



➤ US Declare Bald Eagle As National Bird After 250 Years

On Christmas Eve 2024, President Joe Biden signed a historic law officially designating the bald eagle as the national bird of the United States. Although the bald eagle has been an enduring emblem of the country, appearing on the Great Seal of the US since 1782, it was never formally recognized as the national bird until this legislation. Spearheaded by lawmakers from Minnesota, this decision honors the bald eagle's symbolic representation of strength, courage, and freedom while acknowledging its remarkable recovery from near extinction.



➤ China Approves \$137-Billion Mega Dam on Brahmaputra Near Indian Border

China has approved the construction of the world's largest dam on the Yarlung Zangbo (Brahmaputra) in Tibet, close to the Indian border. Estimated at \$137 billion, this project raises strategic and environmental concerns for India and Bangladesh.



The massive hydropower dam, located at a tectonic boundary prone to earthquakes, has been touted as safe by Chinese authorities, who emphasize ecological protection and advanced engineering techniques.

➤ SLINEX 2024 India Sri-Lanka Naval Drill in Visakhapatnam

The bilateral naval exercise SLINEX 24 (Sri Lanka-India Exercise 2024) was held on December, 2024, in Visakhapatnam under the Eastern Naval Command. This annual exercise is a significant platform to strengthen maritime cooperation, enhance interoperability, and ensure a safe, rule-based maritime domain in the Indian Ocean. SLINEX 24 was conducted in two phases—Harbour Phase and Sea Phase—and featured participation from both navies' Special Forces and key naval vessels.





➤ India's Defence Exports Reach Rs. 21,083 Crore In 2023-24

In the fiscal year 2023-24, India achieved a significant milestone in its defence sector. The country's defence exports reached a record-high value of Rs 21,083 crore (around USD 2.63 billion), marking a 32.5% growth over the previous year.

This growth is part of a broader trend in India's defence sector, reflecting both enhanced domestic production and export capabilities. In parallel, India's indigenous defence production also set a record, with a value of Rs 1,26,887 crore, representing a 16.7% increase compared to the previous fiscal year.



➤ UP CM Inaugurates Atal Yuva Maha Kumbh

Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath and Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated the 'Atal Yuva Maha Kumbh' in Lucknow to honor the birth centenary of former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee. The event, aimed at celebrating Vajpayee's legacy, included the recognition of meritorious students, cultural tributes, and discussions on Vajpayee's contributions.



➤ Indian Banks' Profitability Soars with Low NPAs and Strong Credit Growth

Indian public sector banks (PSBs) have reported strong profitability, with a 25% increase in net profit in H1 2024-25, totaling Rs 85,520 crore, compared to Rs 68,500 crore in H1 2023-24. This upward trajectory is expected to continue, driving PSB profits beyond the Rs 1.5 trillion mark for FY25. Key factors contributing to this growth include low NPAs, robust credit growth, and a solid capital adequacy ratio.



➤ Amitava Chatterjee Appointed as MD & CEO of J&K Bank

Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) Bank's share price soared by 7.4% on December, 2024, following the announcement of Amitava Chatterjee's appointment as the new Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO).



This significant development comes after the bank's board appointed Chatterjee for a three-year term starting December 30, 2024.

