

Daily Current Affairs

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Startup India Initiative

- The government's **flagship initiative Startup India** has **completed** nine years 16 January . The scheme is intended to **catalyse startup culture** and build a strong and **inclusive ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship** in the country.
- India has bloomed into the **world's third-largest startup ecosystem**, which raised more than **\$158 Bn+ funding between 2014 and 2024**. As per government estimates, **India is home to more than 1.59 Lakh Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)-recognised startups** that have created **17 Lakh+ jobs in the country**.



- These startups encompass more than **56 sectors, including IT services, healthcare and life sciences**, education, agriculture, construction, among others. However, what is fascinating is that the startup fever has not remained within the walls of India's biggest cities but has percolated to smaller towns as well.

- As per DPIIT data, **more than half (51%) of the DPIIT-registered startups in India are from non-metro cities** . “More and more startups coming from non-metro cities is a promising sign of India’s entrepreneurial potential. Cities like Jaipur, Indore, Coimbatore, Vadodara, and Surat offer cost-effective talent and opportunities for startups to grow.
- Meanwhile, government-led incubator programs like **T-Hub in Telangana** provide significant support to startups, unlocking trillions of dollars in value and reshaping India’s entrepreneurial landscape,” said Murali Bukkapatnam, chair of non-profit TiE’s global 2025 board of trustees. India is also third in the world in terms of the number of unicorns.
- As per the DPIIT, the **number of billion-dollar valuation companies in India** have soared **13X in the past decade to 118 in 2024 from a mere eight in 2015**. These unicorns are cumulatively **valued north of \$354 Bn**, showing the might of the new-age tech ventures that have emerged from India in the past decade.

National Turmeric Board

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi lauded the establishment of the **National Turmeric Board**. In a social media post, the Prime Minister called the establishment of the board a matter of immense joy, particularly for the country’s hard-working turmeric farmers.



- Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal, inaugurated the **National Turmeric Board in New Delhi**, appointing **Shri Palle Ganga Reddy** as its first Chairperson. The Board's headquarters is established in **Nizamabad, Telangana**, a prominent turmeric-producing region. He underscored that this board will ensure better opportunities for innovation, global promotion, and value addition in turmeric production.
- The Prime Minister added that it will strengthen the supply chains, benefiting both farmers and consumers alike.
- **India stands as the largest producer, consumer, and exporter of turmeric**, accounting for **over 70% of global production**. In the 2023-24 period, the country cultivated turmeric over **3.05 lakh hectares**, yielding **10.74 lakh tonnes**. **With more than 30 varieties grown**, India's share in world turmeric trade exceeds 62%, **exporting 1.62 lakh tonnes** valued at \$226.5 million during 2023-24.

IMD's 150th Foundation Day

- On January 14, 2025, during the **150th Foundation Day celebrations of the India Meteorological Department (IMD)**, Prime Minister Narendra Modi unveiled the **'IMD Vision-2047'** document.
- This strategic roadmap outlines ambitious goals to enhance India's meteorological capabilities by 2047, coinciding with the nation's centenary of independence.



- **Zero Disaster Deaths:** The vision document sets a target of eliminating fatalities due to severe weather events by 2047. This objective emphasizes the importance of accurate and timely weather forecasts to enable effective disaster management and early public warnings.
- **Enhanced Forecast Accuracy:** IMD aims to achieve zero-error weather forecasting for up to three days and 90% accuracy for five-day forecasts by 2047. For severe weather predictions extending up to seven days, the target is 80% accuracy, and 70% accuracy for forecasts up to ten days.
- **Comprehensive Weather Detection:** The department plans to attain 100% detection of all types of severe weather events down to the village and household levels. This will involve augmenting meteorological observational systems nationwide, supported by advanced remote-sensing technologies, including improved radars and satellites.



- **Launch of 'Mission Mausam'** In conjunction with the Vision-2047 document, Prime Minister Modi introduced 'Mission Mausam,' an initiative aimed at transforming India into a **'Weather-ready and Climate-smart' nation**. The mission focuses on developing cutting-edge weather surveillance technologies, implementing **high-resolution atmospheric observations**, deploying next-generation radars and satellites, and enhancing high-performance computing systems.



