

January - 18

TNPSC BITS

- ❖ DRDO successfully conducted a long-duration ground test of an actively cooled full-scale scramjet combustor, which demonstrated sustained performance for over 12 minutes.
- ❖ D. B. Venkatesh Varma, a former Indian Foreign Service (IFS) officer, was nominated to chair the UN Advisory Board on Disarmament Matters for the 2026–27 term.
- ❖ The Navi Mumbai International Airport will be named after D B Patil, a leader associated with farmers' and local rights movements in Navi Mumbai.
- ❖ The Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approved the Dagadarthi Greenfield Airport in Nellore district.
 - The airport will be AP's 8th airport and aims to improve regional connectivity, industrial growth, and port-led logistics.

TAMIL NADU NEWS

Four promises of TN CM



- ❖ On the occasion of Thiruvalluvar Day, TN Chief Minister MK Stalin, said four principles articulated by Thiruvalluvar are the very foundations of his governance and he would continue to uphold them in TN.
- ❖ They are courage, generosity, wisdom and energy.
- ❖ Also, he made following four promise that will continue in TN

- Courage to fight against social injustice and divisive communal forces
- Humanitarian schemes to uplift lives of poor,
- Initiatives to foster intellectual capacity of younger generation and
- Constructive efforts that promote industrial growth and advancement of women.

NATIONAL NEWS

BHASHINI Samudaye Workshop

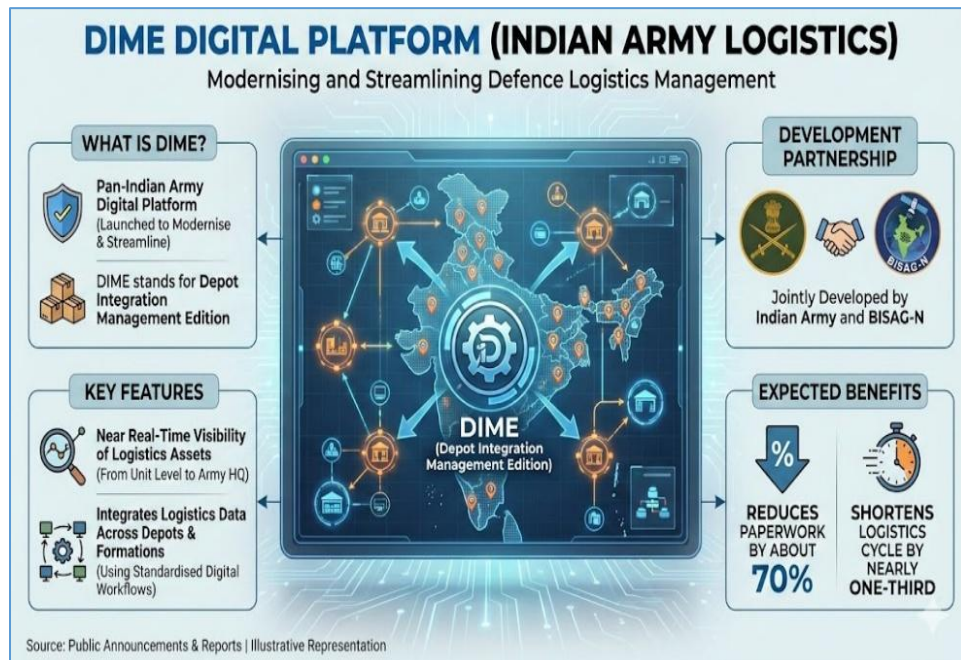
- ❖ The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) organised the BHASHINI Samudaye workshop to strengthen India's Language Artificial Intelligence (AI) ecosystem in New Delhi.
- ❖ It was organised by the Digital India BHASHINI Division (DIBD), MeitY, in collaboration with Wadhvani AI.
- ❖ The event has focused on strengthening the Language AI ecosystem under the National Language Translation Mission (NLTM).
- ❖ It brought together language experts, academic institutions, civil society organisations, and data practitioners.
- ❖ Sessions covered platform expansion, participatory governance, and citizen data contribution through Bhasha Daan.
- ❖ An initiative called the Dataset Onboarding Supporting Team (DOST) was launched to improve multilingual datasets for public digital infrastructure.



