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**8 JANUARY**

**2026**

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< **January 2025** :

Monthly Weekly **Daily** PIB News

January 31 2025 PIB News - English Article

January 30 2025 PIB News - English Article

January 29 2025 PIB News - English Article

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## AFFAIRSCLOUD TODAY

### Table of Contents

Hand Written Notes .....	5
Detailed Content .....	11



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## Hand Written Notes

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### NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1)

Dharmendra Pradhan <sup>Released</sup> → 55 scholarly literary works <sup>In</sup> → Classical Indian Languages  
Ministry of Education (Total: 11)

41 Books - by Centres of Excellence (CoE) under CIIL, Mysuru  
• Cover Classical Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Odia  
13 Books + Tirukkural Series - by CICT, Chennai (for Classical Tamil)

CICT - Central Institute of Classical Tamil

2)

Indian Railways <sup>Electrified</sup> → 99.2% of broad-gauge network <sup>Total</sup> → 69,427 Route Kilometres

📍 First Electric Train: 1925 - Bombay VT to Kurla Harbour  
📊 State-wise Status  
Fully Electrified: 25 States/UTs  
States pending: Only 5 states left (Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Assam, Goa)  
🌐 Global Ranking (UIC Report, June 2025)  
1. Switzerland - 100%  
2. India - 99.2%  
3. China - 82%

UIC - International Union of Railways

3)

HPCL <sup>Commissions</sup> → World's First LC-Max Residue Upgradation Facility <sup>In</sup> → Visakhapatnam, AP  
MoPNG

→ HPCL also introduced a digital optimization system for the LC-Max unit to improve operational stability

📦 Capacity: 3.55 MT  
🔍 RUF: 3 massive reactors, each weighing 2,200 tonnes  
💰 Investment: Rs.31,407 crore  
👥 Partner Institutions: EIL served as PMC, and L&T acted as the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contractor.

EIL - Engineers India Limited

PMC - Project Management Consultant

L&T - Larsen & Toubro

4)





NITI Aayog <sup>Launched</sup> → 5th Edition of 'Trade Watch Quarterly' Report <sup>For</sup> → Q1 of FY26

 **Key Highlights: Automotive Sector**  
 Global Auto-Components Market (2024) Value: USD 856 billion  
 India's Auto-Components Exports (2024): USD 16.9 billion  
 India's Automotive Export Share (2024): USD 30 billion

NITI - National Institution for Transforming India

5)

Indian Army <sup>Grants</sup> → Supply Order <sup>To</sup> → Tata Advanced Systems <sup>For</sup> → Upgradation of Pinaka MLRS & BCPs

 **Model:** Public-Private Partnership  
 **Implementation Agency:** 510 Advance Base Workshop under the Corps of EME  
 **Indigenization:** Nearly 80%.  
 **Strategic Goal:** Sustained availability and peak performance of frontline artillery systems.

MLRS - Multiple Launch Rocket Systems

BCPs - Battery Command Posts

EME - Electronics and Mechanical Engineers



6)

Simplilearn <sup>Partnered</sup> → IndiaAI Mission <sup>For</sup> → 'YUVA AI for ALL' initiative <sup>Target</sup> → Democratize AI education for 10 million citizens  
MeitY

MeitY - Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology

7)

MIB's WaveX + FITT-IIT Delhi <sup>MoU</sup> → To accelerate media technology entrepreneurship in India


MIB - Ministry of Information & Broadcasting


FITT - Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer

IIT - Indian Institute of Technology

8)

DRDO  $\xrightarrow{\text{Celebrated}}$  68th Foundation Day  $\xrightarrow{\text{On}}$  January 01, 2026

 **Established: 1958**

 **Procurement & Financial Milestones**

**22 Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) approvals**

Total Value: ~Rs.1.30 lakh crore

**Defence Contracts & Induction: 11 defence contracts signed**

Total Value: Rs.26,000 crore

DRDO - Defence Research and Development Organisation

**BANKING & FINANCE**

1)

HDFC Bank  $\xrightarrow{\text{Integrated}}$  RBI's CBDC  $\xrightarrow{\text{Into}}$  HDFC Bank's  $\xrightarrow{\text{To}}$  Provide a secure, sovereign-backed digital payment option  
(₹-Digital Rupee) SmartGateway platform

RBI - Reserve Bank of India

CBDC - Central Bank Digital Currency

2)

Federal Bank  $\xrightarrow{\text{Unveiled}}$  'The Fortuna Wave' -  $\xrightarrow{\text{Brand Ambassador}}$  Vidya Balan  
Refreshed Brand Entity

**AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS**

1)

DPE  $\xrightarrow{\text{Awarded}}$  Excellent rating  $\xrightarrow{\text{For}}$  FY25  $\xrightarrow{\text{To}}$  IRFC (Navratna CPSE)  $\xrightarrow{\text{For}}$  5th consecutive year  
MoF

DPE - Department of Public Enterprises

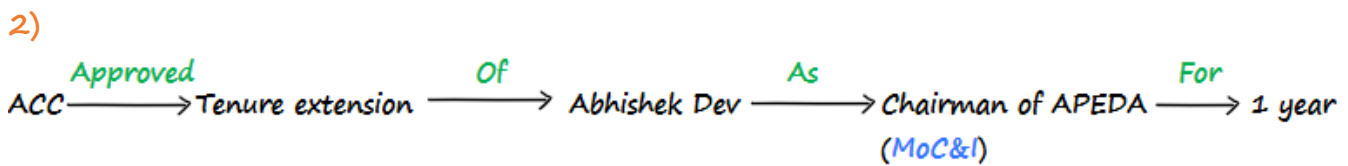
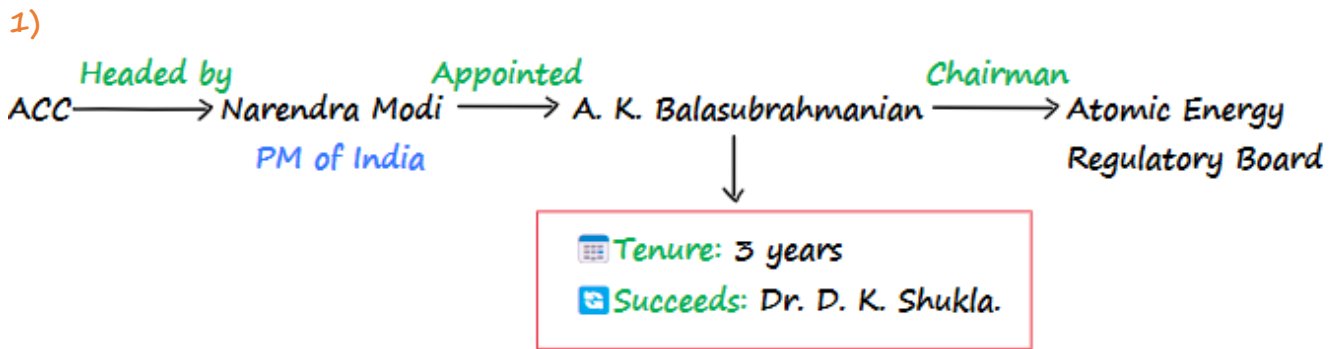
MoF - Ministry of Finance

