



1. J&K Bank wins 'Best MSME Bank' at MSME Banking Excellence Awards 2025

- **Primary Achievement:** J&K Bank was honored as the "Best MSME Bank - Winner" for its exemplary performance and best practices in promoting Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises.
- **Double Recognition:** In addition to the top MSME award, the bank also secured the Runner-Up position in the "CSR Initiative & Business Responsibility" category, highlighting its social impact.
- **High-Profile Ceremony:** The awards were presented by Piyush Goyal, the Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, at a ceremony held in New Delhi on December 24, 2024 (awarded for 2025 cycle).
- **Strategic Focus (Mission YUVA):** The bank is the exclusive implementation partner for the J&K Government's Mission YUVA program, which aims to create 1.37 lakh enterprises and generate 4.25 lakh jobs for youth over the next 5 years.
- **Rigorous Evaluation:** The winners were selected by a jury chaired by former Supreme Court Judge Justice Deepak Verma and evaluated by CareEdge Ratings, ensuring a high standard of merit.



2. India's Largest Stone Labyrinth Discovered in Solapur

- **Unprecedented Scale:** Discovered in the Boramani grasslands of Solapur, Maharashtra, this is now the largest circular stone labyrinth in India, measuring approximately 50 feet by 50 feet.
- **Complex Design:** The structure features 15 concentric stone circuits (rings), surpassing the previous record of 11 circuits. While a larger square labyrinth exists in Tamil Nadu, this is the most complex circular one found to date.
- **Historical Timeline:** Archaeologists date the labyrinth back nearly 2,000 years to the Satavahana dynasty period (1st–3rd century CE), a golden era for trade in the Deccan region.
- **Indo-Roman Connection:** The design closely resembles labyrinth motifs found on ancient Cretan coins used in the Roman Empire. Experts believe it served as a navigational marker or symbolic signpost for Roman merchants traveling inland from the coast.
- **Accidental Discovery:** The site was first spotted not by archaeologists, but by members of a wildlife NGO (Nature Conservation Circle) while they were tracking the endangered Great Indian Bustard and wolves in the grasslands.



3. Haryana Declares Hansi as Its 23rd District

- **Official Recognition:** Hansi was officially declared as the 23rd district of Haryana via a government notification issued on December 22, 2024 (effective as per the 2025 administrative cycle). This follows an announcement made by Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini during a 'Vikas Rally'.
- **Carved from Hisar:** The new district has been carved out of Hisar. Following this bifurcation, Hisar now retains the Hisar and Barwala subdivisions, while Hansi takes control of its own regional administration.
- **Administrative Scope:** Hansi district comprises two major subdivisions—Hansi and Narnaund. It includes three tehsils (Hansi, Narnaund, and Bass) and encompasses approximately 110 villages, serving a population of over 5.4 lakh people.
- **Historical Milestone:** This move restores Hansi's district status after a massive gap of 193 years. Hansi was previously a district headquarters during British rule until 1832, when the status was shifted to Hisar.
- **Goal of Decentralization:** The primary objective of this reorganization is to improve administrative efficiency and bring government services closer to the public. Residents of Hansi and Narnaund will no longer need to travel to Hisar for district-level paperwork and judicial matters.



4. Indian Coast Guard Inducts First Pollution Control Vessel

- **Historic Milestone:** On December 23, 2024, the Indian Coast Guard (ICG) inducted Samudra Pratap, the first Pollution Control Vessel (PCV) to be entirely designed and built in India. This marks a major leap in domestic shipbuilding and maritime environmental protection.
- **Largest in the Fleet:** Measuring 114.5 metres in length with a displacement of 4,170 tonnes, Samudra Pratap is now the largest ship in the Indian Coast Guard's fleet, significantly expanding its operational reach into the high seas.
- **Advanced "Oil Recovery" Tech:** The vessel is equipped with specialized flush-type side sweeping arms to contain oil spills while in motion. It can recover up to 300 tonnes of oil per hour, featuring an onboard laboratory to analyze contaminants and separate oil from water.
- **Precision Maneuvering:** It is the first ICG ship to feature Dynamic Positioning (DP-1) and a retractable stern thruster. These allow the ship to remain perfectly stationary or maneuver with extreme precision in restricted areas during complex spill-recovery operations.
- **Indigenous Prowess:** Built by Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL), the vessel features over 60% indigenous content. Beyond environmental roles, it is armed with a 30mm CRN-91 naval gun and stabilized remote-controlled guns, allowing it to perform maritime law enforcement and search-and-rescue (SAR) missions.



