

December - 29

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ Renowned sand artist Sudarsan Pattnaik created the “World’s Biggest Apple and Sand Installation of Santa Claus” at Niladri Beach, Puri, Odisha, using 1.5 tonnes of apples and sand.
 - The sculpture was officially recognised by the World Records Book of India.

NATIONAL NEWS

25 Years of PMGSY



- ❖ The Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana (PMGSY) has completed 25 years in December 2025.
- ❖ It is a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at providing all-weather road connectivity to previously unconnected rural habitations.
- ❖ PMGSY was launched on 25 December 2000, on the birth anniversary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee.
- ❖ The scheme is implemented by the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD), Government of India.
- ❖ PMGSY has four phases:
 - PMGSY-I: Universal connectivity to unconnected habitations.
 - PMGSY-II: Upgradation of existing rural roads.
 - PMGSY-III: Connecting markets, schools, and healthcare facilities.

- PMGSY-IV (2024–29): Targeting 25,000 habitations via 62,500 km of roads.
- ❖ Over 8.25 lakh km of roads were sanctioned, with nearly 95% completed by December 2025.
- ❖ Technology-driven monitoring is used, including OMMAS, e-MARG, GPS tracking, and geo-tagged inspections.
- ❖ A three-tier quality monitoring system ensures road durability and standards.
- ❖ Sustainable construction includes eco-friendly materials like waste plastic, fly ash, and bio-bitumen.
- ❖ PMGSY improves market access, farm-to-market linkages, education, healthcare, and welfare services in rural areas.

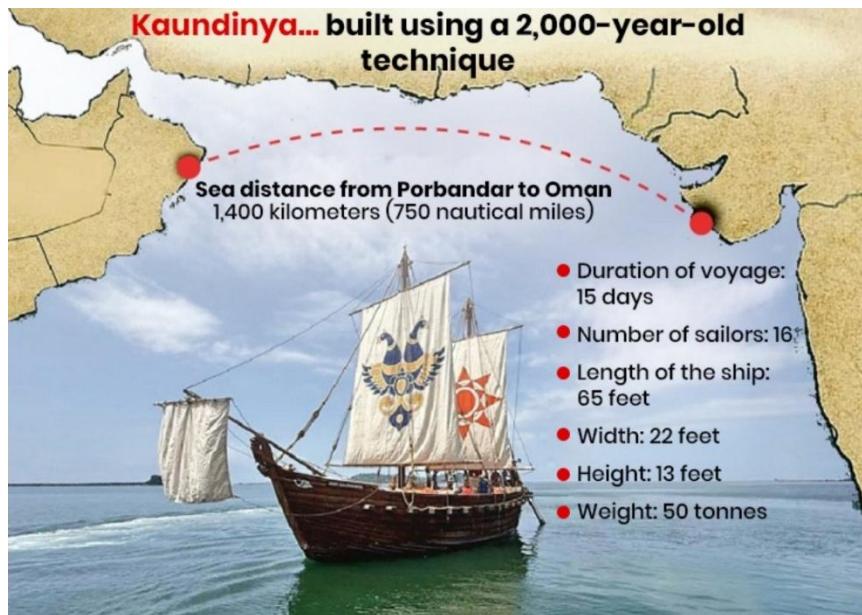
No-Mining Zones in Aravalli Range

Centre Bans New Mining Leases Across Entire Aravalli Range

MoEFCC has directed States to impose a complete ban on granting any new mining leases across the entire Aravalli Range, stretching from Delhi to Gujarat.

- ❖ The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change has imposed a complete ban on new mining leases across the entire Aravalli Range.
- ❖ The ban applies uniformly from Gujarat to the National Capital Region (NCR) to prevent illegal and unregulated mining.
- ❖ The Indian Council of Forestry Research and Education (ICFRE) has been tasked with identifying additional no-mining and protected zones.
- ❖ ICFRE will also prepare a science-based management plan covering ecological impact, carrying capacity, and restoration measures.
- ❖ Existing mining operations will continue only under stricter environmental monitoring and Supreme Court guidelines.
- ❖ Protection of the Aravalli is crucial for preventing desertification, conserving biodiversity, and recharging groundwater.