IRFC - Indian Railways Finance Corporation

CPSE - Central Public Enterprise



**APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS**



ACC - Appointments Committee of the Cabinet  
 APEDA - Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority  
 MoC&I - Ministry of Commerce and Industry

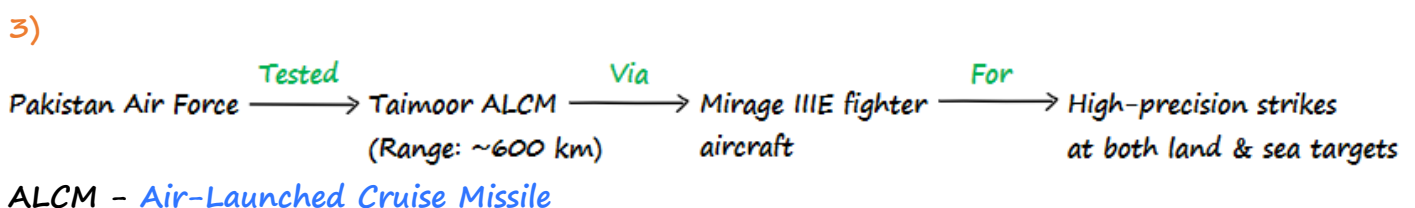
**SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**



NASA - National Aeronautics and Space Administration



**Mpemba Effect:** Hotter water can freeze faster than colder water under similar conditions  
 JNCASR - Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research



IMPORTANT DAYS

1)

January 8 2025 → Earth's Rotation Day



- 📌 **Commemorate:** To mark Léon Foucault's proof of Earth's rotation in 1851.
- 📖 **Significance:** 8 January 2026, marks the observance of the 175th anniversary of Léon Foucault's demonstration.
- ★ **Key Device:** Foucault Pendulum
- 📅 **Rotation Period:** Approximately 24 hours (one mean solar day)

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- [PSU Banks Generate Higher Profit per Employee Than Private Banks in FY25: RBI Explained](#)
- [India's First Indigenous Runway Cleaners Take Flight in Noida](#)
- [Human Capital Working Group meeting held at IIT-Guwahati campus ahead of India AI Impact Summit 2026](#)
- [SECL Signs ₹11.87 Crore CSR MoUs to Upgrade Healthcare, Anganwadi Centres and Drinking Water Access in Chhattisgarh](#)

## Detailed Content

Current Affairs 8 January 2026: Headlines



**AFFAIRSCLOUD TODAY ENGLISH**

**FEDERAL BANK**  
Federal Bank Launches New Brand Logo 'The Fortuna Wave'  
Visual identity update marks a strategic shift in brand positioning and market outreach

**Dharmendra Pradhan Unveils 55 Literary Works in Classical Indian Languages**  
Includes publications in Tamil, Odia, Malayalam, Telugu, Kannada, and Indian Sign Language

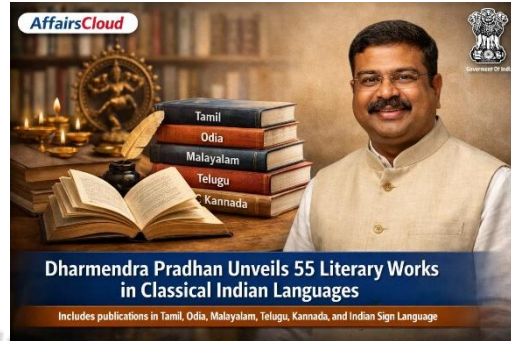
**CURRENT AFFAIRS** **January 8, 2026**

- ▶ Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Releases 55 Literary Works in Classical Indian Languages
- ▶ Indian Railways Electrified about 99.2% of its Network by November 2025
- ▶ HPCL Commissions World's First LC-Max Residue Upgradation Facility in Visakhapatnam, AP
- ▶ NITI Aayog Launches 5th Edition of 'Trade Watch Quarterly' Report
- ▶ Indian Army Grants Supply Order to Tata Advanced Systems for Pinaka MLRS Overhaul
- ▶ Simplilearn Joins IndiaAI Mission to Accelerate AI Literacy for 10 Million Citizens
- ▶ MIB's WaveX Signs MoU with FITT-IIT Delhi to Boost Media-Tech Innovation
- ▶ DRDO Celebrates 68th Foundation Day in Delhi
- ▶ HDFC Bank Integrates Digital Rupee CBDC into SmartGateway Platform
- ▶ Federal Bank Unveils Refreshed Brand Entity 'The Fortuna Wave'
- ▶ IRFC Secures 'Excellent' Rating from DPE for 5th Consecutive Year
- ▶ K. Balasubrahmanian Assumes Charge as Chairman of AERB
- ▶ GoI Extends Abhishek Dev Tenure as Chairman of APEDA
- ▶ NASA's Hubble Telescope Discovered First Starless Gas Cloud 'Cloud-9'
- ▶ Indian Scientists Developed First-Ever Supercomputer-Powered Simulation to Model Mpemba Effect
- ▶ Pakistan Conducts Successful Flight Test of 'Taimoor ALCM'
- ▶ Earth's Rotation Day 2026 - January 8

## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

### Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan Releases 55 Literary Works in Classical Indian Languages

On 6th January 2026, Union Minister **Dharmendra Pradhan**, Ministry of Education (MoE), released **55 scholarly literary works in classical Indian languages** at an event held in New Delhi, Delhi, to promote India's linguistic heritage and inclusive access to classical knowledge.



- This compilation includes literary works in Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Odia, and Tamil, along with an Indian Sign Language (ISL) interpretation of the **Tirukkural**.
- The event was graced by Vineet Joshi, Secretary (Higher Education), MoE; Chamu Krishna Shastry, Chairman, Bharatiya Bhasha Samiti (BBS); Prof. Shailendra Mohan, Director, Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL); Prof. R. Chandrasekaran, Director, Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT); Ms. Manmohan Kaur, Advisor (Cost), along with other senior officials from the MoE.

#### Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Release of 55 literary works in classical Indian languages
- ✓ **Who?** Union Minister Dharmendra Pradhan, MoE
- ✓ **Where?** New Delhi, Delhi
- ✓ **Languages Covered:** Tamil, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, Odia, Indian Sign Language
- ✓ **Literary Works:**
  - 41 books by CIIL's CoE covering Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, and Odia
  - 13 books by CICT on Tamil and Tirukkural Sign Language series
- ✓ **Purpose:** Promote India's linguistic heritage, accessibility of classical knowledge
- ✓ **Alignment:** NEP 2020

#### About Literary Works:

**Publications:** A total of **41 books** were developed by the Centres of Excellence (CoE) for Classical Languages under the CIIL, Mysuru (Karnataka), an autonomous body under the MoE for research, promotion, and documentation of Indian languages.

