

International

Romania, Bulgaria to join EU's Schengen area on January 1, 2025.

Romania and Bulgaria are set to fully join the European Union border-free Schengen Area on January 1, 2025. The border-free Schengen Area guarantees free movement to more than 425 million European Union citizens, along with non-EU nationals living in the EU or visiting the EU. The Schengen provisions abolish checks at the EU's internal borders while providing a single set of rules for controls at the external borders applicable to those who enter the Schengen area for up to 90 days.

Donald Trump Named Time Magazine's 'Person of the Year' 2024.

Time Magazine has named Donald Trump as its person of the year for the second time - he previously won the honour after winning the presidential election in 2016. Vice President Kamala Harris, Kate Middleton, Elon Musk and Benjamin Netanyahu were considered for this year's recognition. Last year, pop superstar Taylor Swift was recognized.

Time already announced NBA star Caitlin Clark as Athlete of the Year, Elton John as Icon of the Year and Lisa Su of Advanced Micro Devices as CEO of the Year.

India backs UNGA resolution for immediate ceasefire in Gaza Strip.

India has joined 157 other nations in supporting a United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) resolution demanding an 'immediate, unconditional, and permanent ceasefire in the war-torn Gaza Strip. The UNGA overwhelmingly approved two resolutions. The first resolution called for a ceasefire in Gaza and the other backing the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA), which Israel has sought to ban.

Poland President Andrzej Duda signs law to freeze electricity prices until September 2025.

President of Poland Andrzej Duda signed a law that will freeze electricity prices for households at 500 Polish zlotys per megawatt-hour until the end of September 2025. According to a statement from the President's office, the new law will also benefit local government units and

certain sensitive entities from a capped electricity price of 693 Polish zlotys per megawatt-hour until the end of March 2025.

Three Indians on BBC's 100 most inspiring women list.

Three Indians have made it to the BBC's list of the 100 most inspiring and influential women worldwide for 2024. Wrestler Vinesh Phogat, funerary rites pioneer Pooja Sharma, and social activist Aruna Roy are amongst 97 other influential women across the globe who are featured on the list.

Indian Americans Sunita Williams, a NASA astronaut, and Sneha Revanur, a 20-year-old AI expert, are also part of the list, which includes Nobel Peace laureate Nadia Murad, Hollywood actor Sharon Stone, climate activist Adenike Oladosu, and rape survivor Gisele Pelicot.

Michelle Bachelet to be conferred with the Indira Gandhi Peace prize 2024.

The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development for 2024 will be conferred on former Chilean president and prominent human rights voice Michelle Bachelet, a statement issued by the Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust said .

The international jury for the award was chaired by former National Security Adviser Shivshankar Menon.

Polarization is Merriam-Webster's 2024 Word Of The Year.

The word 'polarization', which became an integral part of the socio-political discourse in 2024, is Merriam-Webster's Word of the Year. According to Merriam-Webster, 'polarization' is defined as "division into two sharply distinct opposites; especially, a state in which the opinions, beliefs, or interests of a group or society no longer range along a continuum but become concentrated at opposing extremes."

National

Defence ministry signs Rs 13,500 Cr deal with HAL for 12 Su-30 fighters.

Defence Ministry has signed a contract of 13,500 crore rupees with Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the procurement of 12 Su-30MKL aircraft along with associated

equipment. The supply of the aircraft would enhance the operational capability of the Indian Air Force and strengthen defence preparedness of the country. It also said that the aircraft would have an indigenous content of 62.6 per cent, enhanced due to indigenisation of many components to be manufactured by Indian defence industry.

Lok Sabha passes Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill, 2024.

The Lok Sabha passed the Disaster Management (Amendment) Bill, 2024. The Bill amends the Disaster Management Act, 2005 and intended to strengthen the efficient working of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and the State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMA). The bill empowers the NDMA and SDMA to prepare the disaster plan at national level and state level instead of the National Executive Committee and the State Executive Committee. The Bill also empowers the state government to constitute a separate Urban Disaster Management Authority for state capitals and cities with a municipal corporation. The Bill will provide for creation of disaster database at the national and state level.

No fresh suit to be registered under Places of Worship Act till further orders: Supreme Court.

The Supreme Court of India has ordered that no fresh suits would be registered under the Places of Worship Act in the country. It also ordered that in the pending cases, no final or effective orders would be passed till further orders of the Apex Court. A Special Bench headed by CJI Sajiv Khanna asked the Union government to file within four weeks its reply to the clutch of petitions challenging the validity of the 1991 Act, which prohibits the filing of a lawsuit to reclaim a place of worship or seek a change in its character from what prevailed on 15th August 1947.

Uttarakhand CM inaugurates The World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo 2024.

The World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo 2024 officially commenced at Dehradun in Uttarakhand, with Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami inaugurating the event at the Parade Ground. This year's event is themed

“Digital Health, Ayurvedic Approach,” focusing on the integration of traditional Ayurveda with modern technological advancements.

Over 5,500 Indian delegates and more than 350 international participants are taking part in the four-day congress, which will explore the latest technologies and research related to Ayurveda and healthcare.

President Droupadi Murmu awards Honorary General Rank to Nepali Army Chief Ashok Raj Sigdel.

