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Top 12 Students Selected in RRB PO With Highest Marks in GA Section



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Class -01

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Financial Awareness

NOVEMBER MONTH

For SBI PO Mains 2025



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Top 10 students those obtained highest marks in GA .Those became PO in 2022



Name-PRIYA
Roll No-3161003146
Bank-PO IN CBI
Roll no-2811001773
Bank - CLERK IN PNB



Name - Barangi Vijaya
Roll no - 1291000362
State - Andhra Pradesh
Bank - Central Bank of India
Post - PO
Roll no- 1235007730
Post - Bps rrb clerk
Bank - southart krishna bank



Name-- Shakshi
Roll No -- 2611000443
Bank po in cbi



NAME - PRIYADARSHINI KALYAMOORTHY
ROLL NO - 219036964
LECTED IN - HSB PO NAPTIA GIRI GRAMEEN BAN
STATE - TAMILNADU



Name - Nipin
lected in - HSB PO CLERK, SBI CLERK, (DBI EXEC)
Roll No 1615007763



Name- Prabhu Dayal Sa
Roll no - 4351001578
Bank- SBI PO
Banka, Bihar



Name- Rashmi Ranjan Behera
Roll no- 2521007295
State- Odisha
Bank- Union Bank of India
Post- PO



Name :Sonu
Roll no.- 2671013546
lected in - UCO po, pnb clerk & sb



Name - E.Sethuvasan
lected - SBI JA & BPS PO (Central Bank Of Ind
Roll No - 2531009770



NAME - PRAVEEN
ROLL NO - 161100779
lected IN - SBI PO KADAPATRA GRAMMUNA BAN
STATE - KARNATAKA

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Remembering a Resistance Heroine: Agent Zo	Clare Mulley
Women in Transition: Private Revolutions	Yuan Yang
Generosity Beyond Life: The Story of A Heart	Rachel Clarke
A Life in Harmony and Disruption: A Thousand Threads	Neneh Cherry
Bond Beyond Species: Raising Hare	Chloe Dalton
Ocean's Silent History: What the Wild Sea Can Be	Helen Scales

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MARCH 2025

AI valley: Microsoft, Google, and the trillion dollar race to cash in on Artificial intelligence	Gary Rivlin
Living with Birds	Asad Rahmani
Rice : A global History	Renee Marton
The Sona Story The Textile to Tech Journey of Chettiar Industrialist C. Valliappa	Chitra Narayanan
Space : The India story paperback	Dinesh C Sharma
Nalanda: How it changed the World	Abhay K
Bofors Gate: A Journalist's Pursuit of Truth	Chitra Subramanian
Money , Myths and Mantras: The ultimate investment guide	Devin Mehra
Raisina Chronicles : Indias Global Public Square	S Jaishankar and Samir Saran
'Diyaslai' is the autobiography	Kailash Satyarthi

BOOKS & AUTHORS 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2025

The Indian Constitution: Conversations with Power	Gautam Bhatia
History and Stars of the world's greatest sporting event	From Athens 1896 to Paris 202 : Vijayan Bala
Source Code: My beginnings	Bill Gates
Tested : The remarkable power of resolve	Pat Cummins
Akashvani: A Century of Stories from All India Radio	Vikrant Pande and Neelesh Kulkarni
I AM A SOLDIER'S WIFE : The Life and Love of Toni Liddar	Geetika Liddar

The World After Gaza	Pankaj Mishra
Enlightened Leadership	Tshering Tobgay
I AM A SOLDIER'S WIFE : The Life and Love of Toni Lidder	Geetika Lidder
HOPE an Autobiography	Pope Francis
Rice : A global History	Renee Marton

BOOKS & AUTHORS 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

Wild Fictions :Essays	Amitabh Ghosh
The Nehru Development Model History and its lasting impact	Arvind Panagariya
The Tamils: A Portrait of a community	Nirmala Lakshman
India Before the Ambani	Lakshmi Subramanian
The Divine Kumbh	Deepak Kumar Sen
Parliament: Powers, Functions & Privileges; a Comparative Constitutional Perspective	K.S. Chauhan
Friends – India's Closest Strategic Partners	Sreeram Chaulia
Witness	Sakshi Malik with Jonathan Selvaraj

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DECEMBER 2024

BRING IT ON: The Incredible Story of My Life	Deepa Malik
Dalai Lama's Secret to Happiness	Dinesh Shahra
The Satanic Verses	Salman Rushdie
Middle Class India- Driving Change in the 21st Century	Manisha Pande
Vishwa Shastra India and the World	Dhruva Jaishankar
Stumped: An Autobiography by Syed Kiramani	Debashish Sengupta & Dakshesh Pathak
Billionaire , Nerd, Saviour, King	Anupreeta Das
The Art of Power	Nancy Pelosi
My Beloved Life	Amitava Kumar
Living with birds: The memoir of one of India's Greatest Ornithologists	Asad Rahmani
Freedom: Memoirs 1954-2021	Angela Merkel
The Delhi Model	Jasmine Shah
On Beauty: The Cinema of Sanjay Leela Bhansali	Prathyush Parasuraman

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NOVEMBER 2024

Chhaunk on Food , Economics and Society	Abhijit Banerjee
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Ratan Tata: A life	Thomas Mathew
Fearless	Mohinder Amarnath
Orbital	Samantha Harvey

Maa-Mother	Davendra Kumar Dhodawat
Friends: India's closest Strategic Partners	Sreeram Chaulia
SHAH RUKH KHAN: Legend, Icon, Star	Mohar Basu
Will India Get Rich Before It Turns 100 ?	Prosenjit Datta
Shah Rukh Khan: Legend , Star, Icon	Mohar Basu
Why Bharat Matters	S. Jaishankar
Dharmanomics An Indigenous and Sustainable Economic Model	Sriram Balasubramanian
Nehru's India (The Most Definitive Book on Jawaharlal Nehru): Past, Present & Future	Aditya Mukherjee
The Corporation in the 21st Century	John Kay
Viewfinder : A Memoir	Amol Palekar
Karma's Child: The Story of Indian Cinema's Ultimate Showman	Subhash Ghai and Suveen Sinha

BANKING, ECONOMY AND FINANCIAL AWARENESS

APRIL 2025

NaBFID signs MoU with New Development Bank to accelerate financing infra projects.

NaBFID and NDB have signed an MoU to foster a sustainable infrastructure financing market, focusing on clean energy and transportation projects.

This collaboration aims to bridge the infrastructure financing gap through technical expertise exchange and joint participation in projects.

Reserve Bank of India has launched the 69th round of its Order Books, Inventories and Capacity Utilisation Survey (OBICUS).

The survey is for the reference period January - March 2025.

The Reserve Bank has been conducting the Order Books, Inventories and Capacity Utilisation Survey (OBICUS) of the manufacturing sector on a quarterly basis since 2008.

The information collected in the survey includes quantitative data on new orders received during the reference quarter, backlog of orders at the beginning of the quarter, pending orders at the end of the quarter, total inventories with a breakup between finished goods (FG), work-in-progress (WiP) and raw material (RM) inventories at the end of the quarter, item-wise production in terms of quantity and value during the quarter vis-à-vis the installed capacity from the targeted group and the reasons for changes in production / installed capacity during the quarter.

The level of capacity utilisation (CU) is estimated from these responses.

The survey provides valuable input for monetary policy formulation.

The RBI has proposed making its Regulatory Sandbox 'Theme Neutral' and 'On Tap', allowing continuous access for eligible fintech innovations.

This move aims to foster ongoing innovation beyond the limited-time thematic cohorts launched since 2019.

RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra unveiled six measures for banks and fintechs, including enabling securitization of stressed assets and extending co-lending guidelines.

The RBI will also harmonize regulations for gold loans and non-fund-based facilities.

Transaction limits for UPI may be revised by NPCI, while P2P transactions remain capped.

Key measures announced by the RBI

1. Securitisation of stressed assets framework:

RBI proposed a new framework to allow securitisation of stressed assets through a market-driven mechanism, in addition to the existing Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC) route under the SARFAESI Act. The objective is to improve risk distribution and offer lenders an exit route.

The proposal builds on a discussion paper issued in January 2023 and incorporates stakeholder suggestions.

2. Expanded co-lending guidelines:

Existing co-lending rules apply only to collaborations between banks and NBFCs for priority sector lending. RBI plans to broaden this to cover all regulated entities (REs) and all loan categories.

The draft framework aims to address evolving credit partnerships across the sector.

3. Uniform regulations for gold-backed loans:

RBI will introduce standardised guidelines for loans backed by gold jewellery and ornaments across all REs. The move is aimed at harmonising conduct and prudential norms and responding to observed risks in the segment.

4. Revised guidelines for non-fund based facilities:

New norms will consolidate rules for non-fund based facilities like guarantees, letters of credit, and co-acceptances.

The review includes updates on partial credit enhancement to boost infrastructure financing.

Key measures for fintechs

5. UPI Transaction limits to be made flexible:

Currently, UPI transactions are capped at ₹1 lakh for most use cases.

RBI has proposed that the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) will now have the authority to revise transaction limits in consultation with stakeholders.

Banks will retain the discretion to set their internal limits within the NPCI cap.

The ₹1 lakh limit on peer-to-peer (P2P) transfers will remain unchanged.

6. On Tap' and 'Theme Neutral' regulatory sandbox:

RBI plans to shift the Regulatory Sandbox to an open-ended, theme-neutral format.

Earlier, sandboxes were cohort-based with specific themes and timelines.

Under the new system, eligible fintech innovations will be allowed to apply and test their products at any time. Further details will be shared separately.

Nvidia overtaken Intel to become No.1 in semiconductor Revenue.

NVIDIA overtakes Samsung in semiconductor revenue for the first time.

NVIDIA is now the world's largest semiconductor company by revenue.

It brought in \$76.6 billion in revenue last year, a whopping 120% growth over its 2023 revenue.

Samsung Electronics remained in second place with 2024 revenue of \$65.6 billion, a respectable 60.8% improvement over its 2023 numbers.

Meanwhile, Intel has declined from number one on the list to number three with \$49.8 billion in revenue, a meagre 0.8% improvement over 2023.

Top 5 Semiconductor Vendors by Revenue, Worldwide, 2023-2024 (Millions of U.S. Dollars).

2024 Rank	2023 Rank	Vendor	2024 Revenue
1	3	NVIDIA	76,692
2	2	Samsung Electronics	65,697
3	1	Intel	49,804
4	6	SK hynix	44,186
5	4	Qualcomm	32,976

NTPC revises thermal capacity addition target to 30,000 MW by 2032.

NTPC Group has increased its thermal capacity addition target to 30,000 MW by 2031-32, up from the earlier plan of 26,000 MW by 2030-31.

The company aims to add 3,580 MW of thermal capacity in FY26 and is also focusing on expanding its renewable energy portfolio, targeting 60 GW by 2032, alongside boosting coal production from its captive mines.

Google launches new Ironwood chip to speed AI applications.

Alphabet's unveiled its seventh-generation artificial intelligence chip named Ironwood, which the company said is designed to speed the performance of AI applications.

The Ironwood processor is geared toward the type of data crunching needed when users query software such as OpenAI's ChatGPT.

SEBI has announced the formation of a six- member high level committee headed by Pratyush Sinha , a retired IAS officer and former chief vigilance commissioner to review conflict of interest rules.

IRDAI has penalized Flipkart Rs 1.06 crore for violating e-commerce norms related to online insurance distribution.

RBI's proposal to revise UPI transaction limits for paying money to merchants (P2M) and expand its co-lending framework.

The central bank has allowed the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to revise transaction limits for person-to-merchant (P2M) payments on the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), paving the way for select higher-value transactions.

Currently, UPI transactions — both person-to-person (P2P) and P2M — are largely capped at ₹1 lakh. In some merchant categories such as education and healthcare, the cap is at ₹5 lakh.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has revised downwards India's GDP growth forecast for the financial year 2025-26 (FY26) to 6.7 per cent from the earlier 7 per cent in its April 2025.

Coventry University is set to become the first English university to be granted a licence to open a campus in India's new GIFT City.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 36.40 lakh on Aryavart Bank, Lucknow, for failing to transfer eligible unclaimed amounts to the Depositor Education and Awareness Fund (DEA Fund) within the prescribed time.

This action was taken under Section 26A of the Banking Regulation Act (BR Act).

The Union Cabinet gave the green signal to major infrastructure and agriculture-oriented projects worth more than ₹4,800 crore.

Key Highlights of the Cabinet Approval

Doubling of the 104-km Tirupati–Pakala–Katpadi railway line approved at a cost of ₹1,332 crore.

Sanction for a 19.2 km six-lane Zirakpur Bypass through Punjab and Haryana at ₹1,878.31 crore.

Launch of the Modernisation of Command Area Development and Water Management (M-CADWM) scheme under PMKSY with an outlay of ₹1,600 crore for the 2025-26 period.

The infrastructure projects are aimed at decongesting traffic, improving connectivity, and increasing farm-level water efficiency.

RBI Cuts Repo Rate by 25 bps to 6%, Lowers GDP Forecast to 6.5% Amid Global Trade Tensions.

The Reserve Bank of India's Monetary Policy Committee cut the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6% and lowered the FY2026 growth forecast from 6.7% to 6.5%, citing global uncertainties from ongoing trade wars.

RBI Governor warned that new tariffs could hamper domestic growth and exports, though inflation risks remain limited due to falling commodity and crude oil prices.

Key Highlights of the MPC Meeting

RBI Cuts Repo Rate Amid Global Uncertainties

MPC reduced the repo rate by 25 basis points to 6%, marking the second consecutive rate cut.

The repo rate is the interest rate at which commercial banks take or borrow money from the Reserve Bank of India.

This move aims to support economic growth amid increasing global trade tensions and uncertainties arising from reciprocal tariffs announced by the US.

Monetary Policy Stance Turned Accommodative

The MPC also shifted its stance from 'neutral' to 'accommodative', signalling the possibility of further rate cuts in the future.

A neutral stance gives the central bank flexibility to adjust rates based on inflation and growth conditions.

An accommodative stance focuses on promoting economic growth by lowering interest rates.

Growth Forecast Lowered

The RBI revised India's GDP growth forecast for FY2026 down to 6.5% from 6.7%, citing the negative impact of trade wars and policy uncertainties on global and domestic economic activity.

Inflation Risks Under Control

While global uncertainties pose risks to inflation through possible currency pressures and imported inflation, the fall in commodity and crude oil prices is expected to keep domestic inflation within control.

The CPI inflation forecast for FY2026 was revised down to 4% from 4.2%.

The MPC held its 54th meeting from April 7 to 9 under the chairmanship of RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra. The MPC members Nagesh Kumar, Saugata Bhattacharya, Ram Singh, Rajiv Ranjan, and M. Rajeshwar Rao attended the meeting.

The MPC unanimously voted to reduce the policy repo rate by 25 basis points to 6.00 per cent with immediate effect.

Consequently, the SDF rate under the LAF shall stand adjusted to 5.75 per cent and the MSF rate and the Bank Rate to 6.25 per cent.

The minutes of the MPC's meeting will be published on April 23, 2025.

The next meeting of the MPC is scheduled from June 4 to 6, 2025

Additional Measures Announced by the RBI

Introduction of forward contracts in Government securities

Access of SEBI-registered non-bank brokers to NDS-OM

Comprehensive review of trading and settlement timings across various market segments

Introduction of 'bank.in' exclusive Internet Domain for Indian banks and 'fin.in' domains for other non-bank entities

Enabling Additional Factor of authentication in cross-border Card Not Present transactions

RBI DECISIONS ON WEDNESDAY

Securitisation of stressed assets

After factoring in the suggestions received from the stakeholders on the discussion paper, the RBI will soon come out with the draft framework for securitisation of stressed assets. The framework intends to enable securitisation of stressed assets through a market-based mechanism, in addition to the existing ARC route under SARFAESI Act, 2002, the RBI said.

including trade transactions. The revised guidelines include a review of instructions on issuance of partial credit enhancement by entities with a view to broadening funding sources for infrastructure financing.