- These works cover Classical Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, and Odia.
- English and Hindi translations of 'Madalapanji' by JK Nayak and Surendra Panigrahi, the English translation of 'Rudrasudhanidhi' by Gangadhar Panda and Pramodini Panda, 'Shilpa Shabdabali' by Debi Prasanna Nanda, and 'Charyapada' by Santosh Kumar Mohapatra were also released.

**Tamil Works:** The Central Institute of Classical Tamil (CICT), Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN), an autonomous institution under



the MoE dedicated to classical Tamil language and literature, released 13 books and a Tirukkural Sign Language series.

**Tirukkural Sign Language series:** A 45-episode Sign Language interpretation series of the classical Tamil text Tirukkural, authored by Thiruvalluvar and containing couplets on ethics, governance, economy, and love, was launched to promote inclusive education and ensure access to classical wisdom for persons with hearing disabilities.

**Alignment:** The initiative aligns with the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 by promoting education in Indian languages and underscores the preservation of linguistic and cultural heritage as vital to achieving Viksit Bharat 2047.

**Transformation:** Professional courses in engineering, medicine, and law are being developed in Indian languages to move beyond the colonial Macaulay mindset, alongside the translation and digitization of classical texts to strengthen India's linguistic ecosystem.

### Classical Languages of India:

**Criteria:** A language qualifies as classical if it has ancient texts (1,500–2,000 years old), a heritage literature valued across generations, knowledge texts including prose, poetry, and inscriptions, and its classical form may differ from modern derivatives.

**Classical Languages:** India currently recognizes 11 classical languages: Tamil (2004), Sanskrit (2005), Kannada (2008), Telugu (2008), Malayalam (2013), Odia (2014), and five new additions in 2024: Marathi, Pali, Prakrit, Assamese, and Bengali.

### About Ministry of Education (MoE):

**Union Minister-** Dharmendra Pradhan (Constituency- Sambalpur, Odisha)

**Minister of State (MoS)**– Jayant Chaudhary (Rajya Sabha- Uttar Pradesh, UP); Dr. Sukanta Majumdar (Constituency- Balurghat, West Bengal, WB)

### Indian Railways Electrified about 99.2% of its Network by November 2025

In January 2026, Indian Railways (IR) under the Ministry of Railways (MoR), electrified about 99.2% i.e. 69,427 Route Kilometres (RKMs) of its broad-gauge network (70,001 RKMs) by November 2025, emerging as one of the world's most extensively electrified rail systems. Out of the total area electrified, electrification of 46,900 RKMs was done between 2014 and 2025.



- This significant milestone achieved by IR is in alignment with the ambitious “**Mission 100% Electrification**” which aims to transform India's rail system from diesel-dependent network into a fast, efficient and environmentally sustainable backbone of transport.

### Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** About 99.2% of IR's Network Electrified
- ✓ **Achieved by:** by November 2025
- ✓ **India's Total Broad-Gauge Network:** 70,001 RKMs
- ✓ **Total RKMs Electrified:** 69,427 RKMs
- ✓ **Achieved under:** Mission 100% Electrification

- ✓ **Electrification Pace:** from 1.4 km per day (between 2004-14) to over 15 km per day (between 2019-2025).
- ✓ **100% Electrification Achieved in:** 25 States and UTs
- ✓ **Electrification Pending in:** Only 5 states, including Rajasthan (93 RKMs); TN (117 RKMs), Karnataka (151 RKMs), Assam (197 RKMs), and Goa (16 RKMs).
- ✓ **India Surpassed Major Countries:** China (82%), France (60%), Russia (52%) and UK (39%)
- ✓ **IR's Solar power capacity:** 898 MW (as of November 2025), up from 3.68 MW (2014)
- ✓ **Utilisation of Solar Power Commissioned:** 70% (629 MW) for traction purposes and 30% (269 MW) for non-traction purposes

**About IR Electrification in India:**

**1st Electric Train:** India's 1st electric train powered by 1500 Volt Direct Current (DC) system, ran between **Bombay Victoria Terminus** and **Kurla Harbour** in 1925.

- By the time of India's Independence, IR had covered **just 388 RKMs**, a modest but historic shift towards energy-efficient rail transport.

**Pace of IR Electrification:** Electrification expanded from **just 1.4 km per day** (between 2004-14) to an average of **over 15 km per day (between 2019-2025)**.

- Also, the share of electrified track increased significantly from just 24% (in 2000) to 40% in 2017, and surpassed 96% by December 31, 2024.

**State-wise Electrification:** At present, **25 States and Union Territories**, have been electrified with no remaining routes pending.

- Only 5 states namely: Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu (TN), Karnataka, Assam, and Goa, have residual sections under electrification. Together, these states account for just **0.8% (574 RKMs)** of the total network.
- RKMs remaining in these 5 states are: Rajasthan (93 RKMs); TN (117 RKMs), Karnataka (151 RKMs), Assam (197 RKMs), and Goa (16 RKMs).

**Global Position of IR:** With 99.2% of its network electrified, IR now ranks among the world's leading rail networks, surpassing major countries like: China, France, the United Kingdom (UK) and Russia.

- According to the International Union of Railways (**UIC**) report, **June 2025**, Switzerland leads with 100% electrified railways, followed by China (82%), Spain (67%), Japan (64%), France (60%), Russia (52%) and the UK (39%).

**Solar Power Drives IR Electrification:** The solar power capacity of IR surged nearly 244 times i.e. from just 3.68 Mega-Watt (MW) (in 2014) to **898 MW (as of November 2025)**.

- Out of this total solar power capacity commissioned, nearly **70% (629 MW)** supports traction power for electric trains, which reduces dependence on conventional grid electricity, while remaining **30% (269 MW)** powers station lighting, service buildings, workshops, and railway quarters.
- Currently, this solar power is installed at **2,626 railway stations**, reflecting widespread adoption of clean energy solutions.

**Adoption of Modern Technologies:** Adoption of advanced technologies has accelerated electrification of railways projects like:

- The adoption of **cylindrical foundations** has replaced the conventional Overhead Electrification (OHE) that requires intensive manual excavation and slow project progress. In contrast to OHE,

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the new technology streamlines the process by reducing labour effort and significantly saving time.

- **Automatic Wiring Train:** This advanced system enables simultaneous installation of catenary and contact wire with precision tension control, speeding up the wiring process and ensuring timely completion of electrification works.

**About Ministry of Railways (MoR):**

**Union Minister-** Ashwini Vaishnaw (Rajya Sabha- Odisha)

**Minister of State (MoS)-** V. Somanna (Constituency- Tumkur, Karnataka), and Ravneet Singh Bittu (Rajya Sabha- Rajasthan)

**HPCL Commissions World's First LC-Max Residue Upgradation Facility in Visakhapatnam, AP**

On January 5, 2026, Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (**HPCL**), under the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG), successfully commissioned the world's first and largest Liquid Conversion–Maximum (LC-Max) Residue Upgradation Facility (**RUF**) at its Refinery in Visakhapatnam (Vizag), Andhra Pradesh (AP).