President Droupadi Murmu has conferred the Honorary Rank of General of the Indian Army on Suprabal Janasewashree General Ashok Raj Sigdel at an Investiture Ceremony in Rashtrapati Bhavan. Mr Sigdel who is the Chief of the Army Staff in the Nepali Army was awarded for his military prowess and contribution to fostering Nepal's long and friendly association with India.

22nd Divya Kala Mela started at India Gate.

Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities, under the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, will host the 22nd Divya Kala Mela at India Gate, New Delhi. The event will showcase the talent, creativity, and entrepreneurial spirit of Divyang artisans, entrepreneurs, and artists from across India. Over 100 Divyang entrepreneurs and artisans will showcase their products and skills.

Business and Economy

Nov retail inflation eases to 5.48%.

According to data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), India's retail inflation eased to 5.48 percent in November, down from 6.2 percent in the previous month of the current fiscal year. Inflation in rural areas stood at 5.95 percent compared to 4.83 percent in urban regions.

India's industrial output grows 3.5% in October.

India's industrial output rose to 3.5 percent in October this year, standing at a three-month high, as per the data released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation today. October marks the second consecutive

month of rise in industrial output, after a slight contraction in August. Among the three major components of IIP, manufacturing output climbed 4.1 percent in October, while electricity generation grew 2 percent and mining activity increased by 0.9 percent.

5G services rolled out in all Indian states and UTs.

The Union Government has said that the 5G services have been rolled out in all States and Union Territories across the country and presently the services are available in 779 districts out of 783 districts in the country as of 31st October this year. More than 4.6 lakh 5G Base Transceiver Stations have been installed in the country since the launch of 5G services in October, 2022.

Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy unveils 'Green Steel Taxonomy for India'.

Union Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries H D Kumaraswamy unveiled the Taxonomy of Green Steel for India in New Delhi, in the presence of Minister of State for Steel and Heavy Industries, Bhupathi Raju Srinivasa Varma. India is committed to decarbonise the steel sector in alignment with net-zero emission intensity target by 2070.

The launch of the Green Steel Taxonomy represents a transformative framework in steel production that will help define green steel, foster innovation, and create a market for low-carbon products in India.

Registered Enterprises on MSME Udyam portal jump from 1.65 crores to 5.60 crores in 2023.

The number of registered enterprises on MSME Udyam portal has increased from 1.65 crores on 31st March 2023 to 5.60 crores on 30th November this year, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises Minister Jitan Ram Manjhi said. There is an addition of 3.95 crore enterprises during the period. The total Women-led Micro Enterprises registered under Udyam Registration Portal is over 2 crore 19 lakh.

India's banking sector, especially PSBs has seen remarkable turnaround: FM Sitharaman

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has stated that India's banking sector, especially

Public Sector Banks (PSBs), has seen a remarkable turnaround under Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

She highlighted that 54 crore Jan Dhan accounts and more than 52 crore collateral-free loans under various flagship financial inclusion schemes have been sanctioned. Under the PM MUDRA scheme, 68 percent of beneficiaries are women, and under the PM-SVANidhi scheme, 44 percent of beneficiaries are women. She also mentioned that loans up to 10 lakh rupees have increased by 238 percent in the last 10 years, and their share in total loans has risen from 19 percent to 23 percent.

Recruitment drives and Rozgar Mela initiatives have filled lakhs of vacancies across all central government departments, including banks and PSBs. Since 2014, PSBs have recruited 3.94 lakh employees.

Sports

D. Gukesh becomes youngest World chess champion

Indian Grandmaster Dommaraju Gukesh became the youngest chess champion in the world at the age of 18. Gukesh made history as he clinched 18th World Chess Championship defeating Ding Liren of China in the 14th and the final match of the FIDE World Chess Championship in Singapore. Gukesh beat the record previously held by Garry Kasparov who got the crown at the age of 22. Gukesh is the second world champion from India after Viswanathan Anand, who won the title four times.

The 18-year-old prodigy capped his meteoric rise scoring 7.5 points while defending champion Ding got 6.5 points in the championship. In total 14 matches, Gukesh won three while Ding succeeded in two, rest nine matches were drawn.

NDTL receives approval from WADA to manage Athlete Biological Passport

National Dope Testing Laboratory (NDTL), New Delhi has received the approval from World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) as an Athlete Passport Management Unit to manage Athlete Biological Passport. The Athlete Biological Passport is an advanced anti-doping tool that monitors an athlete's biological

markers over time. It analyzes variations in parameters such as blood and steroid profiles to ensure fair play in sports and to protect clean athletes.

Khelo India winter games scheduled in Ladakh from January 23 to 27.

The Khelo India Winter Games dates have been announced. The Union Territory of Ladakh will host ice sports including Ice Hockey & Ice-Skating events from January 23 to 27, next year. This will be the second year that UT Ladakh will host a portion of the Khelo India Winter

Games. Before the 2024 edition, J&K used to host all the events.

Prasar Bharati signs MoU with Hockey India to provide live broadcast of upcoming Hockey India League

Prasar Bharati has signed an MoU with Hockey India in New Delhi to provide a live broadcast of the upcoming Hockey India League. With this MoU, Doordarshan has become the official broadcast partner for Hockey India League 2024-25.