Co-lending arrangements

The RBI has decided to expand the scope for co-lending and issue a generic regulatory framework for all forms of co-lending arrangements among regulated entities. The extant guidelines on co-lending are applicable only to arrangements between banks and NBFCs for priority sector loans.

Enhancing transaction limits in UPI

To enable the ecosystem to respond efficiently to new use cases, the RBI has proposed that NPCI in consultation with banks and other stakeholders of the UPI ecosystem, may announce and revise such limits based on evolving user needs. At present, the transaction amount for UPI, covering both person to person (P2P) and person to merchant payments (P2M), is capped at Rs 1 lakh except for specific use cases of P2M payments which have higher limits, some at Rs 2 lakh and others at Rs 5 lakh. P2P transactions on UPI will continue to be capped at Rs 1 lakh.

Non-fund based facilities

The RBI has proposed to harmonize and consolidate guidelines covering non-fund based (NFB) facilities like guarantees, letters of credit and co-acceptances play a significant role in facilitating effective credit intermediation, besides enabling seamless business transactions,

'On Tap' Regulatory Sandbox

The RBI has proposed to make the Regulatory Sandbox 'Theme Neutral' and 'On Tap'. This initiative is expected to foster continuous innovation and keep pace with the rapidly evolving FinTech/ regulatory landscape. The Reserve Bank has been operating the Regulatory Sandbox (RS) framework since 2019, and four specific thematic cohorts have been announced and completed till date.

Reason Behind RBI's Decision to Cut Repo Rate

Global Trade Tensions Drive Caution

The US administration's 26% reciprocal tariff on Indian goods and rising global trade tensions have increased economic uncertainty, prompting a cautious and proactive monetary response from the RBI

Policy Rates

Policy Repo Rate	6.00%

Standing Deposit Facility Rate	: 5.75%

Marginal Standing Facility Rate	: 6.25%

Bank Rate	: 6.25%

Fixed Reverse Repo Rate	: 3.35%

Reserve Ratio

CRR	4.00%

SLR	18.00%

Union Ministry of Finance has notified the amalgamation of 26 Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) in the country under phase 4 of the amalgamation of RRBs.

After the amalgamation takes effect on 1 May 2025, there will be 28 RRBs in 26 states and 2 Union Territories covering 700 districts of the country.

In the fourth phase, 26 RRBs in 10 states and 1 Union Territory are to be amalgamated.

Amalgamation of RRBs

Amalgamation means the combination of two or more companies to create a new company.

The process of amalgamation of the RRBs was started by the government of India in 2005-06 based on the recommendation of the Dr V S Vyas committee (2004) on "Flow of Credit to Agriculture and Related Activities from the Banking System".

The committee was set up by the RBI to examine the relevance of RRBs in the rural credit system and the alternatives for making it viable.

Phases of RRB amalgamation

First phase focus- RRBs promoted by sponsor banks within a state were amalgamated.

From 2005-06 to 2009-2010

RRB reduced from 196 to 82

Second Phase focus- RRBs were amalgamated across the Sponsor banks within a State.

From 2012-2013 to 2014-2015

RRB reduced from 82 to 56

Third Phase focus- principle of 'One state - One RRB', in smaller states and reduction in number of RRBs

in larger states aiming at reduction in total number of RRBs.

From 2018-19 to 2020-2021

RRB reduced from 56 to 43.

Fourth Phase focus - Continuation of the Third Phase.

RRB to be reduced from 43 to 28.

RRBs will be amalgamated in 10 States - Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, West Bengal, Odisha, and one Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

RRBs to be amalgamated during the 4th Phase

Following is the list of RRBs to be amalgamated, their new name, and sponsoring banks.

1. Andhra Pradesh

Chaitanya Godavari Grameena Bank, Andhra Pragathi Grameena Bank, Saptagiri Grameena Bank and Andhra Pradesh Grameena Vikas Bank sponsored by the Union Bank of India, Canara Bank, Indian Bank and State Bank of India to be amalgamated into Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank.

Head Office of Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank- Amravati

Sponsor Bank of Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank- Union Bank of India

2. Bihar

Dakshin Bihar Gramin Bank and Uttar Bihar Gramin Bank, sponsored by the Punjab National Bank and Central Bank to be amalgamated into Bihar Gramin Bank.

Head Office of Bihar Gramin Bank - Patna

Sponsor Bank of Bihar Gramin Bank- Punjab National Bank

3. Gujarat

Baroda Gujarat Gramin Bank and Saurashtra Gramin Bank, sponsored by the Bank of Baroda and the State Bank of India, are to be amalgamated into Gujarat Gramin Bank

Head Office of Gujarat Gramin Bank- Vadodara

Sponsor Bank of Gujarat Gramin Bank - Bank of Baroda

4. Karnataka

Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank and Karnataka Gramin Bank, sponsored by the Canara Bank, are to be amalgamated into Karnataka Grameena Bank

Head office of Karnataka Grameena Bank- Ballari

Sponsor of Karnataka Grameena Bank- Canara Bank

5. Madhya Pradesh

Madhya Pradesh Gramin Bank and Madhyanchal Gramin Bank, sponsored by the Bank of India and the State Bank to be amalgamated into Madhya Pradesh Gramin Bank.

Head office of Madhya Pradesh Gramin Bank- Indore

Sponsor of Madhya Pradesh Gramin Bank - Bank of India

6. Maharashtra

Maharashtra Gramin Bank and Vidharbha Konkan Gramin Bank sponsored by Bank of Maharashtra and Bank of India to be amalgamated into Maharashtra Gramin Bank.

Head office of Maharashtra Gramin Bank - Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar

Sponsor of Maharashtra Gramin Bank - Bank of Maharashtra

7. Odisha

Odisha Gramya Bank and Utkal Grameen Bank sponsored by the Indian Overseas Bank and State Bank of India to be amalgamated into Odisha Grameen Bank.

Head office of Odisha Grameen Bank- Bhubaneswar

Sponsor of Odisha Grameen Bank- Indian Overseas Bank

8. Rajasthan

Rajasthan Marudhara Gramin Bank and Baroda Rajasthan Kshetriya Gramin Bank, sponsored by the State Bank of India and Bank of Baroda, are to be amalgamated into Rajasthan Gramin Bank.

Head office of Rajasthan Gramin Bank - Jaipur
Sponsor of Rajasthan Gramin Bank - State Bank of India

9. Uttar Pradesh

Baroda U.P. Bank, Aryavart Bank and Prathama U.P. Gramin Bank sponsored by the Bank of Baroda, Bank of India and Punjab National Bank to be amalgamated into Uttar Pradesh Gramin Bank.

Head office of Uttar Pradesh Gramin Bank- Lucknow
Sponsor of Uttar Pradesh Gramin Bank- Bank of Baroda

10. West Bengal

Bangiya Gramin Vikash, Paschim Banga Gramin Bank, and Uttarbanga Kshetriya Gramin Bank, sponsored by the Punjab National Bank, UCO Bank, and Central Bank of India, are to be amalgamated into West Bengal Gramin Bank.

Head office of West Bengal Gramin Bank- Kolkata
Sponsor of West Bengal Gramin Bank- Punjab National Bank

11. Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir

J & K Grameen Bank and Ellaquai Dehati Bank sponsored by the The Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd. and State Bank of India are to be amalgamated into Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank

Head office of Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank - Jammu
Sponsor of Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank - The Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd. It is a private sector bank.

About Regional Rural Banks (RRB)

Regional Rural Banks (RRB) were set up on the recommendation of the Narasimham Committee on Rural Credit 1975.

Five RRBs were set up in India on 2 October 1975. The first, Prathama Bank, was set up in Moradabad (U.P.), sponsored by Syndicate Bank.

The power to set up the RRB is vested with the government of India under the Regional Rural Banks Act 1976.

RRB is owned by the central government, the state government, and a sponsoring bank.

The Reserve Bank of India is the regulator of RRBs.

Jammu and Kashmir is the only private bank to sponsor an RRB.

Purpose: To bridge rural credit gaps and strengthen institutional lending in rural India.

Regulated by: Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

Supervised by: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

Ownership Structure:

Government of India – 50%

State Government – 15%

Sponsor Bank – 35%.

Key Requirements

Must maintain a Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) of 9%, as per RBI norms.

Must allocate 75% of ANBC (Adjusted Net Bank Credit) or CEOBE (Credit Equivalent of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure) whichever is higher to Priority Sector Lending (PSL).

Under the RRB act 1976 the authorized capital of the RRB was Rs 5 crores.

Changes made by RRB amendment act 2015

The authorised capital of the RRB has been raised from Rs 5 crore to Rs 2000 crores .

The minimum issued capital of the RRB has been raised from Rs 25 lakhs to Rs 1 crore.

It provides that the combined shareholding of the Central government and the sponsoring banks shall not be less than 51% in any case.

There is no RRB in the state of Sikkim and Goa.

11 Public sector banks and one private sector bank Jammu and Kashmir bank are the sponsors of the RRBs.

Punjab and Sindh Bank is the only public sector bank which has not sponsored any RRB.

The government of India's Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana completed 10 years on 8th April 2025. The Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) scheme and the Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd (MUDRA) were launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 8th April 2015.

The aim of the scheme and MUDRA was to provide easy loan access to the small and micro business enterprises in the country, with special focus on the weaker section of the society.

MUDRA Loan

Under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, loans are provided to non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises. These loans are called MUDRA loans.

The loans are provided by the Reserve Bank of India-regulated Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Small Finance Banks, Micro Financial Institutions (MFIs), and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs).

Categories of MUDRA loan

There are four categories of loans designed to help business enterprises during their various growth stages.

Sishu Stage

Maximum loan up to Rs 50,000.

The loan is designed for startups and new business ventures, for first-time entrepreneurs.

Kishore Stage

Loans of more than Rs 50,000 and up to Rs 5 lakhs.

It is designed to support enterprises that want to expand their business.

Tarun Stage

Loans of more than Rs 5 lakhs and up to Rs 10 lakhs.

It is designed to meet the higher funding needs of an established business enterprise.

Tarun Plus

It was introduced recently.

Loans of more than Rs 10 lakhs and up to Rs 20 lakhs.

The loan is provided to those entrepreneurs who have successfully repaid previous loans under the 'Tarun' category.

The category is designed to cater to the financial needs of micro-enterprises.

Overdraft under PMJDY comes under Mudra Loan

Overdrafts up to Rs 10,000 provided under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) are also considered a MUDRA loan.

Achievements of MUDRA

Over 52 crore loans worth more than 32 lakh crore rupees have been sanctioned to date.

Around half of the Mudra beneficiaries belong to SC, ST, and OBC Communities, and over 70% of the beneficiaries are women.

About MUDRA

The Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd (MUDRA) was set up as a company in 2015 under the Companies Act 2013.

It is a subsidiary of the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).

It is registered as an NBFC with the Reserve Bank of India.

Headquarters: Mumbai

Function of MUDRA

It is responsible for monitoring the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana.

It is responsible for developing and refinancing all Micro-enterprises sectors.

It provides refinancing facilities to the micro-enterprise sector in the country.

The Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) has seen significant disbursement of loans across India, with Tamil Nadu leading in total disbursement amount. While Tamil Nadu has the highest total disbursement, Bihar leads in the number of women PMMY entrepreneurs (4.2 crore). Maharashtra has the largest share of women account holders (79%).

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology announced a 6 year long ₹22,919 crore scheme to boost the manufacturing of electronics components.

The scheme aims to enhance domestic capability in producing "passive" components by offering a mix of capex- and turnover-linked incentives.

Incentives Structure

Incentives range from 1–10% for incremental investments and turnover, based on the year and type of component.

Sub-assemblies like camera and display modules will receive 4–5% turnover-linked incentives, which will gradually decrease after the second year.

Firms producing electro-mechanicals, multi-layer printed circuit boards, lithium-ion cells, and device enclosures will get 6–8% incentives initially, reducing to 3–5% by the scheme's end.

Capital goods manufacturers and bare component producers benefit from a 25% capex incentive, requiring a minimum additional investment of ₹10 crore.

Objectives and Goals

The scheme aims to increase the domestic value added in electronics manufacturing, which is currently at 18%, compared to China's 38%.

The government targets doubling this percentage by 2030.

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the nation's largest oil firm, will invest over ₹61,000 crore in setting up a mega petrochemical complex at Paradip in Odisha.

Piramal Finance and ICICI Bank Join Hands for Co-Lending Partnership.

French brand Alcatel partners with Flipkart to launch smartphones

Jio Finance Ltd has unveiled a new digital Loan Against Securities product that allows customers to secure loans of up to ₹1 crore with interest rates starting at 9.99%.

NTPC has commissioned a 90 MW unit of Dayapar Wind Energy Project Phase-I in Gujarat, taking the group's total installed and commercial capacity to over 80,000 MW.

Adani Solar has emerged as the top supplier for PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSG: MBY), providing 54 percent of the solar modules needed for solar rooftop installations across the country.

Top 5 states under this scheme:-

Gujarat

Maharashtra

Uttar Pradesh

Kerala

Rajasthan.

Chandigarh and Daman & Diu have achieved 100% of their government building solar targets, leading the nation in clean energy adoption.

Narayana health has launched a preventive screening programme named "Aarogyam" to enable professionals to get quick health checkups.

Japan's MUFG Bank is close to hammering out an agreement to buy a stake in India's Yes Bank, in a deal that would value the private lender in the region of \$6.5-7 billion.

Currently, State Bank of India (SBI), holds the largest share in Yes Bank, owning approximately 24%(23.98%) of the bank's shares.

As on December 2024, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank, Axis Bank held 1-3 per cent stake, while LIC held a 4 per cent stake in YES Bank.

India's agriculture market is set to touch ₹38 lakh crore by financial year 2030, up from ₹31 lakh crore in FY25.

Indian ground agriculture constitutes around 60 per cent of this market, followed by livestock at 30 per cent and fisheries at 10 per cent.

Uttar Pradesh has the largest share contributing around 10 per cent to the Indian agri market, while Karnataka is the key emerging state growing at around 4 per cent per annum.

Meta releases new AI model Llama 4.

Meta released the latest version of its large language model (LLM) Llama, called the Llama 4 Scout and Llama 4 Maverick.

Paytm Launches MahaKumbh Soundbox with Digital Screen for Instant Payment Alerts and Live Transaction Count.

Reserve Bank of India recently launched an official WhatsApp channel to disseminate financial information with greater ease.

Carrier Midea India onboards Rashmika Mandanna as Midea HVAC brand ambassador.

Karnataka Vikas Gramin Bank (KVGB), a regional rural bank (RRB), has officially launched its e-Bank Guarantee (e-BG) service in collaboration with the government's information utility provider, National E-Governance Services Ltd (NESL).

The interest rate on the Government of India Floating Rate Bond 2028 (GOI FRB 2028) for the half year from April 4, 2025, to October 3, 2025, is 7.11% per annum. This was announced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The coupon rate is based on the average Weighted Average Yield (WAY) of the last three auctions of 182-day T-bills plus a fixed spread.

India's Floating Rate Savings Bonds (FRSBs), also known as RBI Floating Rate Savings Bonds, are debt instruments issued by the Government of India.

These bonds offer a variable interest rate that adjusts based on a benchmark, in this case, the National Savings Certificate (NSC) rate, plus a fixed spread.

Minimum Investment: The minimum investment is ₹1,000, with subsequent payments in multiples of ₹1,000.

No Upper Limit: There is no maximum limit on the investment amount.