- HPCL also introduced a digital optimization system for the LC-Max unit to improve operational stability.

**Exam Hints:**

- ✓ **What?** World's First LC-Max Unit commissioned
- ✓ **Who?** HPCL
- ✓ **Where?** Visakhapatnam (AP)
- ✓ **Project:** Visakh Refinery Modernisation Project (VRMP)
- ✓ **Significance:** India's first residue hydrocracking unit
- ✓ **Capacity:** 3.55 MT
- ✓ **RUF:** 3 massive reactors, each weighing 2,200 tonnes
- ✓ **Investment:** Rs.31,407 crore

**About World's First LC-Max Unit:**

**Framework:** The RUF was owned and developed by HPCL as part of its Visakh Refinery Modernization Project (VRMP).

- With an investment of **Rs.31,407 crore**, HPCL's Visakh Refinery has expanded its crude processing capacity from 8.33 million tonnes per annum (MMTPA) to 15 MMTPA.

**Partner Institutions:** Engineers India Limited (EIL) served as the Project Management Consultant (PMC), and Larsen & Toubro (L&T) acted as the Engineering, Procurement, and Construction (EPC) contractor.

- Chevron Lummus Global (CLG) licensed the core LC-Max technology.

**Capacity:** The facility includes, India's first residue hydrocracking unit, has a capacity of **3.55** million tonnes per annum (**MTPA**) and can convert about 93% of low-value bottom-of-the-barrel oils into higher-value products such as diesel, jet fuel, gasoil, and other middle distillates.

- It comprises three massive reactors, each weighing about 2,200 tonnes (T), making it among the heaviest refinery modules globally.

**Distillate Output:** The distillate yields such as diesel and kerosene are expected to increase by up to approximately 10% compared to before the upgrade.

**GRM:** The facility improves the Gross Refining Margin (GRM) by enabling more conversion of heavy residues into marketable fuels than low-value residues.

**Nelson Complexity Index:** With the commissioning of the LC-Max unit, the Nelson Complexity Index of the refinery has increased to around 11.6, making it India's most sophisticated and complex refineries, capable of handling advanced deep-conversion processes.

**About Digital Optimization System:**

**Performance Enhancement:** The system at the Vizag refinery is designed to enhance the performance of the LC-Max unit by combining advanced digital tools with refinery operations.

**Data Monitoring:** It uses real-time data monitoring to track key process parameters, predictive analytics to anticipate operational issues, and Artificial Intelligence (AI)-driven optimization to fine-tune operating conditions.

**Operational Stability:** The capabilities help improve operational stability, product yields, energy efficiency, and on-stream performance, while reducing downtime and variability.

**About LC-Max Technology:**

**Technology:** It is a next-generation residue hydrocracking technology that upgrades heavy refinery residues, low-value products into high-value fuels. It uses advanced catalysts, hydrogen management, and digital optimization.

**Key Features:** It converts vacuum residues and other heavy fractions into lighter products, maximises diesel and jet fuel output, efficiently processes heavy and sour crudes, and employs robust hydrocracking catalysts with high-pressure reactors for optimal conversion.

**About Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL):**

Chairman & Managing Director (CMD) – Vikas Kaushal

Headquarters – Mumbai, Maharashtra

Established – 1974

**NITI Aayog Launches 5th Edition of 'Trade Watch Quarterly' Report**

In January 2026, **Dr. Arvind Virmani**, Member of National Institution for Transforming India (NITI) Aayog launched the 5th edition of ['Trade Watch Quarterly \(TWQ\) for Quarter 1 \(Q1:April-June, 2025\) of Financial Year 2025-26 \(FY26\)](#), in New Delhi, Delhi. The report provides a comprehensive and data-driven analysis of India's trade performance in the context of evolving global economic conditions.



**Exam Hints:**

- ✓ **What?** Launch of NITI Aayog's report 'Trade Watch Quarterly'
- ✓ **Launched by:** Dr. Arvind Virmani, Member of NITI Aayog
- ✓ **Edition:** 5th
- ✓ **For Which Quarter?** Q1 of FY26
- ✓ **Key Focus:** India's automotive exports sector

- ✓ **Automotive Exports:** India contributed ~USD 30 billion (1.4%) to the USD 2.2 trillion global automotive market.
- ✓ **Global trade in Goods and Services:** +2.5% (Q1FY26)
- ✓ **Total Merchandise and Services Trade:** USD 439 billion

## Key Highlights of Report:

**Focus:** The key focus of this latest edition was **India's automotive exports sector**, examining international demand patterns, India's export presence across vehicles and auto components, tariff structures and participation in global value chains.

**Auto-Components Market:** The global auto-components market reached USD 856 billion in 2024, growing at a 3% CAGR since 2015, while India's exports nearly doubled from USD 8.2 billion to USD 16.9 billion, achieving a faster 7% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) over the same period.

**Automotive Exports:** Since 2015, India's share of the global automotive import market has stayed around 1%, with exports growing at a CAGR of 3.5%, slightly below the global average of 3.9%.

- The report highlighted that India, while performing well in certain automotive segments, contributes only ~**USD 30 billion** (1.4%) to the USD 2.2-trillion global automotive import market in 2024, indicating significant scope to expand its share.
- Globally, passenger vehicles make up about 71% of automotive demand, but India has captured only around 1% of this market. In comparison, motorcycles account for roughly 3% of global demand, and India's exports in this segment are about 9%, showing stronger performance.

**Shifts in India's Trade:** The publication highlighted key structural shifts in India's trade profile, including the growing contribution of technology-intensive exports, sustained strength in services-led growth, and evolving import patterns, which collectively reflect deeper integration of India into global value chains.

**Goods and Services Trade:** As per the report, the global trade in goods and services increased **around 2.5%** on quarterly basis during Q1FY26, driven mainly by developing economies and rising South-South trade, even as the United States of America (USA) trade weighed on the global average.

- It further highlighted Goods trade increased from **2% to 2.5%**, while service trade rebounded.
- The report also revealed that India's goods and services exports and imports reached **USD 209 billion** and **USD 230 billion**, respectively in Q1FY26, each increasing by around 3-4% on an annual basis, registering a combined deficit of USD 21 billion.

**Services Sector:** The report highlighted that the services sector continued to be the main driver for supporting India's overall trade performance in Q1FY26. As per the report, India's total merchandise and services trade reached **USD 439 billion**, up 3.5% Year-on-Year (Y-o-Y).

- Also, the services exports increased to 10%, contributing a large surplus of USD 48 billion.

**Recommendations:** The report recommended several strategic measures to enhance India's global trade competitiveness, including reducing tariffs, promoting bilateral trade and cross-border platform participation, and reorienting production toward high-demand segments such as passenger vehicles.

- These initiatives are aimed at boosting India's export potential and strengthening its position in international markets.

**Policy Priorities:** Based on global export trends and stakeholders consultations, the report outlined key policy priorities such as bolstering quality standards, improving certification systems, adopting advanced technologies, diversifying markets and building stronger forward linkages within global automotive supply chains.