MISSION MAUSAM

Cabinet approves 'Mission Mausam' to create a more weather-ready and climate-smart Bharat with an outlay of Rs.2,000 crore over 2 years

BENEFITS

- ◆ A multi-faceted and transformative initiative to tremendously boost India's weather and climate-related science, research and services
- ◆ Will help better equip stakeholders, including citizens and last-mile users, in tackling extreme weather events and the impacts of climate change
- ◆ Mission focus to include improving observations and understanding for providing highly accurate and timely weather and climate information across temporal and spatial scales
- ◆ Mission to be implemented by 3 institutes of the Ministry of Earth Sciences:
 - India Meteorological Department
 - Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology
 - National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting

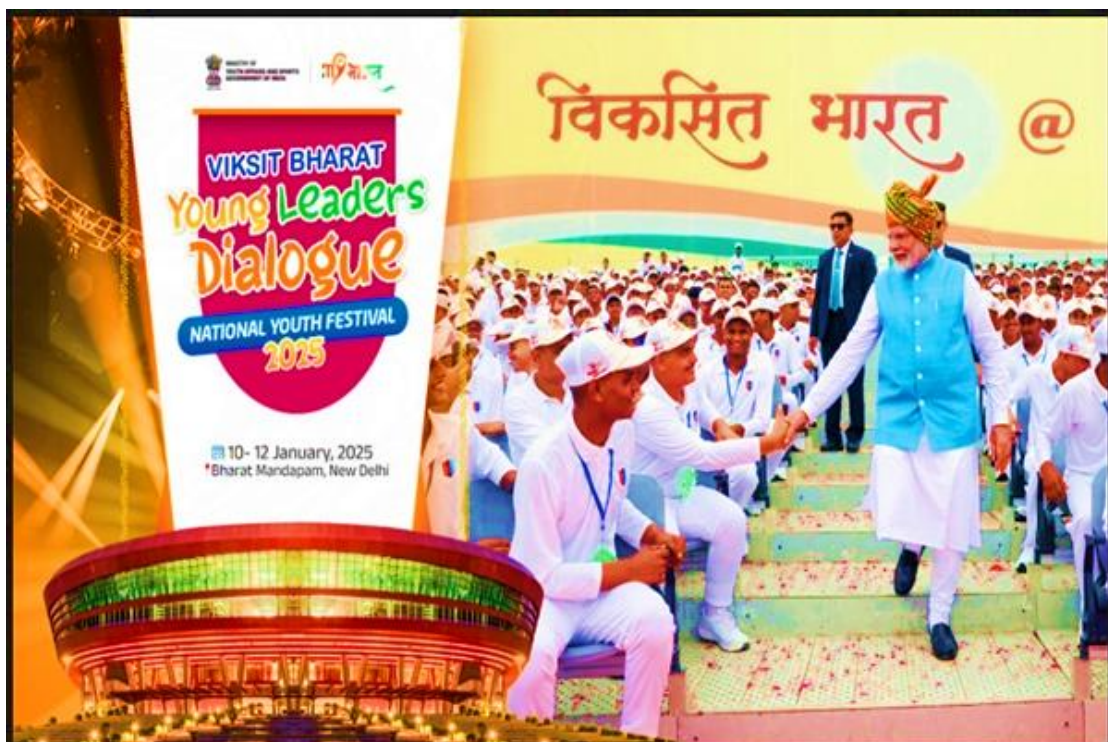
- **Established in 1875, IMD has played a pivotal role in advancing meteorological science in India.** Over the years, the department has significantly improved its forecasting capabilities, contributing to a substantial reduction in casualties from natural disasters. For instance, accurate cyclone warnings have led to a decrease in deaths from **approximately 10,000 in 1999 to zero in recent years.**
- The department has also expanded its technological infrastructure, increasing the number of Doppler Weather Radars from 15 in 2014 to 39 in 2023, thereby enhancing land **area coverage by about 35%. Additionally, the overall forecast accuracy has improved by 40% between 2014 and 2023.**

Viksit Bharat Dialogue 2025

- On the occasion of **National Youth Day, Prime Minister Narendra Modi** is participating in the **Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2025 in New Delhi.** Mr Modi visited an exhibition and interacted with the young leaders.
- They are showcasing presentations on their vision for **Viksit Bharat to the Prime Minister.** These presentations reflect the innovative ideas and solutions to address some of India's most pressing challenges.