Seven-Year Tenure: The bonds have a fixed tenure of seven years.

Semi-Annual Interest Payments: Interest is paid every six months, with the rate reset twice a year (July and January).

RBI issued a letter of displeasure to Bajaj Finance for failing to identify risks in its co-branded credit card business.

KYC Services

India Post and Nippon India Mutual Fund Partners to Deliver Doorstep KYC Services

SEBI issued a framework for recognition and operationalisation of a performance validation agency, to be called Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA)

Eligibility Criteria for PaRRVA:-

(i) Number of years of existence of the CRA (Credit Rating Agencies) should be minimum 15 years

(ii) Minimum net worth of the CRA should be INR 100 crores

(iii) Number of issuers which have obtained ratings of listed or proposed to be listed debt securities from the CRA should be 250 or more; and

(iv) CRA should have Investor grievance redressal mechanism including Online Dispute Resolution ("ODR") Mechanism

The eligibility criteria for a SE to act as PaRRVA Data Centre ("PDC") :-

(i) Number of years of existence of the SE should be minimum 15 years

(ii) Minimum net worth of the SE should be INR 200 crores

(iii) The SE should have nation-wide terminals

(iv) SE should have Investor grievance redressal mechanism including Online Dispute Resolution ("ODR") Mechanism

RBI proposes regulations on export, import transactions.

RBI released revised draft regulations under FEMA to streamline export and import transactions, aiming to enhance ease of doing business.

Exporters with over two years of unrealised export proceeds exceeding Rs 25 crore must receive full advance or an irrevocable letter of credit for further exports.

The central bank has issued 'Regulation of Foreign Trade under Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA), 1999 – Draft Regulations and Directions' in this regard.

The India Fintech Foundation (IFF) was officially launched as the proposed self-regulatory organisation (SRO) for the country's fintech sector.

The launch took place at The Startup Mahakumbh in New Delhi. Shri Amitabh Kant, India's G20 Sherpa, unveiled the IFF logo.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has proposed the establishment of a Self-Regulatory Organisation (SRO) for fintech entities.

The applicant must have a minimum net-worth of INR 10 crore.

The Reserve Bank of India said it will issue ₹10 and ₹500 denomination banknotes in Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series bearing the signature of the new RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra.

Last month, the RBI announced to issue banknotes of Rs 100 and Rs 200 denominations, bearing the signature of Governor Malhotra.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will soon release Rs 50 denomination banknotes in the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series with the signature of newly appointed Governor Sanjay Malhotra.

INDIAN CURRENCY NOTES



10

Size: 63mm X 123mm
Motif: Sun Temple, Konark
Colour: Chocolate Brown

20

Size - 63 mm X 129 mm
Motif - Ellora Caves
Colour - Greenish Yellow

50

Size: 66 mm x 135 mm
Motif: Hampi with Chariot
Colour: Fluorescent blue

100

Size: 66 mm x 142 mm
Motif: Rani ki Vav
Colour: Lavender

200

Size: 66 mm x 146 mm
Motif: Sanchi Stupa
Colour: Bright Yellow

500

Size: 66mm x 150mm
Motif: Red Fort Building
Colour: Stone Grey

2000

Size: 66mm x 166mm
Motif: Mangalyaan
Colour: Pink/Magenta

Aye Finance, a non-banking financial company (NBFC) backed by Google parent Alphabet, has received final observations from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for its ₹1,450 crore IPO.

This means the company can proceed with its initial public offering.

The IPO includes a fresh issue of ₹885 crore and an offer for sale (OFS) of ₹565 crore.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to maintain the existing investment limits for Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) in both government and corporate bonds for the financial year 2025-26.

Unchanged Percentage Limits: The percentage limits for FPI investments as a proportion of the outstanding stock of securities will remain the same as in the previous financial year:

Government Securities (G-Secs): 6%

State Government Securities (SGSs): 2%

Corporate Bonds: 15%.

Citi and State Bank of India (SBI) have announced a \$295 million social loan facility to support small and marginal farmers in India.

The loan, facilitated by Citi's Trade & Working Capital Solutions, will be channeled through SBI's Kisan Credit Card loan portfolio.

This initiative aims to improve financial access and agricultural productivity for small farmers.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to adopt the Secured Overnight Rupee Rate (SORR) as the new overnight benchmark for monetary policy, replacing the current Weighted Average Call Rate (WACR).

This proposal aims to improve the accuracy of the benchmark by capturing the true cost of overnight funding in the secured money market.

The Reserve Bank had set up the Committee on the MIBOR Benchmark headed by Ramanathan Subramanian to review the rupee interest rate benchmarks in the country, especially the usage of Mumbai Interbank Outright Rate (MIBOR), and to examine the need for transition to new benchmarks.

Piramal Finance Ltd has successfully raised \$265 million through an External Commercial Borrowing (ECB) facility.

This funding, equivalent to approximately ₹2,300 crore, is part of their first foray into international debt markets, with the intention to further expand their lending portfolio.

The loan is led by major financial institutions, including Standard Chartered Bank, The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC), Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation, and First Abu Dhabi Bank.

Meta unveils AI-powered ad tools and omnichannel features to accelerate India's e-commerce growth.

UltraTech Cement, an Aditya Birla Group company, has acquired Wonder WallCare at an enterprise value of ₹235 crore.

Dr. Poonam Gupta of NCAER appointed Deputy Governor of the RBI.

The government of India has appointed Dr Poonam Gupta, director of the New Delhi-based think tank National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), as the new Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Dr Poonam Gupta will replace Dr Michael Patra, who relinquished his office on 14 January 2025.

Term of Dr Poonam Gupta

Dr Poonam Gupta has been appointed for a term of three years.

Legal provision regarding the Deputy Governor of the RBI.

According to section 8 of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act 1934, there shall be a maximum of four Deputy Governors of the RBI.

By convention, the government appoints two officers of the RBI as Deputy Governors, one from the Commercial Banks and one an economist.

The Deputy Governors are appointed by the Central government.

The maximum term of a Deputy Governor shall not be more than 5 years.

The maximum age of the Deputy Governor shall not be more than 60 years as on the specified date.

About Dr Poonam Gupta

Dr Poonam Gupta did her Master's in Economics from the Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University and her Ph.D in Economics from the University of Maryland, USA.

She became the first woman to head the prestigious NCAER.

She has also worked at the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank..

She has also taught at the Delhi School of Economics and the University of Maryland.

Deputy Governors of the RBI

At present, Swaminathan J, M. Rajeshwar Rao, and T. Rabi Sankar are the Deputy Governors of the RBI.

First Deputy Governor - Captain Sir Sikander Hyat Khan and Sir James B. Taylor, appointed on 1st April 1935.

First woman Deputy Governor- K.J. Udeshi (2003-2005).

UPI transactions touch a record high of Rs 24.77 lakh crore in March 2025.

In March 2025, UPI transactions reached a record high, with a transaction volume of 18.30151 billion and a transaction value of ₹24,77,221.61 crore.

This marks a significant increase compared to February 2025, which saw a transaction value of ₹21.96 lakh crore.

The figure was 12.7 per cent higher than the figure achieved in February at Rs 21.96 lakh crore.

UPI transactions increased value-wise by 25 per cent and volume-wise by 36 per cent year-on-year in the same timeframe.

The government has appointed Deputy CAG Sivasubramanian Ramann as the Chairperson of Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) , replacing Deepak Mohanty, with a tenure of five years or until he reaches 65 years of age.

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has appointed Sohini Rajola as the Executive Director in charge of its development.

Rajola, who was the Head of Asia-Pacific for Western Union's international remittance, will now be responsible for the adoption of NPCI's payment solutions across the country.

The President of India, Smt Droupadi Murmu graced the closing ceremony of the commemoration of 90th year of the Reserve Bank of India in Mumbai on April 1, 2025.

Airtel and Nokia sign multi-year deal to speed up new 5G service delivery.

Paytm (One 97 Communications Limited) has partnered with the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation (GHMC) to deploy over 400 All-In-One EDC Devices for property tax collection.

Kotak Mahindra Mutual Fund has launched Kotak Energy Opportunities Fund, it is an open-ended scheme following the Energy theme.

OpenAI CEO Sam Altman has announced that the artificial intelligence company will launch its first "Open Weigh" language model since GPT-2 in the coming months.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reported that 98.21% of the ₹2000 banknotes in circulation as of May 19, 2023, have been returned to the banking system.

This withdrawal of the ₹2000 notes was announced on May 19, 2023.

The total value of ₹2000 banknotes in circulation, which was ₹3.56 lakh crore on May 19, 2023, has declined to ₹6,366 crore as of March 31, 2025.

India's defence exports reached a record high of ₹23,622 crore (approximately \$2.76 billion) in FY25, a 12.04% increase over the previous year's ₹21,083 crore.

India was marching towards achieving the target of increasing defence exports to ₹50,000 crore by 2029.

RBI's Rs 80,000 cr OMO push drags 10-year government bond yield under 6.5%.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has taken a proactive stance ahead of the April monetary policy review by announcing ₹80,000 crore in Open Market Operation (OMO) purchase auctions.

This move is aimed at easing financial conditions.

Impact on Bond Yields

The yield on the 10-year benchmark government bond fell by 10 basis points to 6.48%, the lowest in three years.

In March, the benchmark yield had already decreased by 15 basis points.

Yields on 15-year and 5-year bonds also decreased by 9 basis points.

The move is in continuation of the RBI's recent measures to inject liquidity into the financial system.

Earlier in March 2025, RBI conducted OMO purchases of government securities worth Rs 1 lakh crore in two tranches of Rs 50,000 crore each.

RBI also held a dollar-rupee buy/sell swap auction of \$10 billion for 36 months.

India's solar module and cell exports decreased by 16% to \$1.5 billion in 2024.

This decline is attributed to increased shipment scrutiny, including port inspections and barcode verification, as well as concerns over the potential inclusion of Chinese components.

The United States remained the top destination for Indian solar exports, accounting for 97.5% of the total in 2024.

TVS Capital Funds (TCF) is pleased to announce the appointment of Shyam Srinivasan as a Senior Advisor and Operating Partner.

Coal India produced 781.1 million tonnes (MT) of coal, which was 7% lower than the target of 838 MT.

BANKING, ECONOMY AND FINANCIAL AWARENESS

MARCH 2025

RBI to hike ATM transaction fee from Rs 21 to Rs 23 starting May 2025.

Reserve Bank of India has raised the maximum ATM withdrawal fee banks can charge to Rs 23, starting May 1, 2025.

This follows an approved increase in the ATM interchange fee to Rs 19 for cash withdrawals and Rs 7 for non-financial transactions.

Customers will continue to receive five free transactions from their bank's ATMs monthly and limited free transactions at other banks' ATMs.

The revised fees are subject to GST.

Axis Bank has partnered with JP Morgan to offer real time US dollar payment capabilities to commercial clients in the Country.

Axis Bank has become the first Indian bank to launch 24/7 near-real-time programmable USD clearing capabilities using J.P. Morgan's Kinexys Digital Payments platform.

State Bank of India earned Rs 331 crore from ATM cash withdrawals in 2023-24, while other state-owned banks collectively lost Rs 925 crore.

SBI dominates the ATM market with over 65,000 ATMs.

SBI holds a dominant 31% share of the ATM cash withdrawal market and operates the largest ATM network in India, with over 65,000 ATMs, accounting for a 30% market share.

Bank of Baroda incurred the highest loss on ATM cash withdrawals for the fiscal year 2023-24, amounting to Rs 212 crore, followed by Union Bank with a loss of Rs 203 crore.

Indian Bank also faced a loss of Rs 189 crore from ATM cash withdrawals.

Bank of Baroda has initiated the Pradhan Mantri Vidyalaxmi (PM-Vidyalaxmi) Scheme to offer financial support to meritorious students pursuing higher education.

Students can apply digitally for collateral-free and guarantor-free education loans through the PM-Vidyalaxmi portal.

The scheme also includes partial/full interest subvention for students from low-income families.

Bank of India has partnered with New India Assurance to provide its customers with a wide array of general insurance products.

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has unveiled BHIM 3.0, the latest iteration of its popular digital payment application.

This upgrade introduces several advanced features designed to enhance user experience and simplify financial management.

The rollout will occur in phases, with all users expected to access these features by April 2025.

To cater to India's diverse population, BHIM 3.0 now supports over 15 regional languages.

The integration of UPI Lite allows users to load up to ₹2,000 into a wallet within the app, facilitating quick transactions without the need to enter a PIN for amounts less than ₹500.

BHIM 3.0 introduces 'Hello UPI,' a conversational payment mode powered by voice recognition technology.

Government to Mobilise Rs 8 Lakh Crore via Bonds in H1 of FY26.

The Indian government plans to raise Rs 8 lakh crore through dated securities in the first half (H1) of the financial year 2025-26 to bridge the fiscal deficit.

This is part of the total gross market borrowing of Rs 14.82 lakh crore estimated for FY26, as announced by the finance ministry.

The borrowing will be carried out through multiple weekly auctions and will include Rs 10,000 crore of Sovereign Green Bonds (SGRBs).

The fiscal deficit for FY26 is estimated at 4.4% of GDP, amounting to Rs 15.68 lakh crore.

Key Highlights

Total Market Borrowing: Rs 14.82 lakh crore in FY26.

First Half Borrowing (H1 FY26): Rs 8 lakh crore (54% of total borrowing).

Types of Securities: Issuance of dated securities across various maturities (3 to 50 years).

Sovereign Green Bonds (SGRBs): Rs 10,000 crore included in the borrowing plan.

Fiscal Deficit: Estimated at Rs 15.68 lakh crore (4.4% of GDP) for FY26.

Net Market Borrowings: Rs 11.54 lakh crore via dated securities.

Treasury Bills (T-Bills)

Borrowing (Q1 FY26): Rs 19,000 crore per week.

91-day T-bill: Rs 9,000 crore

182-day T-bill: Rs 5,000 crore

364-day T-bill: Rs 5,000 crore.

Ways and Means Advances (WMA) Limit

Rs 1.50 lakh crore for H1 FY26

Bharti Airtel has landed the 2Africa Pearls subsea cable in India, enhancing connectivity to Africa, Europe, and the Middle East.

The system will become the world's longest subsea cable, spanning over 45,000 km.

Airtel serves as the landing partner for the Indian leg of the cable, bringing over 100 Tbps (terabits per second) capacity.

Airtel also landed the SEA-ME-WE-6 cable in Chennai and Mumbai, connecting India, Singapore and France through Egypt

India's central bank plans to double the investment cap for individual foreign investors in listed companies to 10% to boost capital inflows.

This move broadens the scope to include all foreign investors and aims to increase the combined holding limit to 24%, as discussions with the government and SEBI continue.

Centre hikes MGNREGS wages by 2-7% for FY26.

The Centre has hiked the wages under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS) in the range of 2-7% for the financial year 2025-26.

In the current financial year (2024-25), Goa had seen the maximum hike of 10.56 per cent over its previous year (2022-23) wage rate, and Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand recorded the lowest 3.04 per

cent.

World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) its \$5 billion partnership deal with Netflix, giving exclusive streaming rights for its shows on the platform, helps with global growth in a major way.

India's e-retail market is projected to reach Rs. 14,56,220 – 16,27,540 crore (US\$ 170 – US\$ 190 billion) in gross merchandise value (GMV) by 2030.

Govt approves procurement of 37.39 lakh tons of gram, lentils for 2025 rabi season.

The government has approved the procurement of 37.39 lakh tonnes of gram, lentils, and 28.28 lakh tonnes of mustard for the 2025 rabi season, through Nafed and NCCF under the Price Support Scheme. Major growing states include Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, and Gujarat.

Union Agriculture Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan said 100% of the production of tur, urad, and red lentil will be procured till 2028-29 to achieve self-sufficiency in the country.