## **About National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog):**

It is the premier policy think tank body of India, which came into existence on January 01, 2015 replacing the Planning Commission of India (1950).

Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**) – B.V.R. Subrahmanyam

**Headquarters-** New Delhi, Delhi

## Indian Army Grants Supply Order to Tata Advanced Systems for Pinaka MLRS Overhaul

In January 2026, the Indian Army (IA) granted a **supply order** to Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL), an aerospace and defence arm of the Tata Group, to support the overhaul-cum-upgradation of in-service first-generation **Pinaka** Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS) and Battery Command Posts (BCPs), marking a public-private partnership (PPP) in defence sustainment, at an event held in New Delhi, Delhi.



### Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Grants Supply Order for Pinaka MLRS Overhaul
- ✓ **By Whom?** Indian Army (IA).
- ✓ **Recipient:** Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL)
- ✓ **Model:** Public-Private Partnership (PPP)
- ✓ **Implementation Agency:** 510 Advance Base Workshop (ABW) under the Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME).
- ✓ **Indigenization:** Nearly 80%.
- ✓ **Strategic Goal:** Sustained availability and peak performance of frontline artillery systems.

### Phased Overhaul Programme:

**Pilot Overhaul Phase:** As part of the collaboration, TASL, in partnership with the IA's 510 Advance Base Workshop (ABW), will jointly carry out a pilot overhaul of selected Pinaka MLRS and BCPs during the initial phase.

**Full-Scale Overhaul Phase:** After the pilot phase, the remaining Pinaka MLRS and BCPs will be overhauled by the 510 ABW (Meerut, Uttar Pradesh, UP) of the Corps of Electronics and Mechanical Engineers (EME).

**Technical Support:** TASL provides engineering expertise, certified spares, and quality assurance for the overhaul programme.

**Coordinator:** TASL ensures close coordination with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM) to support sustained availability of frontline artillery systems.

### Overview of Pinaka Multiple Launch Rocket Systems (MLRS):

**Development:** Jointly developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and TASL with a modular, future-ready design and software architecture.

- Since 1989, TASL and DRDO have collaborated on the Pinaka programme, delivering key contracts in 2006, 2016, and 2020, with systems in service for over 15 years and upgraded in later batches.

**Role:** An all-weather, indirect-fire artillery system delivering high-volume firepower with net-centric operational capability.

**Platform:** Mounted on an 8x8 High Mobility Vehicle (HMV), enabling high mobility and effective performance in difficult terrain.

**Mobility:** Equipped with automated 'shoot-and-scoot' capability for rapid deployment and enhanced survivability.

**Firecontrol:** Incorporates a microprocessor-based all-electric servo drive and Inertial Navigation System (INS)-based digital fire control for precise targeting.

**Rockets:** Fires Pinaka Mk-I rockets and is adaptable for future guided variants with extended ranges of 120 kilometer (km) and 300 km.

**Indigenous:** Achieves nearly **80%** indigenous content, enhancing self-reliance and strategic autonomy in defence manufacturing.

### **About Tata Advanced Systems Limited (TASL):**

Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Sukaran Singh

**Headquarters** – Hyderabad, Telangana

**Established** – 2006

### **Simplilearn Joins IndiaAI Mission to Accelerate AI Literacy for 10 Million Citizens**

In January 2026, **Simplilearn**, a leading global digital upskilling platform, entered into a strategic partnership with the **IndiaAI (Artificial Intelligence) Mission**, under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), to host as well as roll out the national **'YUVA AI for ALL'**, a free national course to help everyone understand AI, on its learning platform.

- This collaboration represents a major milestone in India's journey towards building a widespread AI learning ecosystem.

#### **Exam Hints:**

- ✓ **What?** Simplilearn collaborated with IndiaAI Mission
- ✓ **For:** Roll out of YUVA AI for ALL, foundational course
- ✓ **Host Platform:** Simplilearn
- ✓ **Course Coverage:** Fundamentals of AI and its impact
- ✓ **Target:** Democratize AI literacy for 10 million citizens

#### **Key Details of Partnership:**

**Objective:** By hosting the program on Simplilearn's platform, IndiaAI mission aims to expand the reach of the course, which will make the learning of AI basics available for students, professionals and citizens across the country.

**Certificate:** As per this strategic partnership, the learners enrolled under the YUVA for ALL course will receive a co-branded certificate issued by IndiaAI and Simplilearn.

**Key Role:** The course will combine Simplilearn's edtech expertise and structured content with MeitY's comprehensive AI and technology resources, providing a standardized and easily accessible framework for foundational AI education.

**Key Target:** To democratize AI education and promote 10 million citizens to pursue and acquire basic AI knowledge.

### **MIB's WaveX Signs MoU with FITT-IIT Delhi to Boost Media-Tech Innovation**

In January 2026, **WaveX**, the startup accelerator initiative under the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting (MIB), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) with the Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (**FITT**), Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi), at Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi, Delhi.

- The agreement, signed in the presence of Sanjay Jaju, Secretary, MIB, aims to accelerate media technology entrepreneurship in India through innovation, incubation, and ecosystem development.

#### **Exam Hints:**

- ✓ **What?** MoU signed to Boost Media-Tech Innovation
- ✓ **Entities:** WaveX and FITT-IIT Delhi
- ✓ **Where?** Shastri Bhawan, New Delhi
- ✓ **In Presence of:** Sanjay Jaju, Secretary, MIB

- ✓ **Focus:** Broadcasting, entertainment, communication technologies

**About the MoU between WaveX and FITT-IIT Delhi:**

**Focus:** The partnership focuses on broadcasting, entertainment, communication, and emerging media technologies.

**FITT Role:** FITT, IIT Delhi will support implementation, provide strategic and operational guidance, enable ecosystem linkages, and offer technical, Intellectual Property (IP), and capacity-building support for incubation centres.

**WaveX Role:** WaveX will act as the national facilitator by providing funding, policy guidance, infrastructure access, industry partnerships, and global market exposure for startups.

**Leadership:** WaveX is envisioned as a national catalyst for establishing world-class Media & Entertainment (M&E) incubation facilities through integrated policy, academic, and industry collaboration.

**WaveX:** It is a national M &E technology innovation and incubation initiative under the MIB, implemented by the National Film Development Corporation (NFDC) in 2025.

**DRDO Celebrates 68th Foundation Day in Delhi**

On January 01, 2026, the Defence Research and Development Organisation (**DRDO**), under the Ministry of Defence (MoD), celebrated its **68th Foundation Day** at DRDO Headquarters in New Delhi, Delhi.



- Union Minister Rajnath Singh, MoD; Union Minister of State (MoS) Sanjay Seth, MoD; Dr. Samir V. Kamat, Chairman of DRDO and Secretary, Department of Defence, Research and Development (R&D), MoD, were present at the event.