- Mr Modi is participating in multiple activities designed to inspire, motivate, and empower the nation's future leaders. **The three-day event began**, providing a unique **platform for youth to present innovative solutions** for Viksit Bharat.
- During the event, Mr. Modi will engage with three thousand dynamic young leaders from across the country. The Prime Minister will also join the young leaders for lunch, providing them an **opportunity to share their ideas**, experiences, and aspirations directly with him.



- He is also scheduled to **release a compilation of best essays written** by participants on the ten themes.
- These themes encompass diverse areas such as **technology, sustainability, women empowerment, manufacturing, and agriculture**. The Viksit Bharat Dialogue is **offering young leaders an opportunity to engage directly** with policymakers, and national and global icons while contributing their ideas for shaping the nation's future.

India To Host 28th CSPOC In 2026

- Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla has announced **India will host the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Parliaments of Commonwealth Countries (CSPOC)** in 2026.
- In a social media post, Mr Birla expressed confidence that the upcoming event would foster **meaningful dialogue and collaborative efforts** to address critical global issues. He further said that it was decided that the thrust of the 28th CSPOC will be the **application of AI and social media in the working of Parliaments**.



- **Established in 1969 by Lucien Lamoureux**, then Speaker of the House of Commons of Canada, CSPOC serves as a platform for Speakers and Presiding Officers from Commonwealth parliaments to promote impartiality, fairness, and the development of parliamentary democracy.
- The conference **convenes biennially, with Canada providing the secretariat**. Notably, CSPOC operates independently, **without formal ties** to the Commonwealth **Parliamentary Association or the Commonwealth Secretariat**.
- India has previously hosted **CSPOC conferences in 1970-71, 1986, and 2010**, demonstrating a longstanding commitment to parliamentary dialogue within the Commonwealth. The **upcoming 2026 conference presents an opportunity** for India to showcase its rich cultural heritage alongside its advancements in technology and infrastructure.

Hurricane Rafael

- India has extended humanitarian assistance to the **people of Cuba in the aftermath of Hurricane Rafael**. In a social media post, Ministry of External Affairs Spokesperson, **Randhir Jaiswal said that the consignment in the form of Essential Medicines** comprising Antibiotics, Anti-pyretics, Pain Killers, ORS and Muscle Relaxants has departed for Cuba.



Blue Flag Certification

- Kerala's renowned **Kappad beach in Kozhikode** and **Chal beach in Kannur** have been awarded the prestigious **Blue Flag certification** by the **Denmark-based Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)**.
- This certification recognizes beaches that meet high standards in **environmental protection, safety, and sustainability**. The Blue Flag status enhances Kerala's appeal as a sustainable tourism destination and serves as a global benchmark for eco-friendly tourism practices.



- Both beaches have **implemented eco-friendly initiatives and maintain hygienic, safe environments** for tourists, setting a model for responsible tourism (RT).
- **Blue Flag is an international eco-label awarded** to beaches, marinas, and sustainable boating operators as a mark of their environmental excellence. Awarded by the **Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE)**, based in Denmark.
- **Established in 1985 to promote sustainable coastal development** globally. 33 stringent criteria are evaluated, grouped **into four categories**, Environmental Education and Information, Bathing Water Quality, Environmental Management, Conservation and Safety Services.



- **Decision to grant Blue Flag status is made by an international jury** that includes representatives from, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). **India has 13 Blue Flag beaches**, including Kappad and Chal, demonstrating its commitment to sustainable tourism.

