

(8th January 2025)

International

'Blue Origin' to launch its first orbital rocket

Jeff Bezos' company 'Blue Origin' will launch its first orbital rocket 'New Glenn' on 10th January from Launch Complex 36 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Florida. New Glenn will carry a payload — Blue Ring Pathfinder, which will test key systems for the Defense Innovation Unit's Orbital Logistics programme.

Named after NASA astronaut John Glenn, the first American astronaut to orbit Earth, completing three orbits in 1962, New Glenn, which is 98 metres tall, is the largest and most powerful rocket ever built and launched.

Volcanic eruption in Indonesia

The Centre for Volcanology and Geological Hazard Mitigation issued a flight alert following the eruption of Mount Ibu, located in the North Maluku province of Indonesia. The volcano, situated in the West Halmahera regency, expelled a column of ash that reached up to three km into the sky, and the resulting brown cloud drifted northwest of the volcano.

Earthquake in Nepal - Tibet Border

A powerful 7.1-magnitude earthquake with the epicenter located at a depth of 10 kilometres in Xizang, the Tibet Autonomous Region, near the Nepal border claimed 126 lives and injured 188. The fatalities were concentrated in the city of Xizang. The earthquake also sent tremors across northern India, affecting areas such as Bihar, West Bengal, and Sikkim. No casualties or property damage have been reported in the country so far.

AI adoption in the UAE is widespread

Nearly half of UAE companies (44.74%) are now utilizing advanced language models in their operations, a newly released white paper exploring artificial intelligence adoption in the Middle East revealed. The findings indicate robust AI integration across the Middle East, with 27% of businesses actively exploring AI, 36% in the initial adoption stages, 13% demonstrating deep integration, and another 13% pioneering innovative AI applications.

National

V Narayanan to be the new Chairman of ISRO.

The Centre has appointed V Narayanan as the new Chairman of the Indian Space Research

Organisation (ISRO) and Secretary of the Department of Space. Mr Narayanan will assume office on January 14. He will succeed the current ISRO chairman, S Somanath.

Government of India Calendar for 2025, unveiled

The government has chosen "Janbhagidari se Jankalyan" as the central theme for its 2025 calendar, underscoring the ethos of transformative governance. The Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw unveiled the Government of India Calendar for 2025 in New Delhi on January 7, 2025.

The First India-Malaysia Security Dialogue

At the First India-Malaysia Security Dialogue, India and Malaysia agreed to deepen cooperation in counterterrorism and deradicalization, cyber security, defence industry, and maritime security. During the India-Malaysia Security Dialogue in New Delhi today, both countries explored ways to enhance cooperation in critical minerals and rare earth elements.

Indusfood 2025 in Delhi-NCR

India's farm-to-fork trade exhibition, Indusfood 2025, will kick off on January 8, 2024, in Delhi-NCR with the participation of over 2,300 exhibitors from over 30 countries. Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Chirag Paswan will inaugurate the 8th Edition of the festival. Indusfood 2025 will also host the prestigious Asia President's Forum for the very first time in India, in partnership with the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations. Two mega summits focusing on the food manufacturing and agritech sectors are to be held on the sidelines of the show.

Assam Government launches the first phase of 'Gunotsav 2025'.

The first phase of 'Gunotsav 2025,' a state-wide assessment to evaluate the performance of 14 lakh students across 16,000 government schools in 11 districts was launched by the Government of Assam. Gunotsav covers all government elementary and secondary schools in the state. To facilitate the assessment process, external evaluators have been deployed throughout the state.

Economy/Business

NSO projects India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) to grow at 6.4 percent in FY 2024-25

According to the first advance estimates of the annual gross domestic product (GDP) for the current fiscal year released by the National Statistics Office (NSO) of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation on January 7, 2025, India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is projected to grow at 6.4 percent in the fiscal year 2024-25, nominal GDP has witnessed a growth rate of 9.7 percent. In the previous fiscal year, the Provisional Estimate of GDP growth rate has been estimated at 8.2 percent, while the Nominal GDP growth rate is estimated at 9.6 percent. The estimates highlighted that the real GVA of agriculture and allied sectors is estimated to grow by 3.8 percent, a marked increase from the previous year's 1.4 percent

RBI guidelines on reporting customer credit information.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued comprehensive guidelines for banks and financial institutions on reporting customer credit information. As per the directions, credit information companies will have to send alerts through SMS or email to customers when their Credit Information Report is accessed by specified users. Credit institutions, including banks and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), must also inform customers about the reasons for rejecting requests for data corrections. This will help customers understand and address any issues in their CIR.

RBI boosts its gold reserves by 8 tonnes in November 2024

The World Gold Council (WGC) said in a report on January 6, 2025, that the Central banks around the world collectively, in November 2024, added 53 tonnes of gold to their reserves, of which the Reserve Bank of India's addition was 8 tonnes. In 2024, central banks, mostly those from emerging markets, remained keen buyers of gold, driven by the need for a stable and secure asset amid global economic uncertainties.

Sports

New President of the Athletics Federation of India

Bahadur Singh Sagoo, Asian Games champion in Men's Shot Put, has been elected as the new President of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI). Bahadur Singh will succeed the outgoing President Adille Sumariwalla, who has been serving as AFI President since 2012.

India Open Super 750 badminton tournament

At the India Open Super 750 badminton tournament, starting on the 14th of January at the KD Jadhav Indoor Hall of Indira Gandhi Stadium in New Delhi, India is all set to participate with its largest-ever contingent. A total of 21 Indian players, including three men's singles, four women's singles, two men's doubles, eight women's doubles, and four mixed doubles pairs, will compete in the tournament.