed voluntary implementation starting FY2027 (April 1, 2027).

RBI decided to delay final guidelines, citing that climate disclosure is not a priority and that implementation could be costly and onerous for corporates lacking mandatory climate reporting.

Separately, RBI has proposed guidelines for banks and regulated entities to implement resolution plans during natural calamities.

The draft norms would have required banks to calculate gross emissions of borrowers, disclose by asset classes and industries, and analyse the impact of adverse climate events on borrowers' repayment ability.

Implementation could have led to higher loan pricing for emission-heavy sectors and borrowers in climate-sensitive zones.

India ranks ninth globally in climate vulnerability according to the Germanwatch Global Climate Risk Index 2026, which tracked 1995–2024 extreme weather events.

During this period, India experienced 430 extreme weather events, resulting in over 80,000 deaths and economic losses of around $170 billion, exposing lenders to credit risks.

AWARDS & PRIZES

Republic Day Parade 2026

The results of the Best Marching Contingents and Best Tableaux of the Republic Day Parade 2026 were announced after evaluation by three separate panels of judges.

Among the three Services, the Indian Navy was selected as the Best Marching Contingent, while Delhi Police won the award among CAPFs/Other Auxiliary Forces.

The top three tableaux from States/UTs were Maharashtra (Ganeshotsav: A Symbol of Aatmanirbharta), Jammu & Kashmir (Handicrafts and Folk Dances of J&K), and Kerala (Water Metro & 100% Digital Literacy).

The Best Tableau from Central Ministries/Departments award was won by the Ministry of Culture for "Vande Mataram – The Soul Cry of a Nation".

Special prizes were awarded to the Central Public Works Department for "Vande Mataram – Commemoration of 150 Years" and the dance group "Vande Mataram: The Eternal Resonance of India".

Under the Popular Choice category, based on the MyGov online poll, the Assam Regiment was selected as the Best Marching Contingent among Services.

In the Popular Choice category, Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) won the award among CAPFs.

The top three Popular Choice tableaux were Gujarat (Mantra of Swadeshi – Vande Mataram), Uttar Pradesh (Culture of Bundelkhand), and Rajasthan (Bikaner Gold Art – Usta Art), while the Department of School Education and Literacy won the Best Central Tableau for showcasing National Education Policy 2020.

NVIDIA CEO Jensen Huang Awarded 2026 IEEE Medal of Honor, Technology's Most Prestigious Recognition

IEEE, the world's largest technical professional organization with over 500,000 members, has named Jensen Huang, founder and CEO of NVIDIA, as the recipient of the 2026 IEEE Medal of Honor.

The IEEE Medal of Honor is the organization's highest recognition and carries a $2 million prize.

Jensen Huang is being honoured for a lifetime of visionary leadership and pioneering work in accelerated computing.

His work has positioned NVIDIA at the forefront of global technological innovation.

Under his leadership, NVIDIA invented the first graphics processing unit (GPU) in 1999, revolutionising computing.

The invention of the GPU enabled breakthroughs in artificial intelligence, medicine, engineering, robotics, autonomous vehicles and manufacturing.

Past recipients include pioneers such as Vinton G. Cerf, Robert Kahn, Bradford Parkinson and Morris Chang.

NVIDIA became the first company to reach a $5 trillion market capitalisation in October 2025.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Mr. Sumant Batra Launches Book titled "The Life and Legacy of Arun Jaitley"

A book titled The Life and Legacy of Arun Jaitley has been formally launched, chronicling the life, contributions, and legacy of late leader Arun Jaitley.

The book is authored by Sumant Batra and published by Om Books International.

Former Vice President M. Venkaiah Naidu attended the event as the chief guest, underlining Jaitley's national stature.

The book portrays Arun Jaitley as an exceptional public figure who left a lasting imprint across law, politics, governance, and public service in India.