

January 15, 2026 – Dinamani Newspaper – Tit bits

1. Voting for the Presidential and Parliamentary elections is taking place on Thursday (January 15) in the East African nation of Uganda. This election has attracted significant international attention because President Yoweri Museveni, who has been in power for nearly 40 years since 1986, is running for his seventh term. Challenging the 81-year-old Yoweri Museveni is 43-year-old 'pop musician' Bobi Wine, who enjoys considerable popularity among young people. A total of 8 candidates are contesting for the Presidency.

(i) Internet Shutdown:

The Government has shut down internet services nationwide 48 hours before the start of the elections. The Government has explained that this measure was taken to prevent the spread of misinformation and for national security reasons.

(ii) In Uganda, which has a population of approximately 45 million, 21.6 million people are eligible to vote in this election. The anticipation surrounding the election results is whether President Museveni will retain power based on his long experience and authority, or whether Bobi Wine will put an end to the 40-year rule with the support of the youth.

2. India's exports to China have increased by 9.7 percent; meanwhile, India's trade deficit with China reached Rs.10 lakh crore (US\$116 billion) last year.

(i) Bilateral trade has increased to an unprecedented level of Rs.14 lakh crore (US\$155.62 billion). This information has been revealed through the annual trade statistics report between the two countries released by the Chinese Customs Department. It further stated that:

(ii) Indian exports, which had been showing improvement for several years, increased to US\$19.75 billion (Rs.1.78 lakh crore) during the period from January to December last year. This is a 9.7 percent increase compared to the previous year, representing a growth of US\$5.5 billion.

(iii) China's exports to India increased by 12.8 percent, reaching US\$135.87 billion (Rs. 12.27 lakh crore).

(iv) Bilateral trade has increased to an unprecedented level of Rs.14 lakh crore (US\$155.62 billion).

(v) At the same time, the trade deficit between the two countries continues to be a persistent problem. Last year, India's trade deficit with that country reached an all-time high of Rs.10 lakh crore. This is the second time since 2023 that the trade deficit between the two countries has crossed the Rs.9 lakh crore (US\$100 billion) mark.

(vi) Despite ongoing trade tensions with the United States, China's overall global trade continues to grow. China's exports were recorded at \$3.77 trillion and imports at \$2.58 trillion. The trade surplus was recorded at \$1.2 trillion, which is reported to be 20 percent higher than last year.

(vii) It is noteworthy that bilateral trade between India and China is increasing, even as the US has imposed additional tariffs on India and China, accusing them of buying crude oil from Russia.

3. A thousand years have passed since the first attack on Somnath in the year 1026.

4. The Under-19 Men's Cricket World Cup begins on Thursday (January 15) in Bulawayo, Zimbabwe.

India has won the tournament a record five times. Australia is the defending champion.

5. The Prime Minister Narendra Modi is scheduled to inaugurate the Conference of Speakers and Deputy Speakers of Commonwealth countries, which will be held on Thursday (January 15) at the Parliament complex in Delhi.

(i) This 42nd Commonwealth Conference, chaired by Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla, will be attended by 61 Speakers and Deputy Speakers from 42 member countries.

(ii) The Conference will discuss various aspects, including the crucial role of presiding officers in the fair governance of robust democratic institutions, the application of Artificial Intelligence technology in Parliamentary proceedings, the impact of social media on Members of Parliament, innovative strategies to enhance public understanding of Parliament, and citizen participation beyond voting.

6. Rakesh Agrawal has been appointed as the head of the National Investigation Agency (NIA).

(i) The Appointments Committee of the Union Cabinet has approved his appointment as the NIA chief. A notification from the Ministry of Personnel stated that he will remain in the post until his retirement date, August 31, 2028.

7. "The sacrifice made by Indian soldiers during 'Operation Pawan' in Sri Lanka about 40 years ago must be respected," said Defence Minister Rajnath Singh.

(i) It is noteworthy that Prime Minister Modi also paid tribute to the Indian soldiers at the IPKF memorial during his visit to Sri Lanka last April.

(ii) Following the violence in the Tamil-majority areas of Sri Lanka, India and Sri Lanka signed a peace accord on July 29, 1987. Subsequently, the Indian Peacekeeping Force (IPKF) was sent to Sri Lanka.

(iii) The Indian Peacekeeping Force was stationed in Sri Lanka from July 1987 to March 1990. During this period, India lost 1,200 soldiers in clashes with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE).

8. Bihu Festival – Assam

9. The President Droupadi Murmu accepted the credentials of Sergio Gor, who formally assumed office in Delhi as the new US Ambassador to India.

(i) A press release issued by the President's Secretariat stated that the President accepted the credentials submitted by Sergio Gor at a ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan in Delhi.

10. At the review meeting, the Chief Minister M.K. Stalin reviewed the progress of 27 flagship projects currently underway at a cost of ₹3,291 crore.

(i) The Tamil Nadu Government also stated that the Chief Minister M.K. Stalin instructed that steps be taken to ensure that Tamil Nadu athletes win medals in the 2030 Olympic Games, and that the foundation stone for the biodiversity conservation park in Kadambur, the international bird center in Marakkanam, the mangrove conservation center in Pichavaram in Cuddalore district, the international dugong conservation center in Thanjavur, and the sea turtle conservation center in Chennai be laid next month and the works commenced.