5. Vaibhav Suryavanshi breaks AB de Villiers' record with fastest 150 in men's List A cricket

- **Breaking a Global Legend's Record:** Suryavanshi smashed the record for the fastest 150 in men's List A cricket, reaching the milestone in just 54 balls. He surpassed the previous world record of 64 balls set by the legendary AB de Villiers against the West Indies in 2015.
- **Youngest Centurion in History:** At 14 years and 272 days, he became the youngest player ever to score a century in men's List A cricket. He broke the long-standing record held by Pakistan's Zahoor Elahi, who was over 15 years old when he achieved the feat.
- **Blitzkrieg Century:** His century came off only 36 deliveries during Bihar's match against Arunachal Pradesh. This is the second-fastest List A hundred by an Indian, trailing only Anmolpreet Singh's 35-ball ton. (Interestingly, his captain Sakibul Gani broke the Indian record later in the same match with a 32-ball ton).




- **Mammoth Final Score:** He was eventually dismissed for a staggering 190 runs off 84 balls. His innings was packed with power-hitting, including 16 fours and 15 sixes, maintaining a strike rate of over 226.
- **World Record Team Total:** His opening assault laid the foundation for Bihar to post 574/6, which is now the highest-ever team total in the history of List A cricket worldwide, overtaking the previous record held by Tamil Nadu (506/2).

6. DRDO Signs MoU with RRU to Enhance Collaboration on Defence & Internal Security

- **Strategic Signing:** The MoU was signed on December 22, 2025, at South Block, New Delhi, in the presence of Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh. It was inked by Dr. Chandrika Kaushik (Director General, DRDO) and Prof. Bimal N. Patel (Vice-Chancellor, RRU). 
- **Focus on Internal Security:** A key pillar of this agreement is strengthening the internal security ecosystem. It specifically targets the technology needs of the Central Armed Police Forces (CAPFs) and other agencies under the Ministry of Home Affairs.
- **Life-Cycle Management:** DRDO will not just provide technology but will also collaborate with RRU on the life-cycle management of DRDO-developed systems already inducted into security forces, ensuring they remain effective and well-maintained.
- **Academic & Research Integration:** The partnership will introduce joint PhD and fellowship programs, creating a new pipeline of researchers and security professionals who can apply advanced technology to real-world operational challenges.
- **Future-Ready Tech:** Both institutions will conduct technology gap analysis and forecasting to anticipate future security threats. This aligns with the "Aatmanirbhar Bharat" vision by ensuring indigenous solutions are ready before the challenges arise.

7. Anu Garg appointed as the first woman CS of Odisha

- **First Woman Chief Secretary:** A 1991-batch IAS officer of the Odisha cadre, Anu Garg was appointed as the Chief Secretary of Odisha on December 24, 2025. She is the first woman to ever hold the state's highest bureaucratic office. 

- **Succession and Tenure:** She will officially take charge on January 1, 2026, succeeding Manoj Ahuja (1990 batch), who retires on December 31, 2025. Her tenure is expected to last until her retirement in March 2029.
- **Consistent Trailblazer:** This is the second major glass ceiling she has broken; in February 2023, she became the first woman Development Commissioner of Odisha—the second-highest-ranking position in the state's bureaucracy.
- **Extensive Experience:** With over 30 years in service, she has held key state roles in Water Resources, Women & Child Development, and Health. Notably, she also served at the Centre as Joint Secretary in the Prime Minister's Office (PMO) between 2012 and 2015.
- **Strong Academic Background:** She is an alumna of Lady Shri Ram College (DU) and holds a Master of Public Health from Johns Hopkins University, USA. Her expertise was instrumental in founding Mission Shakti, Odisha's flagship women's empowerment program.

