

The week from 25 December 2023 to 31 December 2023

AstroSat, India's first multi-wavelength space observatory, detected sub-second X-ray bursts from a new magnetar, revealing ultrahigh magnetic fields. This sheds light on the extreme astrophysical conditions of magnetars.

INS Imphal, the indigenously built stealth-guided missile destroyer, joined the Indian Navy on December 26. Armed with surface-to-surface BrahMos missiles, it is the third Visakhapatnam-class destroyer, honouring Manipur's role in India's Freedom Struggle.

In a sign of Artificial Intelligence (AI) impact on jobs, the payments company Paytm terminated the employment of over 1,000 employees or about 10% of its workforce. The company mentioned cost-cutting and AI's superior performance as the reasons.

India and Russia signed agreements for future power-generating units at the Kudankulam nuclear power plant in Tamil Nadu. The plant, currently generating 2000 MW of electricity, has four 1000 MW units under construction, making it India's largest nuclear power plant.

In a positive development, eight former Indian naval personnel on death row in Qatar for alleged spying had their sentences commuted by the Court of Appeals in Doha. PM Modi's meeting with the Qatari emir at the UN Climate Summit in Dubai earlier raised hopes for leniency in the case.

PM Modi flagged off the first-ever Amrit Bharat trains from the redeveloped Ayodhya railway station. The trains offer an affordable new class of super-fast, non-air-conditioned rail travel. He also inaugurated Ayodhya's newly built Maharishi Valmiki International Airport.

The pro-talks faction of one of the country's oldest insurgent groups, the United Liberation Front of Asom (ULFA) signed a memorandum of settlement with the Union Home Ministry and the Assam Government, officially surrendering their arms and ammunition to join the mainstream democratic process of the country.

Unusual news to round up this week, on what not to do when driving: An impatient tourist who drove his jeep through the Chandra River in Himachal Pradesh to beat traffic on the Lahaul-Manali road was fined by the police once the video of his act went viral on the internet.



Compiled by
Seema Chari and
Kunal Savarkar



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