Both the Houses of the Parliament have passed the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, which allows bank account holders to have up to four nominees.

The Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 9, 2024, and passed on December 3, 2024.

The Bill amends five major laws governing India's banking sector:

Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934

Banking Regulation Act, 1949

State Bank of India Act, 1955

Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Acts of 1970 and 1980.

Key Features of the Bill

Four nominees for deposits:

Deposit holders can now appoint up to four nominees, either successively or simultaneously. Previously, only one nominee was allowed.

Updated definition of 'fortnight':

For calculating cash reserves, banks will now follow fixed calendar periods—1st to 15th or 16th to month-end—instead of the old Saturday-to-Friday format.

Extended director tenure in co-operative banks:

Directors can now serve for 10 consecutive years, up from the earlier limit of 8 years.

Dual directorship allowed in certain co-operative banks:

A director of a central co-operative bank can now serve on the board of a state co-operative bank if they are a member.

Increased threshold for 'substantial interest':

The definition now includes shareholdings worth up to ₹2 crore, replacing the outdated ₹5 lakh cap set decades ago.

Unclaimed funds broadened:

Unclaimed dividends, shares, and bond payments older than seven years will be transferred to the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IEPF).

Bank autonomy in auditor pay:

Banks will now decide the remuneration of their auditors instead of the RBI and Central Government doing so.

RBI imposed a monetary penalty of ₹75.00 lakh on HDFC Bank for non-compliance with certain directions issued by RBI on 'Know Your Customer'.

RBI penalty of ₹68.20 lakh has been imposed on Punjab & Sind Bank for non-compliance with certain directions on 'Creation of a Central Repository of Large Common Exposures - Across Banks' and 'Financial Inclusion - Access to Banking Services - Basic Savings Bank Deposit Account (BSBDA)'.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued revised Priority Sector Lending (PSL) guidelines, set to take effect from April 1, 2025.

These guidelines have been introduced under the authority granted by Sections 21 and 35A, read with Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

Key Changes in Priority Sector Lending (PSL) Guidelines

1. Enhancement of Loan Limits

RBI has increased the maximum loan limits across multiple priority sectors:

A) Education Loans: Up to ₹25 lakh per individual, covering vocational courses as well.

B).Social Infrastructure Loans: Up to ₹8 crore per borrower for projects like school construction, drinking water facilities, and sanitation infrastructure.

C). Other Sectors: Increased loan limits for housing and agriculture loans to improve financial accessibility in these sectors.

2. Greater Focus on Renewable Energy

To promote sustainability, PSL guidelines now prioritize renewable energy projects:

A). Funding for Renewable Energy-Based Power Generators & Public Utilities:

Loans up to ₹35 crore for renewable energy-based power plants, street lighting systems, and village electrification projects.

B). Support for Individual Households:

Loan limit of ₹10 lakh per household for renewable energy installations.

3. Revised PSL Targets for Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs)

Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs) now have higher PSL targets, ensuring more credit flow into priority sectors:

A) Total Priority Sector Lending: 60%

B) Micro Enterprises: 7.5%

C) Advances to Weaker Sections: 12%

4. Expansion of the 'Weaker Sections' Category

The definition of Weaker Sections has been broadened to include transgender individuals, alongside the existing categories:

Small & Marginal Farmers

Distressed Farmers (indebted to non-institutional lenders)

Artisans

Members of Self-Help Groups (SHGs) and Joint Liability Groups (JLGs)

Scheduled Castes (SCs) & Scheduled Tribes (STs)

Persons with Disabilities

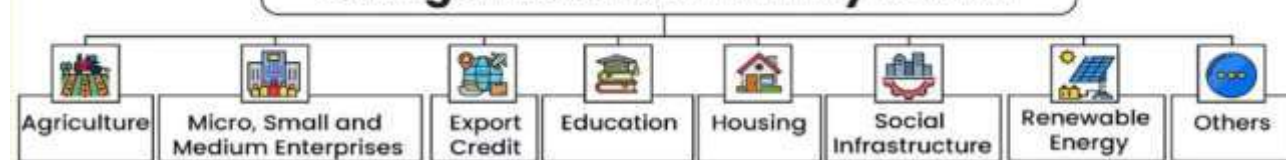
Minority Communities (as per Government of India notifications)

Individual Women Beneficiaries (up to ₹2 lakh) – Not applicable to UCBs

Priority Sector Lending Targets & Sub-Targets

Categories	Domestic Commercial Banks & Foreign Banks (≥20 branches)	Foreign Banks (<20 branches)	Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)	Small Finance Banks (SFBs)
Total PSL	40%	40% (Up to 32% in Export Credit)	75%	75%
Agriculture	18%	Not Applicable	18%	18%
Micro Enterprises	7.5%	Not Applicable	7.5%	7.5%
Weaker Sections	12%	Not Applicable	15%	12%

Categories under Priority Sector



Union government appointed Sanjay Kumar Mishra as a full-time member of the new Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM).

At present, Niti Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery is officiating as Chairman of the EAC-PM. Bery was given additional charge as Chairman of the advisory council in December last year after Bibek Debroy passed away on November 1.

The EAC-PM is an 'independent' body constituted to give advice on economic and related issues to the Government of India, specifically to the Prime Minister.

The government also appointed former Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba to the NITI Aayog as a full-time member.

Maruti Suzuki India has approved an investment of Rs 7,410 crore to set up a third plant at Kharkhoda in Haryana with a capacity of up to 2.5 lakh vehicles per year.

Wipro Ltd has signed a 10-year, \$650-million (£500 million) contract with ReAssure UK Services Limited, a part of Phoenix Group.

Finance Ministry has discontinued the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) for medium- and long-term deposits from March 26, 2025.

RBI has clarified that existing deposits will continue until maturity; however, no fresh mobilisations or renewals will be allowed.

About Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS):

What is GMS?

A scheme to mobilise idle gold held by individuals and institutions, launched to integrate gold into the formal financial system.

Launch Year: November 2015, as a revamped version of the Gold Deposit Scheme (1999).

Implemented by: Jointly by Ministry of Finance, RBI, and scheduled commercial banks.

Objective: To reduce gold imports and curb Current Account Deficit (CAD) by monetising household and institutional gold.

Categories under the Scheme:

Short-Term Bank Deposit (STBD):

Tenure: 1 to 3 years

Interest: Decided and paid by banks

Medium-Term Government Deposit (MTGD):

Tenure: 5 to 7 years

Interest: Fixed by GoI in consultation with RBI (2.25%)

Long-Term Government Deposit (LTGD):

Tenure: 12 to 15 years

Interest: Fixed by GoI (2.5%)

Indonesia has agreed to join the New Development Bank established by the BRICS group.

Indonesia will become the 9th member. It was announced on 25 March 2025.

Indonesia became the 10th full member of BRICS on 6 January 2025.

Indonesia is the first BRICS member country from Southeast Asia.

About New Development Bank (NDB):

Establishment: Year 2015

Objective: To provide financial assistance to infrastructure and sustainable development projects in emerging markets and developing countries.

Member countries:

Founding members (5): Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa

New members (3): Bangladesh, UAE, Egypt

Total members (8): Currently

Indonesia: Will soon become the 9th member

Headquarters and regional offices

Headquarters: Shanghai, China

Regional offices:

India: GIFT City, Gujarat (2022)

Africa: Johannesburg, South Africa (2017)

America: Sao Paulo, Brazil (2019)

Eurasia: Moscow, Russia (2020)

Current President: Dilma Rousseff (Brazil).

The New Development Bank (NDB), formerly known as the BRICS Development Bank.

State Bank of India raised \$1 billion in the largest dollar-denominated syndicated loan this year from the nation, giving a boost to the lagging foreign-currency debt market.

The Jivi AI model will also be incorporated into the Ayushman Bharat Digital Mission (ABDM), a digital health infrastructure initiative of the government. Two of the Artificial Intelligence projects under the India AI Mission will be ready to showcase to the government by 2026.

Japanese consortium sign MoU to set up a new green ammonia production facility in Odisha by 2030

Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) have earned a record profit of Rs 7,571 crore during 2023-24.

key financial parameters like CRAR, deposits, advances, NPA, CD ratio etc.

The total balance sheet size of RRBs have increased from Rs 7,04,556 crore in 2021-22 to Rs 8,40,080 crore in 2023-24.

The net NPA has declined from 4.7 per cent in 2021-22 to 2.4 per cent in 2023-24.

The credit-to-deposit ratio has increased from 64.5 per cent in 2021-22 to 71.4 per cent in 2023-24.

The Centre under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS) provides interest subvention of 1.5 per cent to banks for providing short-term working capital loans of up to Rs 3 lakh at 7 per cent per annum.

A prompt repayment incentive of 3 per cent is also provided to farmers on timely repayment of loans. Therefore, effective interest rate for farmers is 4 per cent.

The government has announced to enhance loan limit under the MISS from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh for loans taken through the KCC (Kisan Credit Card).

The Jan Samarth portal is a one-stop digital platform for linking 15 government-sponsored loans and subsidies schemes.

About RRB

Genesis: Formed in 1975 under the RRB Act, 1976.

Ownership: Jointly owned by Government of India(GOI), Sponsor Bank and concerned State Government and with share proportion of 50%,35% & 15% respectively.

Regulation: Regulated by Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and supervised by NABARD.

Aim: Development of agriculture, trade, commerce, industry and other productive activities in the rural areas.

Priority Sector Lending: Revised to 75% in 2016 of total lending within the sub-targets set by RBI.

Sajjan Jindal-led JSW Steel becomes world's most valuable steelmaker with over \$30 billion market cap.

The surge positioned JSW Steel ahead of US-based Nucor Corp, which held a market capitalisation of \$29.92 billion.

Other prominent steel producers, including Europe's ArcelorMittal, Japan's Nippon Steel Corp, and China's Baoshan Iron, maintain market capitalisations between \$21 billion and \$27 billion.

Tata Steel, the second most valuable steel enterprise in India, has a market capitalisation of approximately \$23 billion.

The top 5 steel-producing countries are China, India, Japan, the United States, and Russia.

Future Generali India Insurance bags DI-verse Certification.

Future Generali India Insurance Company (FGII) has received the DI-verse - India's First Disability Inclusion Certification, for its initiatives in setting new benchmarks in corporate disability inclusion.

India slaps Samsung with tax demand of \$601 million for telecom imports

India has ordered Samsung to pay \$601 million in back taxes and penalties for evading tariffs on telecom equipment imports.

West Bengal govt has joined hands with telecom service provider Vodafone Idea to facilitate the digital transformation of micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) across Bengal.

India is the top producer of milk in the world and has set a target of producing 300 million metric tons (MMT) of milk in the next five years from the present 239 MMT.

The nation contributes more than 24% of global milk production.

Key Facts About India's Dairy Sector

Current Milk Production: 239 MMT

Global Share: Over 24%

Target by 2030: 300 MMT

Growth in Milk Production (since 2014): 63.5%

Contribution to GDP: 4.5%

Employment Generation: 10 crore people, 75% of whom are women.

The top five milk-producing states in India in 2023-24 are:

Uttar Pradesh: 16.21% of the country's milk production

Rajasthan: 14.51% of the country's milk production

Madhya Pradesh: 8.91% of the country's milk production

Gujarat: 7.65% of the country's milk production

Maharashtra: 6.71% of the country's milk production.

Uttar Pradesh produced the highest amount of milk in India at over 38 million metric tons.

Sebi extends suspension of trading in 7 commodity derivatives until Mar 2026.

Sebi has extended the suspension of derivatives trading in seven agricultural commodities, including

wheat and moong, until March 31, 2026

1. moong
2. wheat
3. paddy(non-basmati)
4. chana
5. mustard
6. soyabean
7. crude palm oil.

ADB and Shriram Finance Limited have signed a loan agreement for \$150 million to boost access to finance for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises in India.

Unclaimed deposits of over ₹45,000 cr transferred to special fund.

Finance Ministry informed the Lok Sabha that public sector banks (PSBs) have transferred more than ₹45,000 crore worth of unclaimed deposits to the Depositor Education and Awareness (DEA) Fund between 2019-20 and 2024-25 (till December 31, 2024).

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) manages this fund under the Depositor Education and Awareness Fund Scheme, 2014.

Definition and Classification

Unclaimed deposits refer to balances in savings and current accounts that remain inactive for 10 years, or term deposits that have not been claimed within 10 years from their date of maturity.

When these accounts remain unclaimed for this period, banks transfer the funds to the RBI's DEA Fund.

Zoho founder Sridhar Vembu has hailed the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) for crossing 200 million transactions.

The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) has officially crossed the 200 million transaction mark as it aims to be a game-changer in India's digital commerce landscape.

The Government of India has appointed senior IAS Ajay Seth as the next Finance Secretary.

He will succeed Tuhin Kanta Pandey, who took over as the 11th Chairperson of the capital market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Ajay Seth is currently the Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India. Earlier in February this year, Ajay Seth was also given the additional charge of the post of Secretary, Department of Revenue, Union Ministry of Finance.

Currently, Ajay Seth is India's Alternate Governor on the Asian Development Banks(ADB) Board of Governors.

Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs, the government revised the salaries, allowances, and pensions of Members of Parliament (MPs), effective April 1, 2023.

Salary Hike: MPs' monthly salary increased from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 1.24 lakh.

Daily Allowance: Raised from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 2,500.

Pension Increase: Former MPs' pension increased from Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 31,000 per month.

Additional Pension: Extra pension per year of service beyond five years increased from Rs. 2,000 to Rs. 2,500.

Other Benefits: MPs receive constituency, office and travel allowances, free flights, train travel, rent-free housing, and utility benefits.

This marks the first revision since April 2018 and has been implemented under the Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act in accordance with the Cost Inflation Index outlined in the Income Tax Act of 1961.

The monthly salary of Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs has been increased from ₹1 lakh to ₹1.24 lakh, a 24% hike.

The Rajya Sabha consists of not more than 250 members – 238 members representing the States and Union Territories, and 12 members nominated by the President.

The Lok Sabha is composed of representatives of people chosen by direct election on the basis of Universal Adult Suffrage.

The Constitution of India allows for a maximum of 550 members in the House, with 530 members representing the States and 20 representing the Union Territories.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has increased the disclosure threshold for Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) from ₹25,000 crore to ₹50,000 crore.

FPIs: are entities that invest in securities and financial assets such as stocks, bonds, mutual funds, and Exchange Traded Funds (ETFs) in foreign markets to diversify their portfolio and earn returns.