DIME Digital Platform

- ❖ The Indian Army launched a new digital logistics platform called DIME.

- ❖ DIME stands for Depot Integration Management Edition.
- ❖ It is a pan-Indian Army digital platform launched to modernise and streamline logistics management.
- ❖ The platform provides near real-time visibility of logistics assets from unit level to Army Headquarters.
- ❖ DIME is jointly developed by the Indian Army and BISAG-N (Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics).
- ❖ It integrates logistics data across depots and formations using standardised digital workflows.
- ❖ The platform aims to reduce paperwork by about 70 % and shorten the logistics cycle by nearly one-third.



Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act

- ❖ The Supreme Court of India delivered a split verdict on the constitutional validity of Section 17A of the Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988.
- ❖ Section 17A was introduced by the Prevention of Corruption (Amendment) Act, 2018.
- ❖ It requires prior approval of the competent authority before conducting any enquiry or investigation against a public servant for decisions taken in the discharge of official duties.
- ❖ The provision was challenged by the Centre for Public Interest Litigation (CPIL).

- ❖ The Supreme Court Bench expressed divergent judicial views on the validity of Section 17A.



- **Supreme Court** gives a split verdict on **Section 17A** of the **Prevention of Corruption Act**.
- **Section 17A** requires prior **approval** before investigating a **public servant**.
- **Justice B.V. Nagarathna** rules the provision unconstitutional.
- The **mandatory prior approval** defeats the objective of the Prevention of Corruption Act.

Blue Food Security Summit



- ❖ India participated in the Second Global Summit on “Blue Food Security: Sea the Future 2026” held in Eilat, Israel.
- ❖ The summit focused on food security, sustainable fisheries, and aquaculture innovations.
- ❖ The National Centre for Mariculture (NCM), Eilat, showcased broodstock development, hatchery technologies, and integrated multi-trophic aquaculture.

- ❖ India and Israel have signed a Joint Ministerial Declaration of Intent to enhance cooperation in fisheries and aquaculture, including technology exchange, sustainable fishing practices, capacity building, and trade.
- ❖ The summit has included the participation from global leaders, scientists, and policymakers in the field of blue food security.

Solar-Powered MAPSS Surveillance Drone

- ❖ The Indian Army signed a ₹168 crore contract for the Medium Altitude Persistent Surveillance System (MAPSS), India's first solar-powered surveillance drone.
- ❖ MAPSS is developed by New Space Research & Technologies, Bengaluru, under the Innovations for Defence Excellence (iDEX) framework of the Ministry of Defence.
- ❖ The drone uses solar energy, enabling long-endurance intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) missions across sensitive borders.
- ❖ Operational advantages include monitoring movement, observing border activity, supporting communications in remote areas, and reduced detectability due to quiet electric propulsion.
- ❖ The MAPSS variant has completed trials in operational environments and builds on earlier high-altitude solar drone tests demonstrating endurance beyond 24 hours at 26,000 feet.



New Pax Silica Member - India

- ❖ India is set to become a full member of the Pax Silica initiative, led by the United States Department of State, as early as February 2026.

- ❖ Pax Silica is a multilateral initiative aimed at building a secure, trusted, and resilient global technology ecosystem, covering energy security, critical minerals, semiconductor manufacturing, and advanced artificial intelligence (AI) models.
- ❖ The initiative seeks to reduce coercive dependencies in global supply chains, preventing over-reliance on any single country for critical materials or technologies.
- ❖ Members include the United States, Japan, South Korea, Singapore, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, Israel, the UAE, Australia, Taiwan, the European Union, Canada, and OECD countries.
- ❖ The initiative enhances cooperation in advanced technologies, AI governance, and supply chain security among participating countries.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Russian Fossil Fuel Imports

- ❖ India has slipped to the third position among buyers of Russian fossil fuels in December 2025, as crude oil imports from Russia declined.
- ❖ India's imports of Russian hydrocarbons fell to €2.3 billion in December 2025, from €3.3 billion in November 2025.
- ❖ This placed India below Türkiye (€2.6 billion), while China remained the largest buyer, accounting for 48% of export revenues among top importers.

