

# Far and Wide

Every week we share selection of six news from six continents that we believe will impact our world in the near or distant future

January 2025 | Issue #79

## China's DeepSeek AI Disrupts Global Market

Welcome to the latest edition of Far and Wide, where we embark on a journey to explore intriguing stories and global developments.

Chinese AI startup DeepSeek has shaken the tech industry with its latest model, DeepSeek R1, which rivals OpenAI's technology at a fraction of the cost. The AI-powered chatbot soared to the top of app store downloads, raising concerns about China's growing AI capabilities. Its emergence rattled investors, causing significant losses for US tech giants, including Nvidia, whose market value dropped sharply. Former US President Donald Trump described it as a "wake-up call" for American firms, signaling a potential shift in AI dominance. DeepSeek's efficiency stems from its cost-effective approach—training on stored Nvidia A100 chips and integrating less sophisticated alternatives—while maintaining high performance.

Founded by Liang Wenfeng in 2023, DeepSeek has gained international attention, with Liang emphasizing that China must move beyond being a follower in AI development. Unlike Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, Liang has a finance background, leading a hedge fund that pioneered quantitative trading in China. DeepSeek's success aligns with China's push for technological self-sufficiency, drawing praise from Chinese state media. However, concerns over data security have led countries like Australia and Italy to restrict its usage due to potential privacy risks. Its chatbot, like other Chinese AI models, adheres to government censorship, avoiding politically sensitive topics such as Tiananmen Square.

The impact of DeepSeek extends beyond AI development to financial markets. Its ability to achieve high performance with lower costs challenges the prevailing belief that advanced AI requires extensive computational resources. This led to uncertainty around high-end chip demand, triggering a market sell-off that saw Nvidia's stock plummet. With DeepSeek's rapid ascent, questions arise about whether US firms can maintain their dominance in AI. Meanwhile, China's government sees this success as a step toward technological independence, though some experts warn that it could fuel further tech isolationism between China and the West.

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## Europe

### PM Modi to Co-Chair AI Summit, Strengthen India-France Ties

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will co-chair the Artificial Intelligence (AI) Action Summit with French President Emmanuel Macron in Paris on February 11, alongside key global leaders, including US Vice President JD Vance and China's Vice Prime Minister Ding Xuexiang. The summit, part of the Paris Peace Forum, will focus on promoting an ethical, sustainable, and inclusive AI development framework.

During his visit, PM Modi will engage with top French CEOs to explore business collaborations and strengthen economic ties. On February 12, he will hold a bilateral meeting with President Macron in Marseille, marking a key moment in India-France relations. Discussions will cover aerospace, engines, submarines, and advanced civil nuclear energy cooperation, with potential announcements expected.

India will also open a new Consulate in Marseille, enhancing diplomatic presence and fostering trade, cultural, and people-to-people ties between the two nations. The move is expected to solidify India-France strategic cooperation further.

Earlier, France's President Macron invited PM Modi to the summit, which India accepted. Speaking at a briefing, MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal highlighted India's AI initiatives and commitment to global AI discourse. The AI Summit in Paris will bring together global leaders, international organizations, business executives, academics, and civil society representatives to discuss the future of AI governance.

Source : ANI News

<https://aninews.in/news/world/asia/pm-modi-to-co-chair-ai-summit-to-open-new-consulate-in-marseille-during-france-visit-sources20250207115331/>

## North America



### US-India Strategic Partnership Gains Momentum



US President Donald Trump and Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi reaffirmed their commitment to strengthening the US-India strategic partnership and the Indo-Pacific Quad alliance during a telephonic conversation. The White House described the discussion as "productive," with the leaders emphasizing the importance of deepening cooperation in areas like regional security and economic collaboration. Trump urged India to increase its procurement of American-made security equipment and work towards a balanced bilateral trade relationship.

The conversation also included discussions about Prime Minister Modi's planned visit to the White House and India hosting the Quad Leaders' Summit for the first time later this year. Both leaders highlighted the importance of the Indo-Pacific Quad partnership, which includes the United States, India, Japan, and Australia, in fostering an open, stable, and resilient Indo-Pacific region.

Earlier, the Quad alliance reaffirmed its focus on regional maritime, economic, technological, and supply chain security. Notably, US Secretary of State Marco Rubio hosted a high-level Quad meeting last week with foreign ministers from Australia, India, and Japan, further reinforcing the group's commitment to addressing shared regional challenges.

Source: ANI

<https://aninews.in/news/world/us/pm-modi-trump-emphasize-commitment-to-advance-us-india-strategic-partnership-indo-pacific-quad-partnership20250128034716/>

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## South America

### India Pursues Lithium, Gas, Oil Investments in Argentina for Energy Transition



Source: The Economic Times

<https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/economy/foreign-trade/india-seeking-energy-lithium-investments-in-argentina/articleshow/117695387.cms?from=mdr>

India is looking to expand its investments in Argentina's mining, gas, and oil sectors, with a particular focus on lithium to support its energy transition goals. Indian state firms like Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (ABIL) and Coal India, along with private company Greenko, are exploring lithium in Argentina's northwest Catamarca province, bordering Chile. India hopes to announce further developments within six months, with interest also extending to Salta province.

This effort is part of India's broader strategy to secure critical minerals for clean energy, targeting key resources in countries like Australia, Chile, and Argentina. India's Ambassador to Argentina, Dinesh Bhatia, emphasized plans to transition 30% of vehicles to electric by 2030. India's mining secretary, V.L. Kantha Rao, noted the importance of a stable investment framework and praised Argentina's Large Investment Incentive Regime (RIGI), which offers tax benefits for investments over \$200 million.