FPIs in India are governed by SEBI under SEBI (Foreign Portfolio Investors) Regulations, 2019. SEBI will now permit investment advisers and research analysts to charge advance fees for up to one year.
India plans to eliminate the 6% equalization levy on online advertising services. As per the new amendments proposed in Finance Act 2016, Equalization levy or digital tax on online advertisements will not apply on or after April 1, 2025
Equalization Levy It is a direct tax introduced by Finance Act, 2016, taxing digital transactions i.e. income accruing to foreign e-commerce companies from India. This covers income from advertising also which is aimed at taxing business to business transactions. The government recently proposed the abolition of the 6% Equalisation Levy (EL) on online advertisements as part of the 59 amendments to the Finance Bill, 2025.
East Coast Railway (ECOR) has become the first railway zone in India to achieve 250 million tons (MT) of originating freight in the financial year 2024-25.
HDFC Bank has introduced the Embassy Fixed Deposit for diplomats, non-diplomatic staff, and missions, allowing investment exclusively in USD. These are Foreign Currency (FCY) Term Deposits available only in USD (United States Dollar). The minimum deposit amount is USD 5,000 equivalent. Additional deposits must be made in multiples of USD 1,000. There is no mention of the maximum deposit amount that individuals can invest in Embassy.
Markets regulator Sebi has notified a stricter regulatory framework for small and medium enterprise (SME) IPOs by introducing a profitability requirement and capping a 20% limit on offer-for-sale (OFS).
Loan Threshold for MSMEs Under the Digital Footprint Model Raised to ₹10 Crore. The government has urged PSBs to lend up to ₹10 crore to MSMEs. This will streamline credit flow and boost credit accessibility for MSMEs
Indian government made a significant announcement: the 20 per cent export duty on onions will be lifted starting April 1, 2025.
A consignment of 30 tonnes of Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged jaggery from Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, has been shipped to Bangladesh.
Govt disburses `14,020 cr for ten sectors under PLI schemes. The government has disbursed Rs 14,020 crore under Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes for ten sectors, including electronics and pharma, since the launch of the support measure to boost domestic manufacturing. In 2021, the government announced Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) schemes for 14 sectors like telecommunication, white goods, textiles, manufacturing of medical devices, automobiles, speciality steel, food products, high-efficiency solar PV modules, advanced chemistry cell batteries, drones, and pharma, with an outlay of Rs 1.97 lakh crore.
Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed a monetary penalty of ₹36.30 lakh on IDBI Bank for failing to conduct due diligence while processing inward remittances from a foreign currency account, a violation of Section 10(4) of FEMA 1999.
Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed a monetary penalty of ₹36.28 lakh on Citibank N.A. for contravening directions related to reporting transactions under the Liberalized Remittance Scheme, exercising powers under Section 11(3) of the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) 1999.
Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced that the interest rate on the Government of India Floating Rate Bond 2033 (GOI FRB 2033) for the period from March 22, 2024, to September 21, 2024, will be 8.34% per annum. This bond has a floating interest rate mechanism, where the coupon rate is determined based on the Weighted Average Yield (WAY) of the last three auctions of 182-Day Treasury Bills, plus a fixed spread of 1.22%.
National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has issued an addendum to its previous circular on the Numeric UPI ID solution, introducing new guidelines to increase interoperability and customer experience for UPI number-based payments. These will be effective from April 1, 2025, and must be followed by UPI member banks, UPI apps, and third-party app providers (TPAPs).
IN-SPACe appoints Sidbi Venture Capital to manage Rs 1,000 crore spacetechnology fund. IN-SPACe has selected SIDBI Venture Capital Limited (SVCL) as the fund manager for the Rs 1,000 crore venture capital fund aimed at boosting the Indian space sector, with the fund to be deployed over five years, starting with Rs 150 crore in FY25.

IDFC FIRST Bank has incorporated an “Ace” feature on its mobile banking app that will provide details on more than 2500 mutual funds.

Kotak Mutual Fund Introduces ₹250 ‘Choti SIP’ for First Time Investors.

Kotak Mutual Fund launches ‘Choti SIP’, first-time investors can now start investing in mutual funds with just ₹250 a month, under set conditions.

IRDAI Appoints Five New Members to Insurance Advisory Committee.

IRDAI has reconstituted its Insurance Advisory Committee by appointing five new members under Section 25 of the IRDA Act, 1999, and Regulation 3A of the Insurance Advisory Committee Regulations, 2000.

The newly appointed members include:

MR Kumar : Former Chairman of Life Insurance Corporation of India and current Non-Executive Chairman of Bank of India.

Dinesh Kumar Khara : Former Chairman of State Bank of India.

Visakha Mule : CEO of Aditya Birla Capital.

Nilesh Shah : MD of Kotak Mahindra Asse.

Kotak Ellis G Vaidyan : Former CMD of GIC Re and Independent Director on the boards of Air India and Tata AIA Life Insurance.

SBI Mutual Fund (MF), ICICI Prudential MF, and Nippon India MF has acquired a 4.12 per cent stake in travel distribution firm TBO Tek for Rs 537 crore.

Reliance Strategic Business Ventures Ltd acquired 100% stake in Nauyaan Tradings Pvt Ltd for ₹1 lakh.

Reliance Industries in a regulatory filing said its subsidiary Reliance Strategic Business Ventures (RSBVL) has acquired a 100% stake in Nauyaan Tradings Private Limited (NTPL) for ₹1 lakh.

NPCI international payments ltd has partnered with Singapore based Hitpay to expand UPI acceptance across Singapore.

This is the second major partnership by NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) in Singapore after launching the UPI-PayNow linkage that allows Indians to receive remittances directly in bank accounts in India and Singapore.

DPIIT inks pact with Yes Bank to strengthen India's startup ecosystem.

TCS has partnered with The Cumberland Building Society in the UK to modernize its core banking ecosystem.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed Shri Indranil Bhattacharyya as Executive Director (ED).

Tata Motors has announced Bollywood actor Vicky Kaushal as the brand ambassador for its Passenger and Electric Vehicle segment.

Tata Communications has launched a new cloud offering called Tata Communications Vayu.

Vayu is a fully integrated cloud ecosystem that combines IaaS, PaaS, AI, security, and connectivity offerings.

SEBI unveils regulatory framework for specialized investment funds.

SEBI has introduced a comprehensive regulatory framework for Specialized Investment Funds (SIFs), aimed at bridging the gap between mutual funds and Portfolio Management Services (PMS).

The new regulations, effective from April 1st, mandate a minimum investment of Rs 10 lakh across all SIF strategies

Union Cabinet approves Rs 1,500 cr scheme to boost low-value BHIM-UPI txns.

The Union Cabinet has approved a Rs 1,500 crore incentive to promote low-value BHIM-UPI peer-to-peer merchant (P2M) transactions for the financial year 2024-25.

This initiative aims to reach a transaction volume target of 200 billion in FY25.

Incentive Structure

The scheme distinguishes between small and large merchants for the first time.

Small Merchants : Incentive rate of 0.15% for transactions up to Rs 2,000.

Large Merchants: No incentive for transactions within the same value bracket.

No incentives for transactions exceeding Rs 2,000 for any merchant category.

The Union Cabinet has approved the Revised National Program for Dairy Development (NPDD).

The government has added an extra Rs 1,000 crore to the scheme to strengthen dairy infrastructure and improve milk production and quality.

The Revised National Program for Dairy Development (NPDD)

It is a Central Sector Scheme focused on modernizing and expanding dairy infrastructure, ensuring the sector's sustained growth and productivity.

Budget: The total budget to Rs.2790 crore for the period of the 15th Finance Commission cycle (2021-22 to 2025-26).

Nodal Ministry: Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (DAHD)

Bain Capital will acquire an 18% stake in Manappuram Finance for ₹4,385 crore.

The Union Cabinet has approved a revised outlay of ₹3,400 crore for the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM). Additional ₹1,000 crore has been allocated for the period 2021-22 to 2025-26, with new initiatives for cattle development.

What is Rashtriya Gokul Mission?

It is a flagship scheme for development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds in India.

The mission aims to enhance milk production and productivity in a sustainable manner.

Launched In: The scheme was launched in December 2014.

Ministry: Implemented by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying.

Funding Pattern:

The scheme is implemented on a 100% grant-in-aid basis, except for certain components:

₹5,000 subsidy per IVF pregnancy.

50% subsidy for sex-sorted semen cost.

50% subsidy up to ₹2 crore for establishing breed multiplication farms.

SEBI has partnered with DigiLocker to reduce unclaimed assets in the Indian securities market and streamline demat access.

United States surpassed the United Arab Emirates (UAE) as the top source of remittances to India, with the US accounting for 27.7% of total remittances, while the UAE contributed 19.2%.

Top Recipient States:

Maharashtra, followed by Kerala and Tamil Nadu, are the major recipients of remittances

Wipro, Tech Mahindra, and L&T Technology Services have announced strategic collaborations with NVIDIA.

These partnerships aim to accelerate AI adoption across industries, leveraging NVIDIA's powerful AI computing platforms.

Banks' CD issuances touch an all-time high of ₹10.58 lakh crore in FY25.

Primary market issuances of Certificate of Deposits (CDs) by banks rose 34 per cent year-on-year (y-o-y) to reach an all-time high of ₹10.58 lakh crore during FY2024-25 as against ₹7.89 lakh crore recorded in the year-ago period.

City Union Bank (CUB) has become the official banking partner of Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH).

RBI and Bank of Mauritius sign pact on use of local currencies for bilateral transactions.

Reserve Bank of India and the Bank of Mauritius have signed an MoU to promote the use of Indian Rupee and Mauritian Rupee for cross-border transactions.

ADB Launches "Frontier Seed" to Catalyze Private Sector Growth and Ocean Impact in the Pacific.

Torrent Group has acquired a 67% stake in Indian Premier League franchise Gujarat Titans.

Ahmedabad-based Torrent Group has acquired a 67% majority stake in the Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise Gujarat Titans, marking its entry into the Indian sports sector, with CVC Capital Partners retaining a 33% minority stake.

Tech Mahindra partners with Google Cloud to enhance AI adoption for enterprises.

Paytm Money received registration certificate to be a research analyst from SEBI.

The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has surpassed ₹5 lakh crore in Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) before the end of the financial year 2024-25.

With over 1.6 lakh government buyers and key policy reforms, GeM now hosts over 22 lakh sellers.

GeM is characterized by three core elements: openness, fairness, and inclusiveness.

South Korea's KONEPS is the largest such platform in the world. GeM stands at the second position. It is followed by Singapore's GeBIZ.

RBI permits settlement of trade transactions with Maldives in local currencies.

Reserve Bank of India announced that bilateral trade transactions with Maldives can now be settled in Indian Rupees (INR) and Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR) in addition to the ACU mechanism.

This decision follows the signing of an MoU with the Maldives Monetary Authority to promote the use of local currencies.

Allianz exits Bajaj Insurance JVs after 24 years in €2.6 billion sale.

German insurer Allianz SE has announced the sale of its 26% stake in two joint ventures with India's Bajaj Finserv for approximately €2.6 billion (\$2.84 billion).

The agreement will see Bajaj Group gain complete ownership of Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company (BAGIC) and Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company (BALIC), marking the end of a 24-year-old partnership.
Bharti Airtel, Ericsson, and Volvo Group have partnered for a research initiative to explore Extended Reality (XR), Digital Twin technologies, and AI in manufacturing in 5G research.
The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved Tata Sons' acquisition of an additional 10% stake in Tata Play, increasing Tata Sons' ownership to 70% from an affiliate of Temasek Holdings, a Singaporean sovereign wealth fund.
Airtel Payments Bank surpassed one billion transactions in January 2025
Scheduled commercial banks have written off over ₹16 lakh crore worth of loans during FY15 and FY24. Indian banks have written off a staggering ₹16.35 lakh crore in bad loans over the last ten financial years. The Finance Ministry's data highlights that FY19 saw the highest-ever loan write-offs at ₹2.36 lakh crore, while FY15 recorded the lowest at ₹58,786 crore. In FY24, banks wrote off ₹1.70 lakh crore, a decline from ₹2.16 lakh crore in the previous fiscal. The RBI's 'Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2023-24' highlighted that banks' gross NPAs fell to a 13-year low of 2.5% at the end of September 2024, down from 2.7% in March. Net NPAs also declined to 0.57% from 0.62%, reflecting improved provisioning and better asset quality.
Infibeam Avenues ties up with Sutex Bank to boost digital payments.
BRISKPE has received the RBI's in-principle authorisation to operate as a payment aggregator for cross-border transactions.
EIL, MECON, 4 others in fray for RBI's currency management project. Engineers India and MECON as well as four private entities are in the fray for the project to comprehensively revamp RBI's currency management infrastructure in order to cater to future cash needs of the country's fast growing economy. The four private entities are: Accenture Solutions; Colliers International (India) Property Services; PricewaterhouseCoopers and The Boston Consulting Group (India).
TATA AIA Life insurance has launched Tata AIA Shubh Flexi income plan , a non linked , participating life insurance saving plan.
Alibaba unveils AI-powered Quark app with advanced chatbot & planning tools.
HDFC Bank plans to sell Rs 1,028 cr bad loans via Swiss challenge auction.
Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has won the Digital Transformation Award 2025, presented by Central Banking, London. The Digital Transformation Award recognizes central banks and financial institutions for excellence in digital innovation and technology-driven governance. Presented by: Awarded by Central Banking, London, a globally recognized institution focusing on monetary policies, governance, and financial transformation. Eligibility: Open to central banks, financial regulators, and monetary institutions that have successfully implemented digital reforms. Winner of 2025 Award: Reserve Bank of India (RBI) won for its digital initiatives – 'Saarathi' and 'Pravaah'. Saarathi Initiative: What it is? An internal workflow digitization system for RBI employees. Aim of the Scheme: Enhance record management, automate processes, enable secure digital submissions, and improve data tracking & collaboration. Impact: Eliminated manual paperwork, streamlined task tracking, and integrated various RBI departments into a unified system. Pravaah Initiative: What it is? A digital regulatory application platform for external users submitting documents to RBI. Aim of the Scheme: Digitize over 70 regulatory applications, enhance transparency, and improve cybersecurity in financial documentation.
Indian government aims to increase the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) market share of the BHIM app to 5% by 2028, a significant jump from its current 0.2%.

PhonePe and Google Pay currently hold a significant share of the UPI market, with PhonePe leading with 48.4% and Google Pay following with 37%.

Larsen & Toubro (L&T) is planning to invest up to \$2 billion in its data centre business, aiming to expand its capacity fivefold to 150 megawatts (MW) by 2027

Baba Ramdev's Patanjali Ayurved, along with Dharampal Satyapal Group, has acquired a majority stake in Magma General Insurance from Sanoti Properties, valuing the insurer at ₹4,500 crore.

Valueattics Reinsurance set to become India's first private reinsurer.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has approved the first reinsurance license for a private player, Valueattics Reinsurance, backed by Prem Watsa's FAL Corporation and Kamesh Goyal's Oben Ventures, making it the first private reinsurer in India.

Insurance regulator IRDAI retains LIC, GIC Re, New India Assurance as D-SIIs for 2024-25.

State-owned Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), The New India Assurance Company and General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re) have retained the domestic systemically important insurers (D-SIIs) tag for 2024-25.

Reserve Bank will set up a dedicated 'on Tap' cohort on climate change risks and sustainable finance under its regulatory sandbox initiative.

State Bank of India to set up AI, fintech project finance unit.

State Bank of India is establishing a unit for project financing focused on new age industries like AI, e-commerce, and fintech.

The initiative aims to diversify the bank's project finance efforts, targeting sectors benefitting from increased infrastructure.

PhonePe's Indus Appstore has partnered with Xiaomi India to pre-install its app store on all new Xiaomi smartphones in India.

Microsoft roped in for skilling youth in AI in Andhra Pradesh.

Microsoft to train 2 lakh students, youth of Andhra Pradesh in AI.

Tamil Nadu government opts Tamil letter 'ரூ' instead of '₹' symbol in Budget logo.

Stepping up the campaign to promote Tamil, Chief Minister M.K. Stalin has released a promotional logo for the State Budget 2025-26, replacing the Indian currency symbol ₹ with the Tamil alphabet 'Roo' ('ரூ') to denote 'Roobai' (the Tamil word for the currency).

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has unveiled a framework for recognising self-regulatory organisations (SROs) for the account aggregator (AA) ecosystem, even as it invited applications for recognition of SRO-AAs.

Under the framework, an SRO-AA should be set up as a not-for-profit company registered under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.

The applicant should have/ demonstrate to achieve a minimum net worth of ₹2 crore within one year after recognition as an SRO-AA by the RBI, or before commencement of operations as an SRO-AA, whichever is earlier

Thereafter, the SRO-AA has to maintain the minimum required net worth on an ongoing basis.

The shareholding of the SRO-AA should be sufficiently diversified and no entity can hold 10 per cent or more of its paid-up share capital, either singly or acting in concert.

To ensure balanced representation, the SRO-AA should have at least 25 unique entities each from FIPs and FI-Us as its members at all times.

