

December 20, 2025 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1. In the wake of the terrorist attack carried out in the Bondi Beach area of Sydney, Australia, the Government is set to launch a new program to buy back firearms from the public. Regarding this, Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said:
 - i. Following the Bondi Beach attack, we are launching a major gun buyback program. This will be a larger-scale gun collection program than the one conducted 30 years ago after the Port Arthur massacre. Under this program, hundreds of thousands of firearms will be recovered and destroyed.
 - ii. During the Hanukkah celebrations of the Jewish community at Bondi Beach, 15 people were killed in a indiscriminate shooting attack targeting them, carried out by Sajid Akram (50) and his son Naveed Akram, who were of Indian origin.
2. The European Union leaders have decided to provide Ukraine with €90 billion (approximately ₹9.5 lakh crore) in interest-free loan assistance without using Russia's frozen assets. This was stated in a post published on the X platform by European Council President Antonio Costa:
 - i. An agreement has been reached to provide Ukraine with €90 billion in loan assistance for its expenses during the 2026–2027 fiscal year. This loan amount will not be provided from the Russian assets frozen in the European Union member states, as previously discussed. Instead, it will be borrowed from the international capital market using the European Union budget as collateral, as stated in the final draft of the summit.
 - ii. Most of Russia's assets worth €21,000 billion (approximately ₹22.20 lakh crore) held by the European Union countries are in the Euroclear system in Belgium. Some member states, including Belgium, opposed providing this as a loan to Ukraine.
 - iii. Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán, known to be close to Russian President Vladimir Putin, rejected this plan. Malta, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic, among other member states, also raised concerns about the plan.
 - iv. In a situation where the plan required the support of at least 15 of the European Union's 27 member states, representing 65 percent of the population, a decision was reached to provide a large loan to Ukraine without using the frozen Russian assets.
 - Danish Prime Minister – Mette Frederiksen,
 - President of the European Council – António Costa
 - President of the European Commission – Ursula von der Leyen
3. China filed a petition with the World Trade Organization (WTO) requesting consultations with India regarding tariffs on information and communication technology (ICT) devices and subsidies in the solar sector.
 - i. In its petition, China stated that India's tariffs and subsidies are contrary to various WTO rules and are causing harm to China. China also requested that the WTO urge India to adhere to the commitments it has made to the organization in this regard.
 - ii. It is noteworthy that in October, China had filed a petition with the World Trade Organization (WTO) stating that India's subsidy measures in the electric vehicle and battery manufacturing sectors were unfair and causing harm to China.

4. The Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman is scheduled to present the Union Budget on February 1st (Sunday).
 - i. The Union Budget has been presented on February 1st since 2017. February 1st of 2026 falls on a Sunday. Therefore, according to Parliamentary traditions, it is expected that Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman will present the Union Budget on February 1st (Sunday). It is noteworthy that Parliament usually does not convene on Saturdays and Sundays. However, there is a possibility that it will be held on that day for the budget presentation.
 - ii. Until 2017, the Union Budget was presented on the last day of February. After the budget presentation, the Central Government usually introduces and passes a bill regarding the Demands for Grants.
 - iii. The practice of presenting the budget on February 1st was initiated in 2017 by the then Union Finance Minister, the late Arun Jaitley. The Union Budget presented in this manner receives Parliamentary approval by the end of March.
 - iv. Apart from this, in some other special circumstances, the Parliament session was held on a Sunday. For example, in 2020, to discuss the spread of the coronavirus pandemic, and in 2012, to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the first session of Parliament, the Parliament session was held on Sundays.
5. ISRO plans to launch an American communication satellite into space on December 24th using India's LVM3 rocket.
 - i. NewSpace India Limited, which operates under the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), undertakes commercial activities to launch foreign satellites into space. This company has successfully launched more than 430 foreign satellites to date.
 - ii. ISRO, which contributes to the space research activities of most countries worldwide, is engaged in the effort to launch the BlueBird-6 Communication Satellite of the American company AST SpaceMobile using the LVM3 (GSLV Mark-3) rocket. A memorandum of understanding was signed between the two parties for this purpose.
 - iii. Accordingly, the BlueBird-6 Satellite is scheduled to be launched from the second launch pad at Sriharikota at 8:55 AM on December 24th using the LVM3 rocket. Preparations for this are currently underway.
 - iv. The BlueBird-6 communication satellite weighs 6,500 kg. This is the heaviest satellite that ISRO has launched to date. This satellite will help provide mobile connectivity and high-speed 5G internet services to remote areas.
6. The Parliament's winter session has concluded. Eight bills were passed during this session, including the Viksit Bharat- Guarantee for Rozgar and Ajeevika Mission (Gramin) Bill, 2025, also referred to as Viksit Bharat- G RAM G Bill, 2025.
 - i. The eight bills passed were: the VB-G RAM G Bill, the bill allowing private participation in the atomic energy sector for public use, the amendment bill allowing 100 percent Foreign Direct Investment in the Insurance sector, the Manipur Goods and Services Tax Second Amendment Bill, the Central Excise Amendment Bill, the Health Security and National Security Bill, the Appropriation Bill, and the bill repealing 74 obsolete laws.
 - ii. 137 private member bills were introduced in the Lok Sabha and 59 private member bills were

7. The World Health Organization's Second Global Conference on Traditional Medicine began at the Bharat Mandapam in Delhi and lasted for three days.
8. Gen-Y (born between 1981 and 1996) and Gen-Z (born between 1997 and 2012), also known as 'millennials', are expected to lead the largest number of outbound tourists from India by 2025.
 - i. Neo, a fintech company specializing in international travel bookings, has released this information after analyzing data.
 - ii. Accordingly, among those who traveled abroad from India, especially for tourism, the Gen Y and Gen Z generations are at the forefront. Nine out of ten people who traveled abroad belong to these two categories. Of these, 63.8 percent traveled alone, 19.93 percent as couples, 12.26 percent with family members, and 4.01 percent with groups of friends. They also opted more for low-cost international travel.
 - iii. Two-thirds of these trips were undertaken by residents of Delhi, Bengaluru, and Mumbai. This also reveals that high-earners in metropolitan cities prioritize international tourism. They have mostly traveled to Asian and Central Asian countries.
 - iv. 23.08 percent traveled to Thailand, 21.57 percent to the United Arab Emirates, 9.65 percent to Georgia, 8.89 percent to Malaysia, 8.8 percent to the Philippines, 7.38 percent to Vietnam, 5.6 percent to Uzbekistan, 5.38 percent to the United Kingdom, and 3.78 percent to Singapore.
 - v. Of the money they spent abroad, 47.28 percent went towards purchasing goods, 20.69 percent for food, 19.93 percent for transportation, and 9.09 percent for accommodation. These statistics are based on an analysis of the travel details of one million people who undertook foreign travel in 2025.