Certified In	Beach Name	State Name
2020	Shivrajpur Beach	Dwarka, Gujarat
2020	Golden Beach	Puri, Odisha
2020	Ghoghla Beach	Diu, Gujarat
2020	Kasarkod Beach	Uttara Kannada, Karnataka
2020	Padubidri Beach	Udupi, Karnataka
2020	Rushikonda Beach	Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh
2020	Radhanagar Beach	Havelock Island, Andaman & Nicobar Islands
2020	Kovalam Beach	Chennai, Tamil Nadu
2020	Eden Beach	Puducherry
2022	Minicoy Thundi Beach	Lakshadweep
2022	Kadmat Beach	Lakshadweep
2025	Kappad Beach	Kozhikode, Kerala
2025	Chal Beach	Kannur, Kerala

India Joins UN's Big Data For Official Statistics

- India has joined the **United Nations Committee of Experts on Big Data and Data Science for Official Statistics** (UN-CEBD), marking a significant step in the country's growing influence in global statistical frameworks.
- This membership demonstrates India's commitment to leveraging **Big Data and technology for evidence-based policymaking**. The committee focuses on exploring how **Big Data and data science can be utilized to** improve official statistics and track sustainable development goals (SDGs).



- This development aligns with India's efforts to modernize its statistical processes by **integrating non-traditional data sources like satellite imagery, IoT** (Internet of Things), and machine learning for accurate and real-time insights to support governance. India will help shape global standards and best practices in using Big Data for official statistics.
- The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI)** will play a key role in representing India's initiatives. The Data Innovation Lab and alternate data sources like satellite imagery and machine learning will be showcased as India's contributions.
- **India's Innovations in Big Data for Statistics**
Data Innovation Lab: A government initiative to explore new data collection techniques.

Satellite Imagery & IoT: Being used to modernize statistical processes and enhance the accuracy of estimates.

Machine Learning & AI: Helping to reduce time lags in data collection and provide real-time insights.



- **Big Data is characterized by,**
 - High Volume: Large amounts of data generated every second.
 - High Velocity: Data is produced at an unprecedented speed.
 - Wide Variety: Data comes from various sources in different formats.
- **UN-CEBD Formation**
 - Established by the **UN Statistical Commission in its 45th session.**
 - Created to investigate the benefits and challenges of Big Data for official statistics. Focuses on monitoring and reporting sustainable development goals (SDGs) using Big Data.

INROAD Project

- **INROAD (Indian Natural Rubber Operations for Assisted Development) project,** launched with a **financial backing of ₹100 crore,** aims to enhance the quality of natural rubber **produced in India's North-East.**
- This initiative focuses on **skill development for rubber growers** and the establishment of model infrastructure, with support from key players in the tyre industry, demonstrating a unique collaboration between agriculture and manufacturing.



- **INROAD is a pioneering initiative in the global tyre industry**, focusing on improving the quality of natural rubber through direct involvement from tyre manufacturers.
- **The project is financially supported by four major companies** – Apollo, Ceat, JK, and MRF. The Rubber Board of India oversees its implementation. In its first four years, the project has **successfully established 1,25,272 hectares** of new natural rubber plantations.
- These plantations span across 94 districts in the North East and parts of West Bengal, marking a significant step towards enhancing local rubber production.
- A core component of the **INROAD project is skill development**. The initiative **provides training to rubber growers through digital platforms**, aiming to equip farmers with the necessary knowledge and skills for effective rubber tapping and processing.



- The focus is on areas critical for improving the quality of rubber. Infrastructure development is equally important in the INROAD project. **Model Smoke Houses and Processing and Grading Centres are being established** to support rubber growers. These facilities are designed specifically for the region's needs, with **smokehouses playing a crucial role in producing high-quality rubber** sheets by drying and curing latex.



- The project also emphasizes the **economic empowerment of women** in rubber cultivation. A model smokehouse has been inaugurated for the **Bhaishkhuli Pragatishil Mohila Samittee**, a cooperative of 65 female rubber growers in Goalpara, Assam.
- This facility will not only **enhance the quality of rubber produced** but also serve as a training and demonstration centre. The **INROAD project aims to continue its efforts in capacity building** and infrastructure development, focusing on enhancing the quality of natural rubber and empowering local farmers. By encouraging collaboration between the tyre industry and rubber growers, the project seeks to create a sustainable model for rubber cultivation in India.

REVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Which State Government Has Signed An Mou With Google Cloud (India) To Launch The Open Network For Agriculture

- A. Madhya Pradesh
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Maharashtra
- D. Gujarat

ANSWER: B

2. Who Has Been Elected As The New President Of Lebanon In January, 2025

- A. Michel Aoun
- B. Najib Mikati
- C. Joseph Aoun
- D. Saad Hariri

ANSWER: C

3. World Hindi Day (Vishwa Hindi Diwas) Celebrated Every Year On

- A. January 12
- B. January 10
- C. January 26
- D. February 21

ANSWER: B

4. Pravasi Bharatiya Express Tour Is Offered To Which Group Of People

- A. Indian citizens only
- B. Foreign tourists
- C. Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs)
- D. Government employees

ANSWER: C

5. Who Is The Chairperson Of NITI Aayog

- A. President of India
- B. Chief Minister of any State
- C. Prime Minister of India
- D. Finance Minister of India

ANSWER: C

6. Earth's Rotation Day Is Observed Annually On Which Date

- A. January 7
- B. January 6
- C. January 9
- D. January 8

ANSWER: D

7. Which State Government Launched The Gunotsav 2025 Programme

- A. Bihar
- B. Assam
- C. West Bengal
- D. Odisha

ANSWER: B

8. Which Ministry Collaborated With IIIT- Madras For Developing The Shallow Wave Basin

- A. Ministry of Science and Technology
- B. Ministry of Shipping
- C. Ministry of Environment
- D. Ministry of Education

ANSWER: B

9. Which Indian Organization Is Collaborating With Ultra Marine (UM) To Co-produce Sonobuoys

- A. Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)
- B. Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)
- C. Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL)
- D. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)

ANSWER: A

10. Which State Launched PARTH Yojana To Provide Pre-recruitment Training For The Indian Army, Police, And Para-military Forces

- A. Madhya Pradesh
- B. Uttar Pradesh
- C. Rajasthan
- D. Haryana

ANSWER: A

11. _____ Is India's Rank In The Henley Passport Index 2025

- A. 75th
- B. 80th
- C. 85th
- D. 90th

ANSWER: C

12. Which City Will Host South India's First Infectious Disease Research And Diagnostic Laboratory

- A. Chennai
- B. Bengaluru
- C. Hyderabad
- D. Kochi

ANSWER: B

13. The Z-Morh Tunnel Is Built Under _____ Glacier

- A. Siachen Glacier
- B. Zemu Glacier
- C. Gangotri Glacier
- D. Thajiwass Glacier

ANSWER: D

14. Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue 2025 Is A Reimagined Version Of Which Event

- A. Pravasi Bharatiya Divas
- B. National Youth Festival
- C. Khelo India Youth Games
- D. International Youth Summit

ANSWER: B

15. What global warming threshold was exceeded for the first time in 2024

- A. 1.5°C
- B. 2°C
- C. 1.2°C
- D. 1.8°

ANSWER: A

16. In which city did the 21st Third Eye Asian Film Festival commence

- A. Delhi
- B. Mumbai
- C. Kolkata
- D. Hyderabad

ANSWER: B

17. Which country will host the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Parliaments (CSPOC) in 2026

- A. Germany
- B. India
- C. Spain
- D. Portugal

ANSWER: B

18. Which country joined UN Committee on Big Data and Data Science for Statistics

- A. China
- B. Japan
- C. Germany
- D. India

ANSWER: D

19. Cabinet Declared Which Day As 'National Space Day' In India

- A. August 20
- B. August 23
- C. August 25
- D. August 27

ANSWER: B

20. Ancestors Of Maharaja Ranjit Singh Were From Which Following Misals

- A. The Karora Singh Misal
- B. The Shahid and Nishang Misal
- C. The Phulikian Misal
- D. The Shukarchakia Misal

ANSWER: D