The SRO also has to submit an annual report to the RBI and other financial sector regulators, within three months of completion of the accounting year.

The RBI has sought applications through the PRAVAAH (Platform for Regulatory Application, Validation and Authorisation) portal.

SRO-AA's will function within the overall regulatory framework for the AA ecosystem issued by the Reserve Bank.

Further, the technical specifications will continue to be framed and published by Reserve Bank Information Technology Private Limited (ReBIT).

In August RBI had recognised the Fintech Association for Consumer Empowerment (FACE) as the first SRO in the FinTech sector after evaluating three applications.

The financial bids for the strategic sale of IDBI Bank, the largest in the banking-financial services- insurance (BFSI) space, are expected in May-June after the share purchase agreement (SPA) negotiations conclude.

The department of investment and public asset management (DIPAM) received multiple expressions of interest (EOI) on January 7, 2023 for a total of 60.72% stake in the bank, including 30.48% (approx. Rs

23,700 crore at current prices) from the government and 30.24% from promoter LIC, along with the transfer of management control in the bank. The bidders reportedly include Fairfax India Holdings (promoter of CSB Bank), Emirates NBD, and Kotak Mahindra Bank.
Amazon, Google, and Meta have joined a pledge to support tripling global nuclear energy capacity by 2050.
Flipkart cofounder Binny Bansal has introduced Oppttra, a startup focused on franchise business portfolios for branded consumer goods. Oppttra will use AI-driven localisation and e-commerce expertise to expand brands across Asia and globally.
Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio have indeed signed separate deals with Elon Musk's SpaceX to bring Starlink internet service to India, potentially expanding high-speed broadband access, especially in remote areas.
Former RBI Deputy Governor MK Jain, a brilliant mind in the banking sector, has joined Reliance Industries as an advisor.
ZyduS Lifesciences to buy 86% stake in Amplitude Surgical for Rs 2,430 cr.
Atul Kumar Goel, the former MD & CEO of Punjab National Bank, has assumed charge as the Chief Executive (CE) of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA). Before this, he served as the MD & CEO of Punjab National Bank (PNB) from February 2022 to December 2024.
Fitch affirms Union Bank of India, PNB rating at BBB- with stable outlook. Fitch Ratings has affirmed the ratings of Union Bank of India and Punjab National Bank at 'BBB-' with a stable outlook, driven by government support, an improved risk profile, and enhanced asset quality. The banks' viability rating is upgraded to 'bb-' due to ongoing improvements in financial performance.
India emerges as top source of FDI into Dubai. For the year 2024, India has surpassed USA, France and UK to become the top source countries for FDI into Dubai. India's contribution to FDI inflow accounted for 21.5%, followed by the United States (13.7%), France (11%), United Kingdom (10%), and Switzerland (6.9%).
Governor, Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has inaugurated the 5th Digital Payments Awareness Week (DPAW). The DPAW shall be observed from March 10 to 16, 2025. Under the mission 'Har payment digital'. The theme for the current year is 'India Pays Digitally' As part of the awareness initiative, RBI is also pleased to announce two competitions which are open for public participation:- (A) Har Payment Digital Short Video Contest (b) Har Payment Digital Comic Strip Contest.
Taiwan's Foxconn company unveils its first large language model named "FoxBrain".
Indian government has extended the duty-free import of urad (black gram) until March 31, 2026
Saina Nehwal joins Naarica as brand ambassador and investor
State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a collateral free digital SME (small and medium enterprise) loan product 'SBI Asmita' for women entrepreneurs to help them expand their business. It also launched a 'Nari Shakti' platinum debit card to cater to the needs of women across various segments. The newly launched 'Nari Shakti' platinum debit card (made from 100% recycled plastic) is a RuPay-powered card designed exclusively for women.
India ranks third globally in chip design research papers after China and USA.
Telangana's Mukhra (K) village has become the first in India to implement a "Digital Tree Aadhaar" initiative, using QR codes to track the growth, age, health, and location of trees, essentially giving each tree a digital ID.
Federal Bank has appointed actor Vidya Balan its first-ever brand ambassador.
Swiggy expanded its food delivery service, in partnership with IRCTC, to 100 railway stations across 20 states.
Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had granted a one-year extension to Sumant Kathpalia as the Managing Director and CEO of IndusInd Bank effective from March 24, 2025, to March 23, 2026.
The RBI has set a 15-year limit for the tenure of MD & CEO in private sector banks, with a 3-year cooling-off period before reappointment is possible.

The maximum tenure for the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) in India is 10 years, including any initial term, subject to the superannuation age of 60 years.

Fintech major Razorpay expanded into Singapore, marking its second foray into Southeast Asia after Malaysia.

HDFC Bank partners IAF and CSC Academy for veteran initiative.

HDFC Bank has signed an MoU with the Indian Air Force and CSC Academy to launch Project HAKK (Hawai Anubhavi Kalyan Kendra), an initiative aimed at providing financial and administrative support to retired defence personnel and their families.

PhonePe has launched its 'insuring HEROES' campaign ahead of the International Women's Day.

International Women's Day is observed every year on March 8.

Amul ranked as third most valued brand in the Country.

Amul is the only Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) brand in the top three list, alongside e-commerce giants Amazon and Flipkart,

Rank	Name of Brand	Score
1	Amazon	56.5
2	Flipkart	53.0
3	Amul	52.8
4	Tanishq	48.4
5	MakeMyTrip	45.4

The 19th edition of The Wealth Report 2025 by Knight Frank highlights global wealth distribution, with India ranking 4th in HNWI population.

India ranks 4th globally with 85,698 HNWIs, marking a 6% YoY increase

Top 5 Countries by HNWI Population (2024)

1. USA – 905,413 (38.7%)
2. China – 471,634 (20.1%)
3. Japan – 122,119 (5.2%)
4. India – 85,698 (3.7%)
5. Germany – 69,798 (3.0%).

India's Billionaire Status

India ranks 3rd globally in terms of billionaires, with 191 billionaires in 2024. Notably:

26 new billionaires joined the list in 2024, a significant rise from just 7 new billionaires in 2019.

The billionaire population saw a 12% Year-on-Year (Y-o-Y) growth.

The combined wealth of Indian billionaires is estimated at USD 950 billion, trailing behind the USA (USD 5.7 trillion) and China (USD 1.34 trillion).

Tata Electronics partners with Himax, PSMC to make display chips in Gujarat.

Tata Electronics has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Taiwanese Himax Technologies, and Powerchip Semiconductor Manufacturing Corporation (PSMC) to manufacture display semiconductors in Dholera, Gujarat.

RBI to inject ₹1 lakh crore via OMOs, conduct \$10B forex swap to fix India's liquidity crunch.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a series of operations aimed at managing the current and evolving liquidity conditions in the banking system.

The central bank revealed it would conduct two Open Market Operations (OMO) purchase auctions of Government of India securities for a total amount of ₹1,00,000 crore.

The auctions will be held in two tranches: ₹50,000 crore on March 12, 2025, and another ₹50,000 crore on March 18, 2025.

Additionally, the RBI will conduct a USD/INR Buy/Sell Swap auction for ₹10 billion with a tenor of 36 months. This auction is scheduled for March 24, 2025.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed Dr. Ajit Ratnakar Joshi as Executive Director (ED).

Nitin Kamath of Zerodha named EY Entrepreneur of the Year 2024.

The founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of online stock broking company Zerodha Limited, Nitin Kamath, has been conferred with the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India award.

Elon Musk's electric vehicles (EVs) manufacturing company, Tesla Inc has leased its first showroom in India, located in Mumbai's Bandra Kurla Complex.

SBI has decided to divest its entire 17.8% stake in Jio Payments Bank Ltd, a joint venture between the state owned bank and Jio Financial services (JFS).

JFS will acquire the SBI's stake for Rs.104.5 cr , after which jio payments Bank will become its wholly - owned subsidiary.

Currently JFS holds 82.17 % stake in Jio Payments bank.

Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the proposed acquisition of up to 72.8% shareholding in Orient cement Ltd by Ambuja cement ltd.

The Indian government recently granted "Navratna" status to Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) and Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC), making them the 25th and 26th Navratna Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs).

Navratna entities are allowed to make discretionary investments up to Rs 1,000 crore or 15% of their net worth.

7 Out of 26 Navratna Companies Are from Railways.**Listed Railway PSUs with Navratna Status.**

The seven railway PSUs classified as Navratna include,
Container Corporation of India (Concor) – First to achieve Navratna status in July 2014.

Rail Vikas Nigam Limited (RVNL).

IRCON International Limited.

BITES Limited.

RailTel Corporation of India.

Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC).

Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC).

About Navratna Status:

The government categorises all Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs) into three categories, namely Maharatna, Navratna, and Miniratna.

The Government had introduced the 'Navratna' scheme in 1997.

PSUs that have a Miniratna-I status and have obtained an "Excellent" or "Very Good" Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) rating in three out of the last five years and have a composite score of 60 or more in six selected performance indicators , namely,

Net Profit to Net Worth

Manpower Cost to Total Cost of Production

Profit before depreciation, Interest and taxes(PBDIT) to capital employed

Profit before Interest and taxes to turnover

Earnings Per Share

Inter-Sectoral Performance.

Financial Independence : They invest up to ₹1,000 crore without seeking approval from the central government.

Navratna companies are also allowed to invest up to 15% of their net worth on a single project, or 30% of their net worth in a given year, subject to a cap of ₹1,000 crore.

City Union Bank has partnered with Chennai Super Kings (CSK) to launch a co-branded credit card.

The card will be available in three variants- MasterCard, Platinum and Signature.

Canara HSBC life insurance has launched Promise2Protect , a term insurance plan that will provide protection against life's uncertainties.

Railways' 2030 net zero plan builds on renewable, nuclear and thermal power

Paytm Launches India's First Solar Soundbox for Merchants, a Green Innovation that Harnesses Sustainable Energy for Full-Day Power.

India and Japan have renewed their USD 75 billion bilateral currency swap agreement, as announced by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA) allows both countries to exchange their local currencies for US dollars.

UPI transactions hit all-time high in January.

UPI transactions in January surpassed 16.99 billion and the value exceeded ₹23.48 lakh crore, marking the highest number recorded in any month.

Unified Payments Interface (UPI) remains the cornerstone of India's digital payment ecosystem, contributing to 80 per cent of the retail payments across the country.

The RBI has imposed penalties on The Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation Limited (Rs 66.6 lakh) and IIFL Samasta Finance Limited (Rs 33.1 lakh) for non-compliance with certain regulations, including 'Know Your Customer' and 'Interest Rates on Deposits'.

TCS extends partnership with Norway's DNB Bank ASA for next 5 years.

India's real GDP grew by 6.2% in the October-December 2024 period (Q3 of FY25), according to the National Statistics Office (NSO).

Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has retained the interest rate on Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) deposits at 8.25% for the financial year 2024-25.

SEBI opens centralised database portal for corporate bonds.

SEBI has launched a centralised database portal for corporate bonds in a bid to create a single, authentic source of information on such securities.

The portal — Bond Central — has been developed by Online Bond Platform Providers (OBPP) Association in collaboration with Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs) comprising stock exchanges and depositories

DoT, NABARD ink pact to digitally transform rural areas using BharatNet broadband.

The Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN), under the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) to digitally transform rural areas across the country through high-speed broadband.

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LIC set to buy 40-49% stake in ManipalCigna; primary and secondary deal values company at Rs 3,500 crore.

Life Insurance Corp of India (LIC) is preparing to acquire a 40-49% stake in ManipalCigna Health Insurance, entering the standalone health insurance market.

The government has interest rates unchanged on various small savings schemes, including PPF and NSC, for the fifth straight quarter beginning April 1, 2025.

The rates of interest on various Small Savings Schemes for the first quarter of FY 2025-26 starting from 1st April, 2025 and ending on 30th June, 2025.

Instrument	Rate of interest from April to June 2025 (%)
Post Office Savings Deposit	4
1-Year Time Deposit	6.9
2-Year Time Deposit	7
3-Year Time Deposit	7.1
5-Year Time Deposit	7.5
5-Year Recurring Deposit	6.7
Senior Citizen Savings Scheme	8.2
Monthly Income Account Scheme	7.4
National Savings Certificate	7.7
Public Provident Fund Scheme	7.1
Kisan Vikas Patra	7.5 (Will mature in 115 months)
Sukanya Samriddhi Account	8.2

Challa Sreenivasalu Setty, the SBI Chairman, has been elected as the new Chairman of Indian Banks Association (IBA) for the next fiscal year.
He succeeds MV Rao, Chief Executive of the Central Bank of India, who served as the previous chairman.

Jana Small Finance Bank (SFB) has launched its first branch in Andhra Pradesh, located in Guntur.

AU Small Finance Bank (AU SFB) has raised Rs 770 crore via issuance of Tier-II bonds at a coupon of 9.20%.
These bonds have a 10-year maturity

ONGC NTPC Green Pvt Ltd (ONGPL) has completed acquisition of 100 per cent equity stake in Ayana Renewable Power for Rs 6,248.50 crore.
ONGPL is a 50:50 joint venture of NTPC Green Energy Ltd (NGEL) and ONGC Green Ltd.

The Union Cabinet has approved a 2% increase in Dearness Allowance (DA) for central government employees, raising it from 53% to 55%.
This hike aims to help offset inflation and will boost employees' salaries ahead of the 8th Pay Commission.
The previous DA increase was in July 2024, from 50% to 53%.
This will benefit about 48.66 lakh Central Government employees and 66.55 lakhs pensioners.

The Union Cabinet, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved a Rs 22,919 crore Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme to boost the domestic manufacturing of electronics components

BANKING, ECONOMY AND FINANCIAL AWARENESS

FEBRUARY 2025

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to inject Rupee liquidity for longer duration through long-term USD-INR Buy/Sell swap auction of \$10 billion for a tenor of three years.

This will be the second swap auction by the RBI in a month with it infusing \$5.1 billion through a six-month swap on January 31.

About the Dollar/Rupee Swap Auction

A dollar/rupee swap auction involves the RBI exchanging dollars for rupees and vice versa. It allows the central bank to provide liquidity in rupees while managing foreign exchange reserves. This specific auction is notable for its three-year duration, which indicates a long-term strategy to stabilise liquidity.

Shaktikanta Das, the former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, has been appointed as Principal Secretary-2 to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

He took up this role following his retirement as RBI Governor in December 2024, after a six-year tenure during which he managed significant economic challenges, including the COVID pandemic and fluctuations in foreign exchange reserves.

Shri Shaktikanta Das assumed charge as the 25th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India effective December 12, 2018.

Immediately prior to his current assignment, he was acting as Member, 15th Finance Commission and G20 Sherpa of India.

Shri Das has also served as India's Alternate Governor in the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), New Development Bank (NDB) and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).

He has represented India in international fora like the IMF, G20, BRICS, SAARC, etc.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will release the 19th installment of the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi on February 24 at a function to be held at Bhagalpur in Bihar.

About 9.80 crore beneficiaries will receive ₹2,000 in their accounts for which the Centre has allocated ₹22,000 crore.

The Association of Mutual Funds in India (AMFI) has introduced three new initiatives aimed at improving financial inclusion, investor awareness, and investment recovery.

These initiatives— Chhoti SIP, Tarun Yojana, and MITRA—are designed to make mutual fund investing more accessible.

The Adani group is planning to invest Rs 30,000 crore in Kerala over next five years.

The investments include Rs 5,500 crore on expanding the operations of Trivandrum International Airport and an additional Rs 20,000 crore investment in the Vizhinjam port.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed a Rs 39 lakh penalty on Citibank N.A. for non-compliance with directions on large exposures framework and delay in reporting credit data.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed a Rs 6.20 lakh penalty on Asirvad Micro Finance Limited for non-compliance with the regulatory framework for microfinance loans

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released draft guidelines proposing the removal of foreclosure charges and prepayment penalties on floating rate loans, inviting public comments by March 21, 2025.