INSV Kaundinya



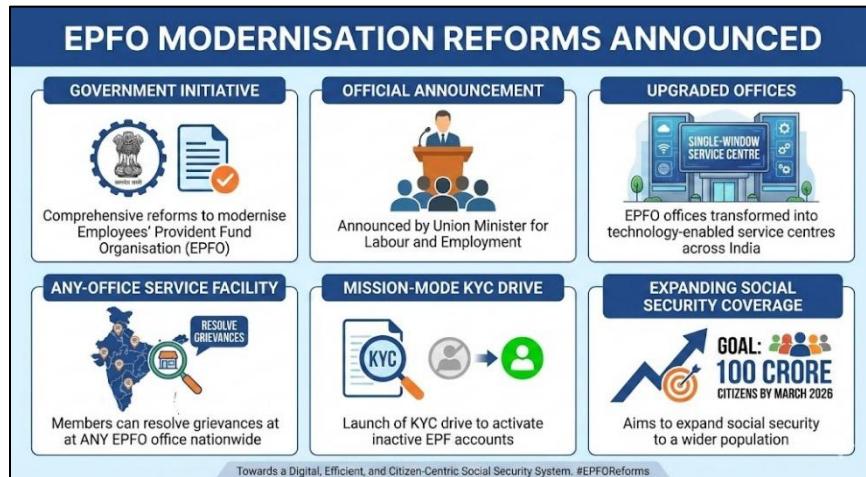
- ❖ INSV Kaundinya is a stitched sailing vessel of the Indian Navy, inspired by 5th-century ship depictions in Ajanta cave murals.
- ❖ It will undertake its maiden overseas voyage to Oman sailing from Porbandar in Gujarat, to Muscat.
- ❖ The vessel is built using traditional stitched-plank technology, with wooden planks stitched using coconut coir rope and sealed with natural resins.
- ❖ The project was executed through a tripartite agreement involving the Ministry of Culture, the Indian Navy, and Hodi Innovations.
- ❖ INSV Kaundinya is named after the ancient Indian mariner Kaundinya, symbolising India's historic maritime links with Southeast Asia.

ECONOMY NEWS

EPFO Modernization Reforms

- ❖ The Government of India announced comprehensive reforms to modernise the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO).
- ❖ The reforms were announced by Union Minister for Labour and Employment.
- ❖ EPFO offices will be upgraded into technology-enabled, single-window service centres across India.
- ❖ An “Any-Office Service Facility” will allow EPF members to resolve grievances at any EPFO office nationwide.

- ❖ A mission-mode Know Your Customer (KYC) drive will be launched to activate inactive EPF accounts.
- ❖ The government aims to expand social security coverage to 100 crore citizens by March 2026.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

K-4 Missile Test



- ❖ India has successfully tested the K-4 intermediate-range ballistic missile from its nuclear-powered submarine INS Arighaat in the Bay of Bengal.
- ❖ The missile test was conducted off the coast of Visakhapatnam.
- ❖ The K-4 missile is solid-fuelled, has a range of 3,500 km, and can carry a nuclear warhead weighing up to two tonnes.
- ❖ INS Arighaat is India's second nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN) and is operated by the Strategic Forces Command.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Tiger in Gujarat

- ❖ Gujarat has been officially reinstated as a tiger-bearing state after a gap of 33 years, following sustained evidence of tiger presence.
- ❖ The decision was formally announced by the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), the nodal body for tiger conservation in India.
- ❖ A nearly four-year-old tiger was confirmed in the Ratanmahal Sloth Bear Sanctuary, located in Dahod district along the Gujarat-Madhya Pradesh border.
- ❖ Following this, Gujarat will now be included in the All-India Tiger Estimation (AITE) 2026, one of the largest wildlife population surveys in the world.