8. Saleem Ahmad Takes Charge as CMD of RVNL

- **Official Assumption of Charge:** Saleem Ahmad officially assumed the role of Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL) on December 23, 2025. He succeeds Sukhmal Chand Jain, whose tenure concluded on the same day.
- **Previous Leadership at NBCC:** Before this appointment, Ahmad served as the Director (Projects) at NBCC (India) Limited, where he was instrumental in overseeing large-scale urban redevelopment and institutional construction projects.
- **Distinguished Career & Expertise:** A 1990-batch Civil Engineering graduate from Jamia Millia Islamia, he brings over 35 years of experience. His career includes a significant tenure at the Delhi Metro Rail Corporation (DMRC) as Executive Director (Civil), where he pioneered last-mile connectivity solutions.
- **Strategic Vision (All-Infra):** His appointment comes as RVNL transitions from a rail-focused PSU to a global infrastructure developer under the vision "From Rail Infra to All Infra." The company is currently executing metro projects in 10 cities and expanding into port and maritime infrastructure.
- **Long-Term Tenure:** Approved by the Appointment Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), Ahmad will lead the Navratna PSU until his superannuation on April 30, 2029, or until further orders.



9. Good Governance Day 2025 observed on December 25

- 101st Birth Anniversary of Atal Bihari Vajpayee:** Observed annually on December 25, the day commemorates the birth anniversary of the former Prime Minister and Bharat Ratna awardee. This year marked his 101st birth anniversary, celebrating his legacy of "Minimum Government, Maximum Governance."
- Inauguration of Rashtra Prerna Sthal:** Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Rashtra Prerna Sthal in Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh. This national memorial serves as an inspirational complex featuring massive bronze statues of Atal Bihari Vajpayee, Dr. Syama Prasad Mookerjee, and Pandit Deendayal Upadhyaya.
- Theme: "Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore":** The 2025 celebration focused on the theme "Prashasan Gaon Ki Ore" (Governance Towards Villages). As part of Good Governance Week (Dec 19–25), special camps were held across 700+ districts to provide doorstep grievance redressal and service delivery to rural citizens.
- Good Governance Index (GGI):** The day highlighted India's progress through the Good Governance Index, which benchmarks states across 10 sectors (like Agriculture, Public Health, and Judiciary). Recent data showed significant improvements in digital service delivery and the ease of doing business across the country.



10. Uniform legal definition established for Aravalli hills

- The "100-Metre" Rule:** The Supreme Court (on November 20, 2025) officially defined an "Aravalli Hill" as any landform in the designated Aravalli districts that has an elevation of 100 metres or more from the local relief (the surrounding ground level).
- Defining the "Range":** An "Aravalli Range" is now legally defined as a cluster of two or more such hills (100m+) located within 500 metres of each other. Crucially, the entire intervening area—including slopes, valleys, and smaller hillocks—is protected as part of that range regardless of their individual heights.
- Freeze on New Mining:** To ensure the new definition is implemented correctly, the Court has imposed an interim freeze on all fresh mining leases and renewals across Delhi, Haryana, Rajasthan, and Gujarat. No new mining will be allowed until a "Management Plan for Sustainable Mining" (MPSM) is finalized.
- Controversy & "Save Aravalli":** The decision has sparked massive protests and a #SaveAravalli campaign. Critics and ecologists argue that the 100-metre



threshold is "scientific reductionism," as it might exclude up to 90% of the range (low-lying ridges and hillocks) from legal protection, potentially opening them to real estate and mining.

- **Ecological Significance:** The Aravallis act as a "Green Wall" preventing the eastward expansion of the Thar Desert. They are also the primary groundwater recharge zone for the water-stressed Delhi-NCR region and a vital wildlife corridor for leopards and other endangered species.



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