

December 26, 2025 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1. North Korea has made progress in building a nuclear-powered submarine, the country's state media reported.
 - i. In a statement released by the KCNA news agency, it was reported that, 'President Kim Jong-un inspected the construction of the 8,700-ton nuclear-powered submarine.
 - ii. The large cylindrical hull of the submarine is nearing completion and has been coated with anti-corrosion paint.'
 - iii. This is the first time North Korea has released images of the submarine since March.
 - iv. The United States and South Korea have expressed concern that this submarine will significantly strengthen North Korea's naval capabilities to carry nuclear weapons.
2. The Saudi Arabia ordered separatists to withdraw from Yemen's Hadhramaut and Mahra provinces. This has created a situation that could further widen the rift in the coalition against the Iran-backed Houthi rebels. The Saudi Arabian Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued a statement regarding this:
 - i. It ordered the Southern Transitional Council (STC) forces to return to their previous positions in Hadhramaut and Mahra provinces and hand over the camps there to Government forces.
 - ii. The STC is a separatist armed group operating with the support of the United Arab Emirates.
 - iii. In 2014, the Iran-backed Houthi rebels seized significant parts of Yemen, including the capital Sana'a. Following this, Saudi Arabia launched a war against the Houthis in 2015. The STC forces also participated in this war. As a result, the southern part of Yemen remains under the control of the Iran-backed Government forces.
 - iv. However, recently, STC forces have advanced in southern Yemen and established control over Hadhramaut and Mahra provinces. The STC has hoisted the South Yemeni flag there. This has further complicated the Yemeni civil war.
 - v. South Yemen was a separate country from 1967 to 1990. Yemen was unified in 1990. However, the STC separatist group, with the support of the UAE, is demanding a separate state. Their recent capture of two provinces has created tension in Saudi Arabia-UAE relations. It is feared that the order recently issued by Saudi Arabia demanding the withdrawal of the STC separatists from these areas will further escalate this tension.
3. The total number of petrol pumps in India has crossed one lakh this year. Compared to 2015, this number has doubled.
 - i. This makes India the country with the third-highest number of petrol pumps, after the United States and China.

- ii. According to data from the Petroleum Planning and Analysis Cell of the Union Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas, there were 100,266 petrol pump in India at the end of November this year. It further stated that 90 percent of the petrol pumps are managed by the Public Sector Companies Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL). IOC owns 41,664 pumps, BPCL owns 24,605 pumps, and HPCL owns 24,418 pumps.
 - iii. Russia's Rosneft-owned Nayara Energy is in first place in the private sector with 6,921 petrol pumps. Reliance and BP are in second place with 2,114 pumps, and Shell is in third place with 346 pumps. In 2015, there were a total of 50,451 petrol pumps in the country. In the same year, the number of private petrol pumps was 2,967 (5.9 percent), which has now increased to 9.3 percent.
 - iv. Overall, 29 percent of petrol pumps are located in rural areas. It was stated that these petrol pumps now also have facilities for filling compressed natural gas and charging stations for electric vehicles. A report published in 2024 mentioned that there are 190,000 petrol pumps in the United States and 115,000 petrol pumps in China.
 - v. After private companies were allowed to set up petrol pumps, the number of private petrol pumps in India was 27 in 2004. Industry experts stated that due to the Central Government's indirect control over determining the retail prices of petrol and diesel, the private sector's participation in this sector remains low.
4. On the occasion of the birth anniversary of the late freedom fighter, educationist, and social reformer Madan Mohan Malaviya, Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan and Prime Minister Narendra Modi paid their respects to him.
- i. Malaviya, the founder of the renowned Banaras Hindu University, was born in Allahabad on December 25, 1861. He was a multifaceted personality – a politician, lawyer, and scholar.
 - ii. He passed away in 1946, and he was posthumously awarded the Bharat Ratna in 2015, the country's highest civilian honour.
5. On the occasion of Rani Velu Nachiyar's death anniversary, Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan paid tribute to her. Rani Velu Nachiyar was a fearless warrior and visionary queen who led her people with courage and resilience. Her heroic legacy and unwavering determination continue to inspire us across generations.
6. Indian Army personnel have been granted permission to use the social media platform 'Instagram' as viewers only.
- i. This permission has been granted with conditions to enhance the awareness of soldiers in the information technology age, while simultaneously preventing the leakage of national security-related secrets.
7. On the occasion of the 101st birth anniversary of the late former Prime Minister Vajpayee, President Droupadi Murmu, Vice President C.P. Radhakrishnan, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, and Union Ministers, among others, paid their respects by laying flowers at his memorial (Sadaiv Atal) in Delhi.



- i. Vajpayee, the country's 13th Prime Minister, held the office three times during the period 1996–2004. Born on December 25, 1924, in Gwalior (Madhya Pradesh), he rose to the highest office in the country from a humble background. He holds the distinction of having served as a Member of Parliament in the Lok Sabha nine times and in the Rajya Sabha twice.
8. The Commonwealth Games will be held in Ahmedabad, Gujarat in 2030.