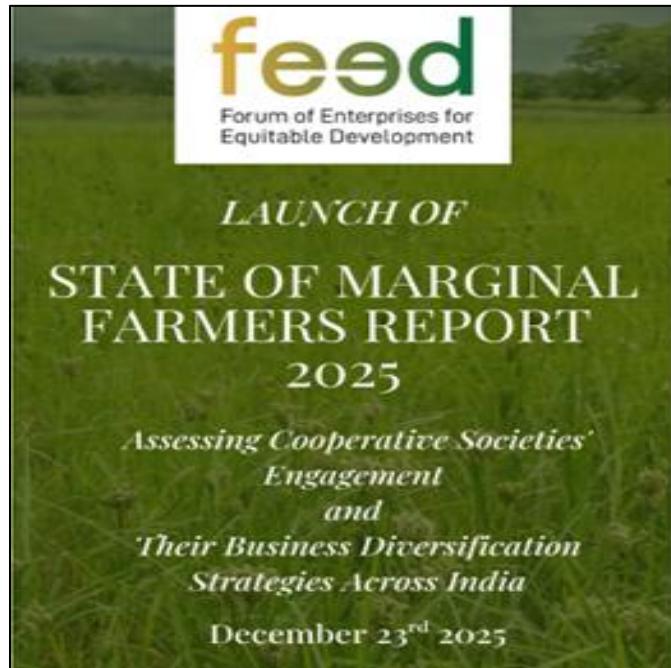


REPORTS AND INDICES

State of Marginal Farmers in India 2025

- ❖ The State of Marginal Farmers in India 2025 report was released by the Forum of Enterprises for Equitable Development (FEED) on Kisan Diwas (December 23, 2025).
- ❖ The report found that less than 25% of marginal farmers are linked to agricultural cooperatives, even though they make up 60–70% of India's agricultural households.
- ❖ Marginal farmers are defined as cultivators who own less than one hectare of land.
- ❖ Cooperative participation was especially low in Bihar, Tripura, and Himachal Pradesh.

- ❖ Barriers to cooperative engagement include complex membership procedures, long distances to Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (PACS), limited availability of capital, social exclusion, and gender gaps.
- ❖ Marginal farmers who accessed cooperatives reported higher household income, improved livelihood security, and better access to credit, agricultural inputs, and public services.



STATES' NEWS

Murshidabad Mob Lynching case



- ❖ A court in Murshidabad district of West Bengal sentenced 13 persons to life imprisonment for a mob lynching case.
- ❖ The incident took place at Jafrabad village in Samserganj, Murshidabad.
- ❖ The lynching occurred during a violent protest against the Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.
- ❖ The accused were convicted under Section 103(2) of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), which deals with mob lynching.
- ❖ This is the second conviction for mob lynching in India and the first such conviction in West Bengal under the BNS.
- ❖ The court directed the West Bengal Government to pay ₹15 lakh as compensation to the victims' family.

PERSONALITIES, AWARDS, AND EVENTS

Tata Transformation Prize 2025



**HISTORIC ACHIEVEMENT
THREE BENGALURU SCIENTISTS
WON THE \$2M PRIZE FOR RICE,
CANCER, AND MANUFACTURING
BREAKTHROUGHS.**

- ❖ Three Bengaluru scientists — Padubidri V. Shivaprasad (National Centre for Biological Sciences), Balasubramanian Gopal, and Ambarish Ghosh (Indian Institute of Science) won the 2025 Tata Transformation Prize.
- ❖ They were recognised for research in food security, sustainability, and healthcare, respectively.
- ❖ Each will receive ₹2 crore to advance their research and its real-world impact.
- ❖ Shivaprasad works on epigenetic engineering in rice to improve stress tolerance and nutrition.
- ❖ Gopal has developed sustainable chemical production using bioengineered *E. coli*, and Ghosh uses magnetic nanorobots for targeted cancer treatment.

PMRBP Awards 2025



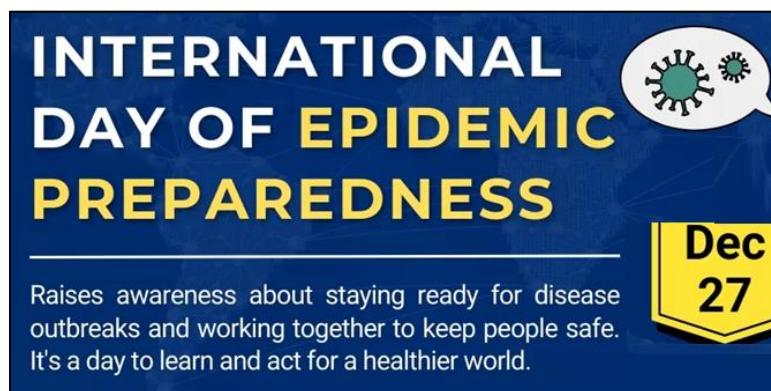
- ❖ Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar (PMRBP) is a national award given annually by the President of India to children below 18 years.
- ❖ PMRBP is awarded for exceptional achievements in Bravery, Social Service, Environment, Sports, Art & Culture, and Science & Technology.
- ❖ In 2025, 20 children from 18 States/UTs received the award, presented by the President of India in New Delhi.
- ❖ Vaibhav Suryavanshi, a 14-year-old Indian cricketer, received the award in the Sports category for his achievements in domestic, Under-19 (U-19), and Indian Premier League (IPL) cricket.
- ❖ He became the youngest centurion in List A cricket (Vijay Hazare Trophy), Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (T20), and the Indian Premier League (IPL).
- ❖ Other awardees include Vyoma Priya (TN) and Kamlesh Kumar (Bihar) for Bravery, Esther Lalduhawmi Hnamte (Mizoram) for Art & Culture, Arnav Anupriya Maharshi (Maharashtra) for Science & Technology, and Vaibhav Sooryavanshi (Bihar) for Sports.