Argentina, a major lithium exporter and part of the "lithium triangle" with Chile and Bolivia, is actively working on deregulation to attract foreign investment amidst economic challenges. In addition to lithium, India is exploring opportunities in Argentina's copper, gold, gas, and oil sectors, with further plans for LNG exports through a partnership with Argentina's state oil company YPF.

## Asia



### Advancing Green Steel and Global Collaboration: India-Japan Steel Dialogue 2025



The 3rd India-Japan Steel Dialogue, held on February 4, 2025, at Vigyan Bhavan, New Delhi, brought together delegations led by Mr. Vinod Kumar Tripathi, Joint Secretary, Ministry of Steel, India, and Mr. Hideyuki Urata, Deputy Director General, METI, Japan. Jointly organized by India's Ministry of Steel and Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI), the dialogue focused on advancing bilateral collaboration in the steel sector. Discussions covered economic developments, steel industry trends, bilateral trade, and the international steel market. India emphasized its initiatives to foster ease of doing business, boost infrastructure-led steel demand, and encourage green steel through the release of the Green Steel Report and Taxonomy of Green Steel.

Source: PIB

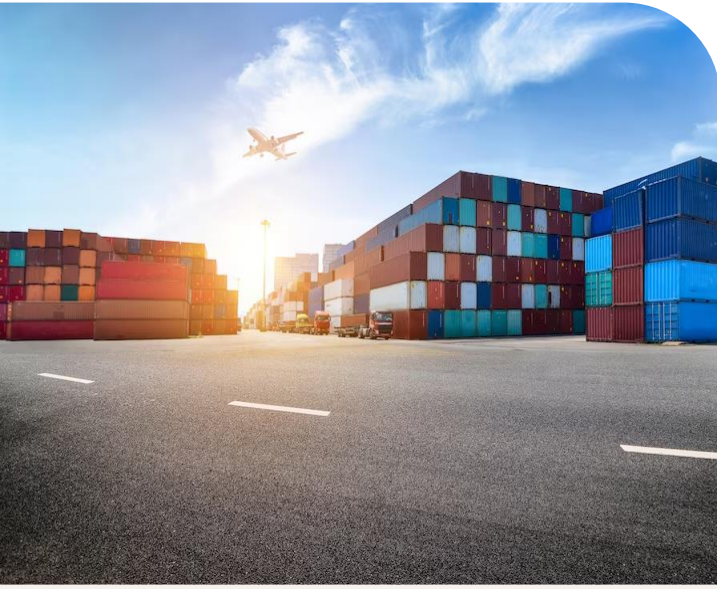
<https://pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2100091>

The dialogue addressed key global issues, including the European Union's Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (EU CBAM), and explored capacity-building and technology-sharing opportunities. The Japanese delegation highlighted advancements in their steel industry and ongoing initiatives for skill development and technology transfer. Both sides reiterated their commitment to strengthening strategic ties and creating pathways for enhanced cooperation.

The India-Japan Steel Dialogue, established under a 2020 Memorandum of Cooperation, aims to promote sustainable growth, innovation, and resilience in the steel industry while supporting mutual investments and fostering workplace safety.

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## Australia

### Australia Commits \$200 Million to Strengthen Trade Ties with India

Australia is deepening its trade and investment relationship with India by committing \$200 million for government business support across multiple sectors, as highlighted by Philip Green, the Australian High Commissioner to India. He also underscored Australia's strong interest in advancing the second phase of the free trade agreement with India, stating that a new document would soon be released in Australia to help traders and investors better understand emerging opportunities in India.

India's trade with Australia has been expanding rapidly, outpacing its global export growth. Over the past five years, India's exports worldwide have grown by 35%, whereas exports to Australia have surged by 66%. Key sectors such as textiles, agriculture, and automotive have witnessed substantial increases, with textile exports rising by 20%, agricultural exports by 35%, and automotive exports doubling in the past two years. Green credited this growth to the strengthening economic ties between the two nations.

Source : CNBC TV18

<https://www.cnbctv18.com/business/india-australia-trade-business-fta-philip-green-19548629.htm>

Regarding the Comprehensive Economic Cooperation Agreement (CECA), Green revealed that nine rounds of negotiations have already taken place, with intensified discussions ongoing. While he refrained from specifying a timeline, he expressed optimism about the progress, citing a strong foundation of trust between both countries. He affirmed that both sides remain deeply engaged, aiming for a high-quality agreement that benefits both economies.

## Africa

### Chabahar's Success Fuels India's Global Port Acquisition Push in Africa, West Asia

India is actively expanding its global footprint in port operations, eyeing opportunities in Africa and West Asia for port acquisitions, development, and operations. It also plans to strengthen its presence in the region and scale up Chabahar Port operations, targeting full capacity of 100,000 TEUs by FY26. The port handled 65,000 TEUs by January-end FY24, surpassing the previous year's total of 64,245 TEUs.

Chabahar Port, operated by India Ports Global Ltd (IPGL), remains in "investment mode," with plans to bring in Indian shipping lines and intensify marketing efforts to ensure long-term profitability despite geopolitical challenges. The Economic Survey 2024-25 highlighted Chabahar's role in connecting Mumbai to Eurasia via the INSTC, reducing transport costs and increasing vessel traffic by 43% in FY24.

Additionally, a consortium involving PSUs and Ministries is being considered for greenfield port development projects, focusing on execution expertise. Talks are underway for approvals, with India aiming to enhance maritime influence and trade connectivity across strategic global locations.



Source: The Hindu businessline

<https://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/chabahars-viability-whets-indias-global-port-acquisition-appetite-africa-west-asia-being-explored/article69179561.ece>