**Exam Hints:**

- ✓ **Event:** 68th Foundation Day of DRDO
- ✓ **When?** January 01, 2026
- ✓ **Where?** DRDO Headquarters, New Delhi
- ✓ **Focus Areas:** Cyber, Space, AI
- ✓ **Milestone:**
- ✓ 22 AoN approvals worth ~Rs.1.30 lakh crore
- ✓ 11 defence contracts signed worth Rs.26,000 crore
- ✓ Technology Transfer: 245 LAToT in 2025 (Total: 2,201)
- ✓ CoE: 15 operational; 66 new projects (Rs.228 crore)

**DRDO's 2025 Strategic Overview & Milestones:**

**Procurement and Financial Achievements:**

**Vision:** DRDO is reaffirmed as a pivotal force in Aatmanirbhar Bharat, driving India's defence manufacturing ecosystem with a future focus on Cyber, Space, and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

**Approvals:** The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) and Strategic Policy Board (SPB) accorded 22 Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) approvals worth **~Rs.1.30 lakh crore**, facilitating Indian industry in the production of critical defence systems.

## Contracts and Inductions:

**Contracts:** As part of its expanding operational footprint, 11 defence contracts worth Rs.26,000 crore were signed with production partners.

**Induction:** Multiple DRDO -developed systems have been inducted into Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs), Police Forces, and the National Disaster Response Force (NDRF), expanding operational reach beyond the Indian Armed Forces.

## Research, Development, and Trials:

**User Evaluation Trials (UETs) Progress:** UETs have been completed or are nearing completion for Pralay, Akash Next Generation (Akash NG), Guided Pinaka, Man Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM), Advanced Lightweight Torpedo (ALWT), Battlefield Observation Surveillance System (BOSS), Specialised Demolition Robot (SDR), and Chemical, Biological, Radiological, and Nuclear (CBRN) water systems.

**Progress of Ongoing Trials:** The Developmental Trials are underway for Indian Light Tank, Very Short Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS), New Air-to-Surface Missile-Short Range (NASM-SR), Rudram-2, Gaurav Glide Bomb, advanced radars, and Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) life support systems.

## Industry and Academia Partnership:

**Technology Transfers:** 245 Licensing Agreement for Transfer of Technology (LATO T) signed in 2025, taking the total to 2,201.

**Industry Partnerships & Tests:** 13 new Defence Corridor Production/Production Agency (DcPP/PA) partnerships added (total 145) and over 4,000 industry tests conducted for private sector and Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs).

**Centres of Excellence (CoE):** 15 Industry–Academia CoE operational, with 66 new projects sanctioned in 2025, valued at Rs. 228 crore.

## About Defense Research and Development Organization (DRDO):

It was established through the amalgamation of the Technical Development Establishment, the Directorate of Technical Development and Production of the Indian Ordnance Factories, and the Defence Science Organisation.

- DRDO has grown from an initial network of 10 laboratories to 52, and is actively engaged in developing defence technologies across multiple disciplines.

**Chairman** – Samir V. Kamat

**Headquarters** – New Delhi, Delhi

**Established** – January 1, 1958

# BANKING & FINANCE

## HDFC Bank Integrates Digital Rupee CBDC into SmartGateway Platform

In January 2026, **HDFC Bank** integrated the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC), the Digital Rupee (e₹), into its online merchant payment platform, **SmartGateway**.

### Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What:** Integration of RBI's Digital Rupee (CBDC) into SmartGateway
- ✓ **By Whom:** HDFC Bank
- ✓ **Platform:** SmartGateway
- ✓ **Key Feature:** Zero transaction cost for merchants
- ✓ **Objective:** To provide a secure, sovereign-backed digital payment option.

### About CBDC Integration:

**Platform:** SmartGateway now supports the RBI-backed Digital Rupee (CBDC) alongside existing payment options like Unified Payments Interface (UPI), cards, and net banking.

**Cost:** Merchants can accept Digital Rupee payments at **zero transaction cost**, with an intermediary-free, efficient settlement process.

**Customers:** Enables a seamless, instant, and secure digital payment experience combining UPI convenience with sovereign-backed digital currency.

**Impact:** Strengthens the bank's digital-first strategy and supports India's transition to a cash-light, inclusive digital economy.

### **Federal Bank Unveils Refreshed Brand Entity 'The Fortuna Wave'**

On January 7, 2026, **Federal Bank Limited**, an Indian private sector bank, launched '**The Fortuna Wave**', a refreshed brand identity, as part of a strategic brand refresh to signal modernization and future-readiness, in Mumbai (Maharashtra) in the presence of **Vidya Balan**, brand ambassador of the bank.



#### **Exam Hints:**

- ✓ **What?** Federal Bank Unveils Refreshed Brand Entity 'The Fortuna Wave'
- ✓ **Where?** In Mumbai (Maharashtra)
- ✓ **Brand Ambassador:** Vidya Balan
- ✓ **Logo:** Three waves representing authenticity, togetherness, prosperity
- ✓ **Design:** Fluid, adaptable, rounded wordmark, yellow underline, digital-friendly palette

#### **About The Fortuna Wave:**

**Logo & Insignia:** The central feature of the refresh is "Fortuna Wave", a new visual insignia, which consists of three wave elements such as authenticity, togetherness, and prosperity.

- The design is more fluid and adaptable compared with the older boxed structure, improving visibility across digital and physical platforms.

**Visual Features:** It includes a dynamic wave motif, fluid, rounded typeface for the 'FEDERAL BANK' wordmark, signature yellow underline retained, and vibrant and digital-friendly color palette.

**About Federal Bank:** Incorporated in 1931 in Aluva (Kerala), Federal Bank offers a wide range of services including savings and current accounts, loans, digital banking, and Non-Resident Indian (NRI) services.

## **AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS**

### **IRFC Secures 'Excellent' Rating from DPE for 5th Consecutive Year**

In January 2026, Indian Railways Finance Corporation (**IRFC**), a 'Navratna' Central Public Enterprise (CPSE) working under the Ministry of Railways (MoR), has been awarded '**Excellent**' rating by the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE) under the Ministry of Finance (MoF), for the Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25).

- This marks the **5th** consecutive year for IRFC to achieve the highest performance rating ever since it was listed in FY21.

#### **Exam Hints:**

- ✓ **What?** IRFC Secured Excellent Rating for FY25
- ✓ **From:** DPE

- ✓ **For:** 5th consecutive year
- ✓ **Significance:** Reflects strong institutional performance, resilience, and consistent delivery

### Key Details:

**Significance:** This sustained recognition indicates IRFC's ability to navigate emerging challenges and maintain institutional strength, and deliver consistently strong performance.

**Whole-of-Approach:** During FY25, IRFC continued to bolster and diversify its lending portfolio in a structured manner, which is in alignment with "Whole-of-Approach".

**IRFC:** Established in 1986, IRFC serves as the MoR's dedicated financing arm, supporting railway projects and related infrastructure sectors.

- In its IRFC 2.0 phase, it reached the annual sanction target of Rs.60,000 crore by the third quarter (October–December) of FY26.

## APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

### K. Balasubrahmanian Assumes Charge as Chairman of AERB

In January 2026, the Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) headed by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, appointed distinguished scientist **A. K. Balasubrahmanian** as the **Chairman** of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (**AERB**), India's apex nuclear safety regulator, for **three years**.

- He succeeded **Dr. D.K. Shukla**, who completed his tenure on December 31, 2025.

### Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Appointment of Chairman of the Atomic Energy Regulatory Board (AERB)
- ✓ **Who?** A. K. Balasubrahmanian
- ✓ **Appointed by:** Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)
- ✓ **Tenure:** 3 years
- ✓ **Succeeds:** Dr. D. K. Shukla.

### About A.K. Balasubrahmanian

**Experience:** His career spans almost 40 years in the design, development, safety assessment, construction, and commissioning of Nuclear Power Plants (NPP).

**Key Role:** Held the position of Director (Technical) on the Board of Nuclear Power Corporation of India Limited (NPCIL).

**Previous Role:** He served as Chairman of the Project Design Safety Committee for Pressurized Heavy Water Reactor (PHWR)-based nuclear power plants and as a member of the Safety Review Committee for Operating Plants (SARCOP) of the AERB.

**Innovation:** Contributed to first-of-a-kind systems with indigenous safety features, promoted self-reliance in nuclear reactor technology, and represented India in international conferences and technical forums on reactor technology and safety.

**About AERB:** It was constituted on November 15, 1983 by the former President of India, Giani Zail Singh under the Atomic Energy Act(AEA), 1962, and is headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

### GoI Extends Abhishek Dev Tenure as Chairman of APEDA

On January 6, 2026, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (**ACC**) headed by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, approved a **one-year extension** of **Abhishek Dev's** tenure as **Chairman** of the Agricultural and Processed Food Products Export Development Authority (**APEDA**) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I), effective from February 8, 2026.

### Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Abhishek Dev Tenure as Chairman of APEDA extended

- ✓ **Who?** Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC)
- ✓ **Tenure:** One year
- ✓ **Effective From:** 8 February 2026

### About Abhishek Dev:

**Profile:** He is a 2007-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from Arunachal Pradesh (AR)-Goa-Mizoram and Union Territories (AGMUT) cadre.

**Leadership Roles:** He served as Director in the Department of Commerce (DoC), MoC&I from 2021 to 2023.

- In July 2023, he was appointed as the Chairman of the APEDA.

**About APEDA:** Based in New Delhi, APEDA was established in 1985 under the APEDA Act, 1985. It is responsible for the promotion, development and regulation of exports of agricultural and processed food products such as fruits and vegetables, meat and poultry, dairy, cereals, processed foods and organic products.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### NASA's Hubble Telescope Discovered First Starless Gas Cloud 'Cloud-9'

In January 2026, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)'s Hubble Telescope discovered a starless, gas-rich, dark-matter cloud, which is nicknamed 'Cloud-9'.

- The results related to Cloud-9 were published in 'The Astrophysical Journal Letters', and later presented at the 247th meeting of the American Astronomical Society in Phoenix.

### Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Discovery of starless, dark-matter dominated cloud
- ✓ **Discovered by:** NASA's Hubble Telescope
- ✓ **Found Near:** Messier 94 (M94)
- ✓ **Distance from Earth:** 14 million light-years
- ✓ **Nicknamed:** Cloud-9
- ✓ **Key Specifications:**
  - ✓ Neutral Hydrogen gas (about 1 million solar masses);
  - ✓ 4,900 light-years in diameter;
  - ✓ dark matter (around 5 billion solar masses)

### About Cloud-9:

**Location:** This newly discovered dark matter-dominated cloud, considered a 'relic' or remnant of early galaxy formation, is located 14 million light-years from Earth near the spiral galaxy Messier 94 (M94).

**Composition:** Cloud-9 is also called a Reionization-Limited HI Cloud (RELHIC) as both have nearly same composition.

- For instance both RELHIC and Cloud-9 are composed of neutral hydrogen (with a mass of about 1 million times that of the Sun) and dominated by dark matter and have same diameter i.e. about 4,900 light-years.
- The mass of Cloud-9's dark matter is projected to be about **5 billion solar masses**.

**Key Feature:** Cloud-9 is invisible in visible light and only detectable by its hydrogen, which makes it a rare 'fossil' from the universe early days.

**Discovery Timeline:** Discovered in 2023 via China's Five-hundred-meter Aperture Spherical Telescope (FAST) radio telescope and in 2025 Very Large Array (VLA)/Green Bank Telescope (GBT) confirm neutral hydrogen core. In Jan 2026 Hubble's Advanced Camera finds no stars within boundaries.

## Indian Scientists Developed First-Ever Supercomputer-Powered Simulation to Model Mpemba Effect

On January 6, 2026, Indian scientists from the Jawaharlal Nehru Centre for Advanced Scientific Research (**JNCASR**), in Bengaluru (Karnataka) under the Ministry of Science and Technology (MoS&T), developed the first-ever supercomputer-powered simulation to model the **Mpemba effect**.

### Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** First-Ever Supercomputer-Powered Simulation to Model Mpemba Effect was developed
- ✓ **Who?** Indian scientists from JNCASR
- ✓ **Mpemba Effect:** Hot water freezes faster than cold water
- ✓ **Published in:** Communication Physics.

### Supercomputers to Decode the Mpemba Effect:

**Phenomenon:** The Mpemba effect refers to the observation that water at a higher initial temperature can freeze sooner than water at a low temperature.

- It was named after Erasto Mpemba, who brought the phenomenon back into scientific discussion in the 20th century.

**Supercomputer Unlocks Mpemba Effect:** Scientists at JNCASR used high-performance computing to simulate ice formation at the molecular level, revealing how non-equilibrium thermodynamics, molecular rearrangements, and energy dissipation enable hotter water to freeze faster.

**Implications:** This study, published in **Communication Physics**, offers a technical perspective on phenomena such as material relaxation resulting from abrupt temperature variations.

## Pakistan Conducts Successful Flight Test of 'Taimoor ALCM'

In January 2026, Pakistan Air Force (**PAF**) conducted a successful flight test of the indigenously developed Taimoor Air-Launched Cruise Missile (**ALCM**), which was deployed from a Mirage IIIE fighter aircraft during a live-trial exercise.

### Exam Hints:

- ✓ **What?** Successful Flight Test of Taimoor ALCM
- ✓ **By Whom:** Pakistan Air Force (PAF)
- ✓ **Platform:** Launched from Mirage IIIE fighter jet
- ✓ **Strike Range:** 600 km

### About Taimoor Missile:

**Developer:** It is a new Pakistani ALCM developed primarily by Pakistan's Air Weapons Complex. It is a turbojet-powered subsonic cruise missile designed to strike both land and sea targets.

**Explosive warhead:** It carries a conventional high-explosive warhead optimized for precise damage to defended infrastructure.

**Range:** It is designed to deliver high-precision strikes at targets located up to approximately **600 kilometres**(km) away.