- ❖ A maximum of 25 awards are given annually, each consisting of a medal and a certificate.

IMPORTANT DAYS

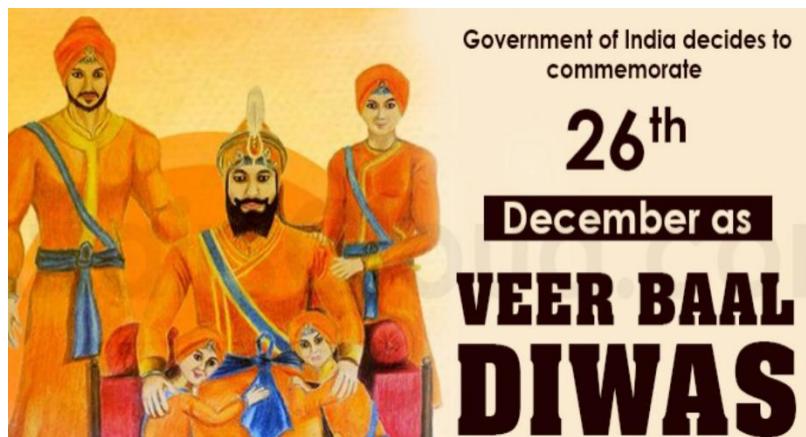
International Day of Epidemic Preparedness 2025 – December 27

- ❖ The day aims to promote awareness, preparedness, and global cooperation to reduce the impact of epidemics.
- ❖ The day was declared by the UNGA, and it was first observed on 27 December 2020.
- ❖ The day highlights the need to prevent, detect, and respond to infectious disease outbreaks.
- ❖ An epidemic is a sudden outbreak of a disease affecting more people than normally expected in a region.



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

Veer Bal Diwas 2025



- ❖ Veer Bal Diwas is observed every year on 26 December in India.
- ❖ It commemorates the sacrifice of Sahibzada Zorawar Singh (9 years) and Sahibzada Fateh Singh (7 years).
- ❖ They were the younger sons of Guru Gobind Singh Ji (Tenth Sikh Guru).
- ❖ The Sahibzadas were executed in 1705 at Sirhind by Mughal governor Wazir Khan for refusing to abandon the Sikh faith.
- ❖ The day was officially announced by the Government of India in 2022.

100 Years of Communist Party of India (CPI)

100 YEARS OF CPI
A CENTURY OF INDIAN COMMUNISM

- Communist Party of India (CPI) marks 100 years
- CPI considers December 26, 1925, as its foundation day
- Communist groups met in Cawnpore (Kanpur)
- First all-India effort to build a Communist party on Indian soil



- ❖ The Communist Party of India (CPI) completed 100 years on 26 December 2025.
- ❖ The CPI was first formed in 1920 at Tashkent by Indian revolutionaries including M.N. Roy, Mohammad Ali, M.P.T. Acharya, and Mohammad Shafiq.
- ❖ It was formally established in India at the Kanpur Communist Conference in December 1925.
- ❖ Singaravelu Chettiar was the first President of the Communist Party of India.
- ❖ The slogan “Inquilab Zindabad” was coined by Maulana Hasrat Mohani and was raised at the Kanpur Conference.
- ❖ The CPI helped build organisations such as the All-India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) and the All-India Kisan Sabha (AIKS).
- ❖ It also supported organisations like the All-India Students’ Federation (AISF), Progressive Writers’ Association (PWA), and Indian People’s Theatre Association (IPTA).
- ❖ The CPI led major movements such as the Telangana armed struggle, the Tebhaga movement, and the Punnappa-Vayalar struggle.
- ❖ The party supported the demand for complete independence from British rule.
- ❖ The CPI strongly advocated the formation of a Constituent Assembly for free India.

- ❖ M.N. Roy proposed a constitution in 1934.
- ❖ The CPI raised issues of land redistribution, labour rights, minimum wages, and social security.
- ❖ The party also supported federalism and linguistic and cultural diversity in India.

Bezymianny Volcano Regrowth

- ❖ Russia's Bezymianny volcano blew itself apart 69 years ago, in a massive eruption on 30 March 1956.
- ❖ The eruption caused the summit to collapse, turning the cone-shaped mountain into a horseshoe-shaped amphitheatre.
- ❖ The volcano has been regrowing through frequent eruptions, including a major one in November 2025.
- ❖ A 2020 study reported that Bezymianny is expected to reach its pre-1956 height between 2030 and 2035.
- ❖ The volcano emits explosive ash clouds and pyroclastic flows while also growing via non-explosive lava flows (effusive eruptions).

