

International

US President-elect appoints Indian-American Sriram Krishnan as policy advisor on AI.

United States President-elect Donald Trump has appointed Indian American entrepreneur Sriram Krishnan as the Senior White House Policy Advisor on Artificial Intelligence, AI. Krishnan will work closely with David Sacks, who has been appointed as the White House AI and Crypto Czar, to shape AI policy across the federal government.

Bangladesh seeks extradition of ousted PM Sheikh Hasina from India.

Bangladesh has submitted a formal request to India to extradite its former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina, who fled to New Delhi in August amid student-led protests that ended her 15 years in power. Ties between the south Asian countries, who have strong trade and cultural links, have become fraught since Hasina was ousted after violent protests against her rule, and she took refuge across the border.

US President Joe Biden commute sentences for 37 out of 40 federal inmates on death row

US President Joe Biden has commuted the sentences of 37 of the 40 federal inmates on death row, converting their punishments to life imprisonment without parole. The announcement comes just weeks before President-elect Donald Trump, an outspoken proponent of expanding capital punishment, takes office on the 20th of next month.

Earlier this month, President Biden commuted the sentences of nearly 1,500 people and pardoned 39 more convicted of nonviolent crimes.

National

Acclaimed film director Shyam Benegal passes away.

Acclaimed film director Shyam Benegal, who was widely regarded as one of the greatest visionaries in Indian cinema, passed away in Mumbai. He was 90 years old. He won several National Awards for movies including, Manthan (1976), Bhumika: The Role (1977), Junoon (1978), Arohan (1982), Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose: The Forgotten Hero (2004), and Well Done Abba (2010).

His contributions went beyond cinema – from his iconic TV series Bharat Ek Khoj to mentoring generations of artists. He was honoured with Dadasaheb Phalke, Padma Shri, and Padma Bhushan,

Former SC judge V. Ramasubramanian appointed as NHRC Chairperson

Retired Supreme Court judge V. Ramasubramanian has been appointed as the new chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC). Priyank Kanoongo and Dr Justice Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi (Retd.) have also been appointed as members of the commission.

This appointment comes months after former Supreme Court Justice (retd) Arun Kumar Mishra concluded his tenure as NHRC chairperson on 1st June this year. After Mishra's retirement, Vijaya Bharathi Sayani became the acting chairperson of the human rights panel.

Over 10 lakh govt jobs provided to youth in last 1.5 years: PM Modi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has said that around ten lakh government jobs have been provided to the youth of the country in the last one and half years. Mr Modi said this while distributing more than 71 thousand appointment letters to newly appointed recruits through video conferencing. Mr Modi said that there is a campaign going on to provide government jobs in various Ministries, Departments and institutions of the country for the last ten years. Prime Minister Modi said that Rozgar Melas are empowering the youth and unlocking their potential.

Swarnim Bharat: 'Virasat aur Vikas' announced as theme for Republic Day 2025 Tableaux.

The Ministry of Defence has said that 'Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas' will be the theme of tableaux for Republic Day (RDC)-2025. It added that 15 states and Union Territories have been selected to showcase their tableaux on the Kartavya Path during the parade. These states include Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Chandigarh, Dadar Nagar Haveli and Daman, and Diu, Goa, Gujarat, Haryana, Jharkhand, Karnataka and among others. In addition, 11 Ministries and the Department of Union government have also been selected for RDC-2025.

Business and Economy

Japan's Nissan and Honda announce plans to merge.

Japan's Honda and Nissan are planning a merger, which would create the world's third-largest carmaker as the industry pivots away from fossil fuels. The company's two presidents,

Toshihiro Mibe of Honda and Makoto Uchida of Nissan, signed an MoU projecting the establishment of a holding company by August 2026, which could potentially position them third in the market after Toyota and Volkswagen. Honda, currently Japan's second-largest carmaker, is widely viewed as the only national partner able to rescue Nissan, which has struggled since former chairman Carlos Ghosn was arrested on charges of fraud and misuse of company assets in 2018.

India secures \$500 million ADB loan for Green Infrastructure Projects

The Union government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a 500 million dollar loan to support green and sustainable infrastructure projects aligned with the country's climate commitments. The Ministry of Finance said that the loan, with a sovereign guarantee, will be extended to the India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL). It said that the project will build the institutional capacity of IIFCL to integrate green and best practices into the infrastructure projects.

This financing will help IIFCL provide long-term capital for infrastructure projects focusing on connectivity, energy transition, education, and health care.

HDFC Bank executes first gold forward deal from Gujarat GIFT City.

HDFC Bank has become the first domestic bank to execute a gold forward deal from GIFT City, Gujarat. The deal was executed by HDFC Bank GIFT City IBU in collaboration with Hindustan Platinum Private Limited, a refiner and manufacturer of precious metal products and industrial services.

Central Bank emphasises on Digital Banking, MSME and low cost deposits on 114th Foundation Day.

Central Bank of India, one of the country's leading public sector banks, marked its 114th Foundation Day on 21st December 2024 with celebrations held across the country. It has announced the introduction of customised financial products for MSMEs, retail, salaried class, business persons and facilities for forex operations.

The Bank also launched new initiatives for its employees, focusing on their growth, well-being, and professional development besides

deciding to focus on mobilising low cost deposits.

Centre launches Jago Grahak Jago App, Jagriti App, Jagriti Dashboard on occasion of National Consumer Day.

The Department of Consumer Affairs has launched Jago Grahak Jago App, Jagriti App, and Jagriti Dashboard on December 24 on the occasion of National Consumer Day 2024. These apps aim to enhance the capability of the Central Consumer Protection Authority-CCPA in taking suo moto action against dark patterns.

The Jago Grahak Jago App aims to provide essential e-commerce information about all Universal Resource Links-URLs during a consumer's online activities, alerting them if any URL may be unsafe and requires caution/

Epigamia founder Rohan Mirchandani dies of cardiac arrest.

Founder of Drums Food International, the firm behind popular Greek yogurt brand Epigamia, Rohan Mirchandani passed away due to cardiac arrest. In 2013, he co-founded Drums Food International, the parent company of Epigamia, India's first Greek yoghurt brand. Epigamia offers a range of healthy snacks and convenience food products, including yoghurt, milkshakes, almond drinks, smoothies, cheese, and flavoured yoghurts

TIL to invest ₹20,000 crore to develop Vadhvan Port

Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA) said it has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Terminal Investment Ltd. (TIL) for the construction of the Vadhvan Port Project Ltd. (VPPL) in Maharashtra. As per the MoU, TIL will invest an estimated ₹20,000 crore for the development of the Vadhvan Port and the surrounding ecosystem.

Sports

Junior World Pencak Silat Championship: India's Nusrath Fatima wins silver.

Nusrath Fatima from Sankoo, Kargil, representing India, won a silver medal at the 5th Junior World Pencak Silat Championship, held in Abu Dhabi from December 18 to 22. Competing in the 58 kg Junior category. Pencak Silat is an umbrella term for a class of related Indonesian martial arts.

Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships: Sairaj Pardeshi bags one gold and two silver medals

In weightlifting, India's Sairaj Pardeshi won one gold and two silver medals in snatch, clean and jerk, and total lift categories at the Asian Youth and Junior Weightlifting Championships in Doha, Qatar. He bettered his own youth national records to clinch the 81kg men's title.

Sairaj won the gold medal with an overall lift of 310kg, setting a national youth record. This was India's first gold in the men's category at this event. He lifted 139kg in the snatch category setting a youth national record. It fetched him a silver medal.