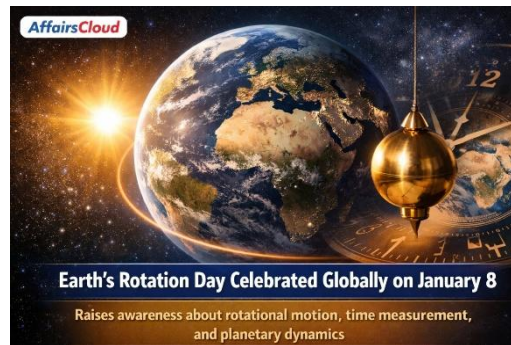
**Capability:** The missile features a state-of-the-art navigation and guidance system and can operate at very low altitudes, enabling it to evade hostile air defences and missile interception systems.

## IMPORTANT DAYS

### Earth's Rotation Day 2026 – January 8

**Earth's Rotation Day** is annually observed across the globe on **8th January** to highlight the significance of Earth's rotational motion and to commemorate **French physicist Léon Foucault's** historic 1851 pendulum experiment, which first publicly demonstrated the Earth's rotation.

- 8 January 2026, marks the observance of the **175th** anniversary of Léon Foucault's demonstration.



**Exam Hints:**

- ✓ **What?** Earth's Rotation Day 2026
- ✓ **When?** 8 January 2026
- ✓ **Why?** To mark Léon Foucault's proof of Earth's rotation in 1851.
- ✓ **Key Device:** Foucault Pendulum
- ✓ **Rotation Period:** Approximately 24 hours (one mean solar day).

**Background:**

**Early Ideas:** Greek scholars as early as **470 Before Christ(BC)** proposed that the Earth rotates, an idea later developed in the **16th century** by **Nicolaus Copernicus** through the heliocentric model and supported by **Galileo Galilei's** observations in **1610**.

**Demonstration:** On 8 January 1851, French physicist Léon Foucault conclusively proved Earth's rotation using a pendulum experiment at the Panthéon in Paris, France.

**Pendulum Setup:** Foucault's pendulum, consisting of a 28 kilogram (kg) brass bob, 38 centimeter (cm) in diameter, suspended from a 67 meter (m) long wire, provided the first direct laboratory proof of Earth's rotation, offering visible physical evidence beyond astronomical observations.

**Key Fact of Earth's Rotation:**

**Axis:** Earth rotates on an imaginary axis connecting the North and South Poles, tilted at approximately 23.5 degrees to its orbital plane.

**Rotation:** Earth rotates from west to east once every 24 hours (mean solar day) at a speed of about 1,670 kilometers per hour (km/h) at the equator, causing the Sun and stars to appear to move across the sky.

**Diameter:** The Earth's diameter measures 12,714 kilometer (km) (7,900 miles) from the North to South Pole and 12,756 km (7,926 miles) across the equator.

**Revolution:** Earth revolves around the Sun in approximately 365 days, and its rotation speed varies slightly, causing minor differences of seconds per day.

**Significance:** Earth's Rotation Day emphasizes the understanding that Earth's rotation underlies day-night cycles, seasonal changes, and the **Coriolis effect**.



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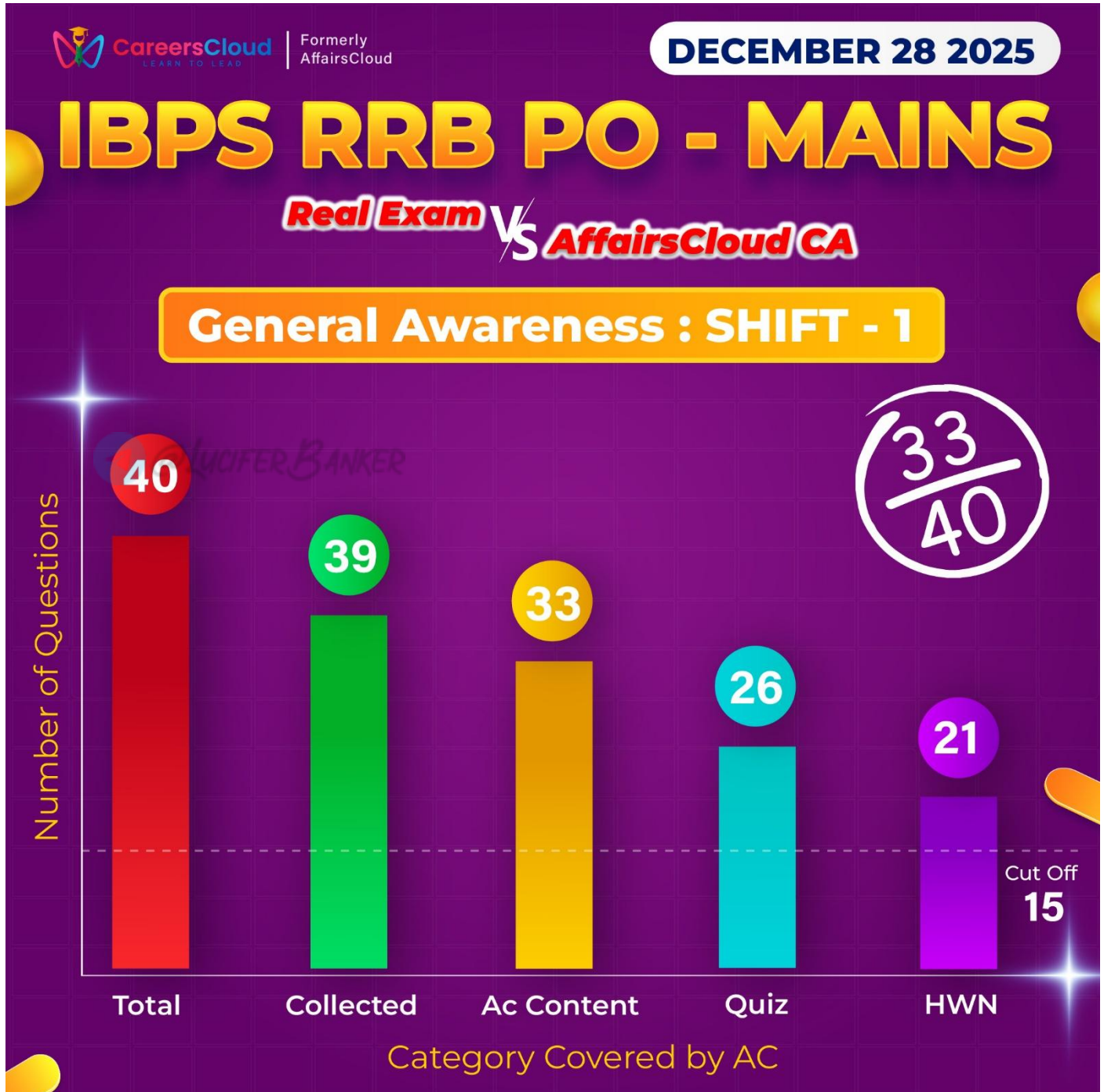
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