- ❖ Crude oil formed 78% (€1.8 billion) of India's Russian energy imports; coal (€424 million) and oil products (€82 million) formed the rest.
- ❖ Russia supplied about 25% of India's total crude oil imports in December, down from 35% in November 2025.
- ❖ The decline was due to US sanctions, the G7-led price cap policy, and reduced purchases by private and state-owned Indian refiners.
- ❖ The data was highlighted by the Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA).



ECONOMY NEWS

New FEMA Regulations on Foreign Guarantees

- ❖ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) notified the Foreign Exchange Management (Guarantees) Regulations, 2026.
- ❖ The regulations provide a regulatory framework for guarantees involving persons resident outside India.
- ❖ They are issued under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999.
- ❖ Authorised Dealer Category-I (AD-I) banks are required to comply with the new regulations while issuing, modifying, or invoking guarantees related to non-residents.

- ❖ The regulations mandate mandatory reporting of all guarantee-related transactions by AD-I banks in a prescribed format.
- ❖ Several earlier Authorised Persons (Directions Series) circulars related to guarantees have been superseded.
- ❖ The requirement of quarterly reporting on guarantees for Trade Credit has been discontinued from the quarter ending March 2026.

RBI | Foreign Exchange Management (Guarantees) Regulations, 2026

General prohibition with regulated carve-outs

No person resident in India shall be a party to a guarantee involving a person resident outside India unless expressly permitted under FEMA, these regulations, or with RBI's approval.

Specified exemptions

The regulations exclude guarantees issued by overseas branches or IFSC units of authorised dealer banks, Irrevocable Payment Commitments issued by custodian banks for FPIs, and guarantees governed by the FEMA (Overseas Investment) Regulations, 2022.

Permission to obtain guarantees as creditors

An India resident may obtain a guarantee in its favour, provided that where both the principal debtor and surety are non-residents, the underlying transaction is not prohibited under FEMA.

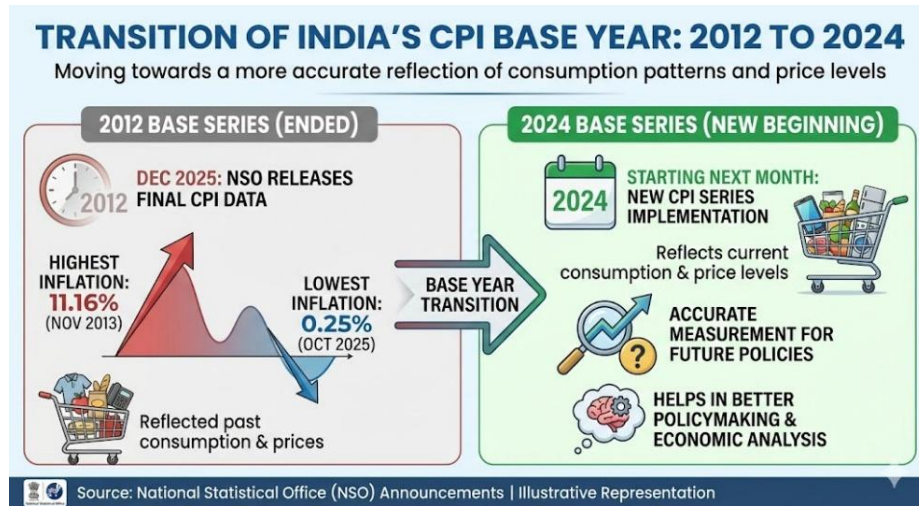
Quarterly reporting timelines

Reporting must be made on a quarterly basis within 15 calendar days from the end of the relevant quarter to an authorised dealer bank, with onward submission by the bank to RBI within 30 calendar days.

CPI Base Year - 2024

- ❖ India ended the Consumer Price Index (CPI) series with 2012 as the base year and will start a new CPI series with 2024 as the base year.
- ❖ The National Statistical Office (NSO) released the final CPI data for December 2025 under the 2012 base year.
- ❖ The new CPI series with 2024 as the base year will be implemented from next month.
- ❖ Under the 2012 base, headline inflation was highest at 11.16% in November 2013.
- ❖ The lowest inflation under this series was 0.25% in October 2025.

- ❖ The base year change helps reflect current consumption patterns and price levels more accurately.



SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY NEWS

People-First AI Platform



- ❖ Reliance Jio will launch a people-first artificial intelligence (AI) platform built in India, for India, and the world.
- ❖ The platform will enable citizens to access AI services in their own language on personal devices.
- ❖ India's largest AI-ready data centre is being built at Jamnagar, Gujarat, to support the platform.

- ❖ The core goal is to provide affordable and inclusive AI access to citizens nationwide.
- ❖ The platform is part of Reliance's broader ₹7 lakh crore investment plan in Gujarat, focusing on technology, digital services, and clean energy.

ENVIRONMENT NEWS

Two New Frog Species - Arunachal Pradesh

- ❖ Scientists discovered two new frog species in Arunachal Pradesh.
- ❖ The two species belong to the genus *Leptobrachium* under the family Megophryidae.
- ❖ The research was led by Professor S. D. Biju of Delhi University, also known as the Frogman of India.
- ❖ The newly identified frogs are Soman's Slender Arm Frog (*Leptobrachium somani*) and Mechuka Slender Arm Frog (*Leptobrachium mechuka*).



STATES' NEWS

Bhadrakali Inscription

- ❖ The Bhadrakali Inscription is highlighted as an important 12th-century epigraphic record linked to the history of the Somnath Temple.
- ❖ The Bhadrakali Inscription is located at Prabhas Patan, Gujarat, on the wall of the Bhadrakali Temple.
- ❖ It was carved in 1169 CE, corresponding to Valabhi Samvat 850 and Vikram Samvat 1255.

- ❖ The inscription provides historical details about the construction and reconstruction of the Somnath Temple across different periods.
- ❖ It records patronage by the Solanki dynasty, especially during the reign of King Kumarapala.
- ❖ The inscription is a eulogy of Param Pashupata Acharya Shriman Bhavabrihaspati, the spiritual preceptor of the Solanki ruler.



Akka Pade Scheme



- ❖ The Akka Pade scheme was launched in the Dakshina Kannada district, Karnataka to enhance the safety of women and children.

- ❖ Akka Pade is a special safety initiative jointly implemented by the Department of Women and Child Development (DWCD) and the Police Department.
- ❖ Each Akka Pade team consists of five women Home Guards trained to assist women and children in distress.
- ❖ Deployment areas include schools, colleges, bus and railway stations, hostels, tourist places, and religious locations.

IMPORTANT DAYS

Army Day 2026 - January 15

- ❖ It marks the day in 1949 when the Indian Army came under full Indian leadership after independence.
- ❖ On this day, Field Marshal K. M. Cariappa became the first Indian Commander-in-Chief of the Indian Army.
- ❖ He took charge from General Sir F. R. R. Bucher, the last British Commander-in-Chief.
- ❖ The day honours the service and sacrifices of Indian Army soldiers in protecting national security.



MISCELLANEOUS NEWS

BRICS 2026 Website and Logo

- ❖ India's BRICS Presidency 2026 official website and logo launched recently.
- ❖ India will assume the BRICS chairship in 2026, coinciding with the grouping's 20th anniversary.

- ❖ Theme: Building for resilience, innovation, cooperation, and sustainability.
- ❖ BRICS is a platform for cooperation among emerging markets and developing economies.
- ❖ The logo represents unity in diversity, blending tradition and modernity with the colours of all member countries.
- ❖ The website will provide information on meetings, initiatives, and outcomes during India's chairship.