The draft proposal applies to all Scheduled Commercial Banks (excluding Payments Banks), Local Area Banks, Co-operative Banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), Housing Finance Companies (HFCs), and All India Financial Institutions (AIFIs).

Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) is building a new polypropylene unit in Kochi at a cost of about ₹5,500 crore.

The govt has extended the term of Chief economic advisor V Anantha Nageswaran by two years till March 2027.

The Centre has extended the tenure of NITI Aayog Chief Executive Officer (CEO) B V R Subrahmanyam by one year until February 24, 2026.

RBI rejected all bids for its Rs 26,000 crore auction of 91-day and 182-day treasury bills.

However, it accepted bids for Rs 7,000 crore in its auction of 364-day treasury bills at a yield of 6.56%.

Meanwhile, RBI conducted open market operations, accepting offers to sell bonds worth Rs 40,000 crore as part of its liquidity infusion measures.

The banking system liquidity remains in deep deficit, despite recent cash injection measures by RBI.

Banks have borrowed around Rs 2 lakh crore from the central bank.

PhonePe, India's payments FinTech backed by Walmart, has begun preparations for a public listing on Indian stock exchanges.

This move makes PhonePe the third major FinTech to go public in the country in the past five years, following the listings of Paytm and MobiKwik.

PhonePe, which redomiciled from Singapore to India in December 2022.

PhonePe commands a leading position in the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) ecosystem, holding a 47.67% market share.

The decade-old platform boasts over 590 million registered users and a payment acceptance network encompassing more than 40 million merchants across India.

NSDL and CDSL launch unified investor platform to provide consolidated data to investors.

The National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL) and Central Depository Services Limited (CDSL), in collaboration with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), have launched the Unified Investor App (UIP).

This platform integrates MyEasi by CDSL and SPEED-e by NSDL, providing investors with a consolidated view of their financial holdings.

Google is close to selecting locations for its first physical retail stores in India, marking its first such expansion outside the US.

The company views India as a key market and has invested \$10 billion in the country.

Currently, Google operates only five retail stores, all in the US, selling Pixel phones, watches, and earbuds.

New Delhi and Mumbai are emerging as the most likely choices for the initial stores, with Bengaluru also considered.

Tata Power partners with Amazon Web Services to Drive Smart & Consumer-Centric Energy Transition in India.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed severe restrictions on New India Co-operative Bank, barring it from issuing new loans, accepting fresh deposits, or allowing withdrawals for six months.

Key Highlights of RBI's Directive

Loan and Deposit Ban : The bank cannot issue new loans or accept fresh deposits from customers.

Withdrawal Restrictions : Depositors cannot withdraw money from their accounts for six months.

Administrator Appointment : RBI has removed the board and appointed Shreekant, a former SBI Chief General Manager, as the Administrator for a period of 12 months.

Committee of Advisors : A three-member advisory committee has been set up to assist the Administrator.

Deposit Insurance Protection : Depositors are eligible to claim up to ₹5 lakh under the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) scheme.

Eligible depositors will be able to claim up to ₹5 lakh under the deposit insurance scheme.

The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has launched a single premium "Smart Pension plan," offering a range of annuity options for single life and joint life annuities.

To subscribe to the "Smart Pension plan", which is a non-par, non-linked, individual/group, savings, and

immediate annuity plan, the minimum age at entry is 18 years.

The maximum age at entry varies from 65 to 100 years depending upon the annuity option.

The minimum purchase price is ₹1 lakh, with incentives for higher purchase prices.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) recently set up a seven-member committee headed by former chairman of SBI Dinesh Khara to examine proposed amendments to the Insurance Act, 1938, and suggest a framework for its implementation.

About Dinesh Khara Committee

It is a high-powered seven-member committee set up by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI).

Purpose: To review proposed amendments to the Insurance Act of 1938 and recommend a regulatory framework for their implementation.

The proposed amendments include increasing the foreign direct investment (FDI) cap in the insurance sector from 74% to 100%, reducing paid-up capital requirements, introducing a composite licence system, and streamlining regulatory processes.

IN-SPACE starts Rs 500 cr tech adoption fund to boost India's space sector.

The Indian National Space Promotion and Authorisation Centre (IN-SPACE) on Wednesday announced a ₹500-crore Technology Adoption Fund (TAF), a corpus which will support space technology firms, especially startups and MSMEs, in developing commercially-viable products.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched of an 'RBIDATA' mobile app, which offers macroeconomic and financial statistics-related data about the Indian economy.

Key features of the RBIDATA app

The new mobile application will give users access to 11,000 different economic data sets, which will give them a comprehensive overview of the health of the Indian economy.

Users can view the time series data in the form of graphs or charts and download the data for their own analysis.

The mobile application includes details like data sources, units of measurement, frequency, and recent updates, along with additional notes, which are there to help the users understand the graphs and charts better.

The application will also have a "Popular Reports" section featuring frequently viewed reports.

The application also has a "Search" option, which allows users to access data directly from the home screen without having to navigate across sections or publications.

The mobile application will also give the user the option of "Banking Outlet" to use to find the nearest banking facilities within 20 km of their location.

The users can also access data about SAARC countries using the "SAARC Finance" option link in the application.

Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) launched "Campa" in the UAE.

Reliance Jio has launched the new JioTele OS, a new generation Smart TV operating system.

Hurun India 500 List: Reliance Industries, TCS, and HDFC bank are among India's top 10 most valuable companies, according to the 2024 Burgundy Private Hurun India 500 list.

ONE MORE FEATHER IN ITS CAP				
Rank	Company	Value (₹ Cr)	Value Chg (%)	Chg Over last 4 Years (%)
1	Reliance Industries	17,52,650	12 *	5 *
2	TCS	16,10,800	30 ●	23 ●
3	HDFC Bank	14,22,570	26 ●	57 ●
4	Bharti Airtel	9,74,470	75 ●	152 ●
5	ICICI Bank	9,30,720	44 ●	73 ●
6	Infosys	7,99,400	40 ●	6 ●
7	ITC	5,80,670	8 *	98 ●
8	Larsen & Toubro	5,42,770	35 ●	366 ●
9	HCL Technologies	5,18,170	51 ●	62 ●
10	NSE India	4,70,250	201 ●	179 ●

Source: Burgundy Private Hurun India 500 Top 10 report

IRDAI introduced Bima-ASBA, a UPI-based premium payment system for life and health insurance.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has introduced Bima-ASBA (Bima

Applications Supported by Blocked Amount) to simplify premium payments for life and health insurance policies.

This initiative, effective from March 1, 2025, allows policyholders to authorize a one-time UPI mandate (OTM) to block funds in their bank accounts for premium payments.

Funds Blocked for a Maximum of 14 Days.

The Bima-ASBA facility is free of charge. There are no processing fees or hidden costs .

Karnataka Bank celebrated its 101st Founders' day on 18 February 2025, by launching two new products 'KBL Stri' and 'KBL One Family Banking Programme'.

Karnataka Bank marked its centenary by launching a specialized savings account for children and a high-interest term deposit scheme, along with inaugurating a centenary building, two museums, and 15 new branches.

To celebrate the milestone, the bank released a ₹100 commemorative coin and a special postal stamp, while also expanding its presence with 15 new branches across different regions.

University of San Diego (USD) is planning to establish a campus in GIFT City, Gujarat, India.

This will be the first American university to have a campus in GIFT City.

Bharti Airtel Limited ("Airtel") announced on Monday that the new SEA-ME-WE 6 (Southeast Asia-Middle East-West Europe-6, or SMW6) has landed in Chennai.

The 21,700 km SEA-ME-WE-6 submarine cable system connects India to Singapore and France (Marseille) crossing Egypt through terrestrial cables.

SBI Mutual Fund, in collaboration with State Bank of India (SBI), has introduced the JanNivesh SIP scheme, allowing micro systematic investment plans (SIPs) starting from ₹250.

The facility will be available on the SBI YONO platform and other fintech platforms like Paytm, Groww and Zerodha.

SBI Cards and Payment Services has appointed Salila Pande as the managing director (MD) & CEO with effect from 1 April 2025.

He replaced Abhijit Chakravorty.

Government credit guarantee scheme of ₹1,000 crore to push e-NWR adoption.

National e-Repository expects the Government move to allocate ₹1,000 crore towards Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR (electronic-Negotiable Warehouse Receipts) based Pledge Financing to be a game changer in adoption of warehouse receipts and post-hard credit finance in agriculture marke.

This apart, the Government under the Digital India Mission has launched e-Kisan Upaj Nidhi (e-KUN) program that enables farmers to access low-interest loans through electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipts (e-NWRs).

RBI has also enhanced the Priority Sector Lending limit for e-NWRs from ₹50 lakh to ₹75 lakh. However, NeRL has made a representation to RBI for further enhancing it to ₹2 crore for farmer producer organisations and ₹4 crore for traders.

The government is making various initiatives and expects lending through e-NWR based pledge finance to touch ₹1 lakh crore in next 10 years.

Zomato Introduces AI-Powered Customer Support Platform 'Nugget'.

Union Government has approved the continuation of the Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) Scheme during the 15th Finance Commission Cycle up to 2025-26.

PhonePe has launch of a device tokenization solution for Credit and Debit cards.

Reliance's Campa and JioStar are partnering as co-powered sponsors for the 2025 Indian Premier League (IPL).

The Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has introduced a new pension scheme, the Smart Pension Plan, designed to offer retirees a steady and reliable income.

This single-premium, non-par, non-linked plan provides a range of annuity options, including choices for single life and joint life annuities.

The plan is open to individuals aged between 18 and 100 years.

The minimum purchase amount for the plan is set at Rs 1 lakh, with no upper limit.

The minimum annuity under this scheme is Rs 1,000.

The government is considering raising bank deposit insurance beyond the current ₹5 lakh.

The bank deposit insurance is provided by RBI's Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC).

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) ranked second in the 2024 FutureBrand Index, surpassing Apple and Nike.

Samsung topped the rankings.

Apple, Nike, ASML, and Danaher took up third to sixth spot.

Reserve Bank – Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2021 to be called as ‘रिज़र्व बैंक-एकीकृत ओम्बड्समैन योजना, 2021’ instead of ‘रिज़र्व बैंक-एकीकृत लोकपाल योजना, 2021’ after inputs from Lokpal of India.

FM launches Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs for facilitating loans upto Rs 100 crore. The Government of India has approved the introduction of the Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs (MCGS- MSME).

Target Borrowers: MSMEs with valid Udyam Registration Number.

Loan Limit: Up to Rs 100 crore for purchase of equipment/machinery.

Loan Guarantee: National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Ltd (NCGTC) provides 60% guarantee coverage to Member Lending Institutions (MLIs).

Project Costs: 75% of the project cost should be for equipment/machinery.

Scheme Duration: Applicable for 4 years or until Rs. 7 lakh crore cumulative guarantee is issued, whichever is earlier.

Bank of Maharashtra has received RBI approval to open its first international branch at GIFT City IFSC in Gujarat.

Rediff.com India Limited, a subsidiary of Infibeam Avenues, received a Third-Party Application Provider (TPAP) license from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).

This license allows Rediff to offer Unified Payments Interface (UPI) services through its digital payment platform, RediffPay.

Axis Bank will act as the Payment Service Provider (PSP) bank.

Grok 3 chatbot from Musk-led start-up xAI to be unveiled.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved Prabdev (PD) Singh as the CEO of Standard Chartered Bank's India and South Asia operations, effective April 1, 2025.

Singh will replace Zarin Daruwala, who is retiring on March 31, 2025.

Bank of India mops up ₹2,690 crore via 10-year infra bonds at 7.50%.

Bank of India (BoI) has raised ₹2,690 crore via infrastructure bonds of 10-years duration at 7.50 per cent through the NSE Electronic Bidding Platform.

The base issue size was ₹1,500 crore with green shoe option of ₹3,500 crore

SEBI has revised the timelines for the issuance of Consolidated Account Statements (CAS) by depositories to enhance compliance ease.

The asset management companies (AMCs), mutual fund registrar and transfer agents (MF-RTAs) are required to provide common PAN data to the depositories within five days from the end of the month, instead of the earlier three-day deadline.

After receiving the data, the depositories will then consolidate and dispatch the CAS to investors who opt for electronic delivery (e-CAS) by the 12th day of the month and to those preferring physical copies by the 15th of the month, it noted.

Responding to a petition filed in the Supreme Court, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has defended the collection of financial data of banking users by credit rating companies to prepare credit scores.

RBI argues that the collection of financial data by CICs is legal under the CICR Act, 2005, and that obtaining individual consent is unnecessary for credit assessment.

RBI clarified that while seven years is the minimum retention period, there is no upper limit for data storage.

CICs serve a vital role in risk mitigation, helping lenders assess a borrower's ability to repay loans and reducing Non-Performing Assets (NPAs).

RBI assures that CICs follow strict security safeguards to prevent unauthorised data access or misuse, with penalties up to Rs. 1 crore for violations.

At present, four credit information companies are given certificates of registration by the RBI. These companies are:

TransUnion Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited (CIBIL)

Equifax Credit Information Services Private Limited

Experian Credit Information Company of India Private Limited

CRIF High Mark Credit Information Services Private Limited.

Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has stated its ambition to play a significant role in achieving India's goal of generating 100 Gigawatts of nuclear energy by the year 2047.

Sachin Bansal was appointed as the Executive Chairman of Navi Group.

Bansal is the co-founder of the financial services and technology company.

Meta, the parent company of social media platforms Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, is aiming to build the world's longest subsea cable.

Project Waterworth will see a 50,000-kilometre-long subsea cable connect five continents from its laying point 7,000 m under the ocean.

Meta's cable would use a 24 fibre-pair system, which will give the connections the cable makes to the United States, India, Brazil, and South Africa a "higher capacity," Meta continued.

DPIIT to sign MoUs with firms for setting up manufacturing incubation centres.

Reliance Consumer Products has recently acquired the iconic FMCG brand "Velvette".

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed a total penalty of ₹68.1 lakh on Nainital Bank, Ujjivan Small Finance Bank, and Shriram Finance for violating regulatory norms.

The penalties were imposed under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

Nainital Bank: ₹61.40 lakh for not following guidelines on interest rates on advances and customer service

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank: ₹6.70 lakh for not following guidelines on loans and advances

Shriram Finance: ₹5.80 lakh for not following guidelines on Know Your Customer (KYC) and data format for credit information.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has superseded the board of directors of New India Cooperative Bank, and appointed Shreekant, a former chief general manager of State Bank of India (SBI), as the 'Administrator' to oversee the bank's operations.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) superseded the board of New India Cooperative Bank for 12 months.

Restrictions have been imposed on loan issuance and withdrawals due to governance issues and liquidity concerns.

Depositors can claim insurance up to ₹5 lakh under the deposit insurance scheme.

20 non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) surrendered their registration certificates to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The 20 NBFCs who have surrendered their registration include 12 from West Bengal, four from Maharashtra and two each from Assam and Tamil Nadu.

Ride hailing service Rapido co-founder Pavan Guntupalli has announced that the company will launch pink taxis in Karnataka.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has declared an Open Market Operation (OMO) to purchase Government of India Securities, with a total amount of Rs. 40,000 crore.

OMO Mechanism:

The RBI will buy government securities from the open market, effectively injecting money into the system.

Eligible participants will submit bids electronically on the RBI's E-Kuber platform.

JioStar unveils JioHotstar platform, merges JioCinema and Disney+ Hotstar.

JioStar, the recently formed joint venture with the merger of Viacom18 and Star India, has announced the launch of JioHotstar, bringing together JioCinema and Disney+ Hotstar.

Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) provided a USD 180 million Line of Credit (LoC) to the Government of Vietnam to buy four Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs).

Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) has provided a \$120 million Line of Credit (LoC) to the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (GO-VNM) to buy high-speed guard boats.

AU Small Finance Bank has received Reserve Bank of India approval for Zulia Investments, a unit of Singapore's state-owned investment firm Temasek, to acquire up to 7% of its paid-up share capital.

AU Small Finance has received a letter from Zulia saying that the Reserve Bank of India approved the stake increase on the condition that the transaction takes place by February 12, 2026.

Market regulator Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has launched a new platform, 'MITRA' (Mutual Fund Investment Tracing and Retrieval Assistant), to help investors trace their unclaimed or inactive mutual fund folios.

The government has proposed a new bill to repeal and replace the 60-year-old Income-tax Act, 1961, with a simpler and more efficient tax framework.

Income Tax Bill 2025 aims to simplify Income Tax Act 1961.

The new bill reduces chapters and words for enhanced clarity.

It aims to reduce litigation and enhance compliance.

Once passed, the proposed legislation will be called the Income Tax Act, 2025, and is expected to take effect in April 2026.

BPCL signed a strategic contract with TotalEnergies for crude oil supply from West Asia, effective April

2025.

Nissan and Honda ditch \$60 billion merger talks and face new uncertainty.

Nissan and Honda have decided to end their merger talks, which began in late December, due to challenges from rapid growth of Chinese electric-vehicle makers and potential US tariffs.

Microsoft inaugurates new campus in Hyderabad, inks pact with Telangana govt for AI push.

Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) have signed deals with the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to import Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG).

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has recently implemented strict rules to combat pesky callers, including hefty fines ranging from Rs 2 lakh to Rs 10 lakh for repeated violations, and the potential for suspension of services within 10 days for telecommunication operators who fail to curb spam calls and messages effectively.

Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) and the Agence Française de Développement (AFD) of France signed a \$100 million credit facility agreement (CFA) in February 2025.

HDFC Bank launches India's first salary account with cyber fraud protection for PSU employees.

HDFC Bank has launched India's first Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) Salary Account with a cyber fraud cover - 'Anmol Savings Account'.

The salient features of Anmol Savings Account are:

Cyber Fraud Cover - protects customers against cyber frauds up to ₹ 25,000*

Family Benefits - Zero Balance Salary Family Account for up to 5 family members and locker benefits

Insurance Cover* – Customers will have the benefit of comprehensive health cover with OPD coverage, top up plans of up to ₹ 30 lakhs and zero cost accident insurance cover worth over ₹ 15 lakhs.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) lifted restrictions on Kotak Mahindra Bank.

This allows the bank to issue new credit cards and onboard new customers online and through mobile banking.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently permitted Small Finance Banks (SFBs) to offer pre-sanctioned credit lines through the Unified Payment Interface (UPI).

Key Features of Credit Line Through UPI by SFBs:

Pre-Sanctioned Credit Lines via UPI:

Small Finance Banks can now issue pre-sanctioned credit lines to individuals.

With the prior consent of the individual customer, these credit lines can be used for transactions through the UPI system.

Earlier RBI Decision: In September 2023, the RBI had already allowed Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) to extend pre-sanctioned credit limits via UPI to individuals.

Capital Requirements: SFBs are required to have a minimum paid-up voting equity capital of ₹200 crore (except those converted from Urban Cooperative Banks).

CRR and SLR Requirements: SFBs are subject to Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) and Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) requirements similar to Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs).

Priority Sector Lending (PSL): SFBs are required to extend 75% of their Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) to priority sectors as defined by the RBI.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has declared the release of new banknotes with a denomination of ₹50 signed by Sanjay Malhotra, its recently appointed governor.

Malhotra succeeded Shaktikanta Das as the 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India in December 2024.

The new denomination has motif of Hampi with Chariot on the reverse, depicting the country's cultural heritage. The base colour of the note is Fluorescent Blue.

Dimension of the banknote will be 66 mm x 135 mm.

Reserve Bank of India has mandated that all agency banks remain open on March 31, 2025, which is a public holiday, to process government receipts and payments.

This will ensure that transactions are completed within the 2024-25 fiscal year.

Maaza became a billion-dollar brand in 2024, making it the third brand from Coca-Cola's Indian stable to achieve this milestone.

Maaza is a mango-based fruit drink that was launched in the 1970s by Ramesh Chauhan of Parle Products. Coca-Cola acquired Maaza in 1993.

Thums Up was the first Indian brand from Coca-Cola to become a billion-dollar brand in 2021. Sprite became a billion-dollar brand in 2022.

Easebuzz has received the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) final approval to operate as an online payment aggregator (PA).

RBI green lights ARCs listing plans, opens new capital avenue.

Reserve Bank of India has allowed asset reconstruction companies (ARCs) to raise equity capital by listing their shares in the market, providing an opportunity to enhance liquidity and investor base.

RBI master directions for ARCs mandate that shareholding of 10% or more is classified as a 'sponsor' of an ARC.

Any entity increasing stake above 10% requires a go ahead from RBI.

RBI rules for ARCs say that these bad loan aggregators have to reach a net worth of Rs 300 crore by March 2026.

Currently only nine of the 27 ARCs have reached that milestone

Google Maps has changed the Gulf of Mexico's name to the Gulf of America for people using the app in the US.

President Donald Trump signed proclamations on February 10, 2025 to impose 25-percent tariffs on imports of steel and aluminum into the US from all countries without exception, rolling back exemptions for Canada, Mexico, the EU, UK, Japan, South Korea, and other allied nations.

DPIIT signs pact with Korean institute to enhance cooperation in logistics.

Reliance Consumer Products Ltd (RCPL) has entered into the sports hydration drink segment with the brand 'Spinner', co-created with Sri Lankan cricket icon Muttiah Muralitharan.

Reserve Bank of India has doubled its bond purchases from the market to ₹40,000 crore from the earlier notified amount of ₹20,000 crore.

Projects worth Rs 58,000-cr get support of agri-infra fund.

The government has approved proposals worth Rs 58,000 crore under the Agri Infrastructure Fund (AIF) for more than 92,000 projects since its launch in May 2020.

These projects have mobilised Rs 91,856 crore in total investment for the agriculture sector, with significant contributions from private entities.

The AIF aims to disburse Rs one lakh crore by FY26, with the scheme operational until 2032-33.

SEBI sets sights on global ESG standards for India Inc.

SEBI is working on revamping its Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) standards and has already set up a research team that includes enablers such as the Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation and auctusESG.

The Indian government has approved a financial package of ₹6,000 crore for BSNL and MTNL to expand their 4G networks.

This funding will help set up around 1 lakh new 4G sites.

The National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM) is set to become autonomous with ₹500 crore funding, aiming to preserve India's vast manuscript heritage.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) received an order worth Rs 8,000 crore from Maharashtra State Power Generation Company Limited (Mahagenco).

The order is for a boiler, turbine-generator (BTG) package for the Koradi Thermal Power Station in Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Reserve Bank of India has sanctioned the Scheme of Amalgamation of Pune Commercial Co-operative Bank Ltd., Satara (Maharashtra) with Pimpri Chinchwad Sahakari Bank Maryadit, Pune (Maharashtra).

The Scheme has been sanctioned in exercise of the powers conferred under Sub-Section (4) of Section 44A read with Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

The Scheme will come into force with effect from February 10, 2025 .

The branches of Pune Commercial Co-operative Bank Ltd., Satara (Maharashtra) will function as branches of Pimpri Chinchwad Sahakari Bank Maryadit, Pune (Maharashtra) with effect from February 10, 2025.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fined Federal Bank Limited ₹27.30 lakh for violating RBI's interest rate directions on deposits.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fined Karur Vysya Bank Limited ₹8.30 lakh for not complying with RBI guidelines on credit delivery.

The bank failed to ensure that the outstanding loan amounts of some borrowers met the required percentage of the sanctioned working capital limit.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has sanctioned the scheme of amalgamation of the Citizen Cooperative Bank Limited, Vasco-Da-Gama, Goa, with TJSB Sahakari Bank Ltd., a leading urban cooperative bank based in Maharashtra.

The approval has been granted under the powers conferred by sub-section (4) of Section 44A read with

Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

The merger will officially come into effect on February 10, 2025.

PhonePe is shutting down its Account Aggregator (AA) business and surrendering its license to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

The company will stop offering the service on February 12, 2025.

What is an AA?

An AA is a non-banking financial company (NBFC) that shares a user's financial data with financial information users (FIUs). FIUs can then use this data to offer financial services like loans and credit cards.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to postpone the implementation of the proposed Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) norms and project financing guidelines by a year, with the new deadline set for no earlier than March 31, 2026. RBI has decided to postpone the implementation of new guidelines requiring banks to allocate

additional funds for digitally-linked deposits. Initially planned for an earlier rollout, these norms will now take effect no sooner than March 2026.

RBI to set up Working Group to review trading and settlement timings of markets.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to undertake a comprehensive review of trading and settlement timings across various market to synchronise it to facilitate benefits of efficient price discovery and optimisation of the liquidity requirements.

The Group is expected to submit its report by April 30, 2025.

Zomato Limited was renamed Eternal Limited.

Eternal will comprise four major businesses(as of now)- Zomato, Blinkit, District and Hyperpure.

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has proposed a 10-digit numbering system for landlines.

This will replace the Short-Distance Charging Area (SDCA) or STD codes with a 10-digit numbering system.

World Gold Council (WGC) reported that global gold demand reached a record high of 4,974.5 metric tons in 2024, a 1% increase from the previous year.

The National Bank of Poland was the largest buyer of gold among central banks, adding 90 tons to its reserves.

YONO-UPI integration via PayNow to provide bigger reach for India-bound transactions from Singapore.

SBI Singapore's planned YONO-UPI integration with PayNow will enhance India-bound transactions.

The upcoming launch of two new payments solutions by MAS and ABS aims to support e-payments.

State Bank of India (SBI) plans to raise ₹5,000 crore (\$573.38 million) through Basel III-compliant bonds before the end of February 2025.

The bonds may include a call option, exercisable after either five or ten years.

The bonds will be rated AA+ with a stable outlook from CRISIL Ratings and CARE Ratings.

The bonds will be designed to comply with Basel-III norms.

Zepto, an Indian quick commerce startup, became the "world's second most downloaded mobile app in the food and drink" category in 2024, according to data released by Sensor Tower.

United States holds the top spot, with McDonald's being the most downloaded food and drink app.

Zomato ranks 5th, and Swiggy ranks 9th in the same category.

National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) extended a ₹2,000 crore loan to Gramercy Techpark Private Ltd, a Blackstone-backed company.

This loan is for the construction of a 120 megawatt (MW) data centre at Mahape in New Mumbai.

Institute of Rural Management Anand (IRMA) in Gujarat will become India's first national cooperative university.

The university will be named after Tribhuvandas Patel, the founder of Amul dairy in Anand.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) increased the collateral-free loan limit for the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme from ₹1.6 lakh to ₹2 lakh on January 1, 2025.

The move is also set to facilitate greater access to Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans, complementing the government's Modified Interest Subvention Scheme, which offers loans of up to Rs 3 lakh at an effective interest rate of 4 per cent.

The Kisan Credit Scheme (KCC) was introduced in 1998 based on a model scheme prepared by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

Ola Founder Bhavish Aggarwal has announced an investment of ₹2,000 crore in his artificial

intelligence venture Krutrim, with a commitment of ₹10,000 crore by next year.

Krutrim has raised \$50 million at a valuation of \$1 billion, making it the first start-up unicorn in the country in 2024.

The Competition Commission of India has approved the proposed acquisition of some shareholding by Posco India Processing Center Private Limited in Posco - India Pune Processing Center Private Limited.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is considering increasing the maximum fee for cash withdrawals from ATMs, as well as the ATM interchange fee.

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has recommended these increases.

The maximum fee for cash withdrawals could increase from ₹21 to ₹22 per transaction.

The ATM interchange fee for cash transactions could increase from ₹17 to ₹19.

The ATM interchange fee for non-cash transactions could increase from ₹6 to ₹7.

Himachal Pradesh government has secured the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (Nabard) approval for 127 projects worth Rs 903.21 crore for 2024-25.

Paytm Cloud Technologies Limited (PCTL) acquired a 25% stake in Seven Technology LLC for \$1 million.

Seven Technology is the parent company of Dinie, a Brazilian embedded finance startup.

CreditAccess Grameen Ltd. secured \$50 million in funding from the International Finance Corporation (IFC), bolstering confidence in the microfinance sector.

OpenAI has stepped up its development of artificial intelligence agents by announcing a new tool that crafts reports which it claims can match the output of a research analyst.

The ChatGPT developer said the new tool, "deep research", "accomplishes in 10 minutes what would take a human many hours".

OpenAI CEO : Sam Altman.

Sam Altman and Greg Brockman are co-founders of OpenAI, the company that created ChatGPT.

ChatGPT stands for Chat Generative Pre-Trained Transformer.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's announcement to extend the deadline for startup incorporation by five years, until April 1, 2030.

The Production Linked Incentive (PLI) outlay for the financial year 2025-26 is estimated to be ₹19,500 crore, which is a 76% increase from the previous year.

This outlay is for incentives across 14 sectors.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is working on a secure Unified Payments Interface (UPI) mechanism for registered market intermediaries.

Currently, UPI transactions for capital markets are capped at ₹2 lakh per day.

SEBI proposes increasing this limit to ₹5 lakh per day, allowing investors to carry out higher-value transactions securely.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fined Equitas Small Finance Bank ₹65 lakh for violating banking regulations.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) penalized India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) with ₹26.70 lakh for violating customer service guidelines.

The government announced an additional Rs 10,000 crore to the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS).

This will bring the total outlay of the scheme to Rs 20,000 crore.

The government will set up a centre of excellence in artificial intelligence (AI) for education with a total investment of Rs 500 crore.

Revision in classification criteria for MSMEs

₹ in Crore	Investment		Turnover	
	Current	Revised	Current	Revised
Micro Enterprises	1	2.5	5	10
Small Enterprises	10	25	50	100
Medium Enterprises	50	125	250	500

The Grameen Credit Score (GCS) is a newly launched initiative introduced by the Finance Minister in the Union Budget 2025.

The GCS will collect data from various sources, including SHG transaction records, mobile banking data, and government schemes, to create a "digital footprint" for rural borrowers.

With a reliable credit score, banks can design customized products such as microcredit or tailored credit

cards with limits up to ₹5 lakh for SHG members.

Financial Intelligence Unit-India (FIU-IND) has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 9.27 crore on virtual digital asset service provider Bybit Fintech Limited for violations of its obligations under the PMLA.

Zomato Launches 'Zomato Quick', an In-App 10-Minute Food Delivery Service in Multiple Cities

Tuhin Kanta Pandey appointed 11th Chief of SEBI.

The Appointment Committee of the Union Cabinet has approved the appointment of Tuhin Kanta Pandey as the 11th Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Tuhin Kanta Pandey, currently the Finance and Revenue Secretary in the Union Ministry of Finance, will succeed Madhabi Puri Buch as the Chairman of SEBI.

Tuhin Kanta has been appointed for three years from the date he assumes his office.

Maximum term of the Chairman and the whole-time member of SEBI shall not be more than 5 years;

No person shall hold the office after attaining the age of sixty-five years.

About Tuhin Kanta Pandey

Tuhin Kanta Pandey is the longest serving DIPAM Secretary .

He has held several important posts including in the Regional Office of the United Nations Industrial Development Organisation (UNIDO).

About SEBI

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) was set up by an order of the government of India on 12 April 1988.

It was made a statutory body in 1992, under the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992, that came into force on January 30, 1992.

SEBI is the regulator of the Capital market and the Commodities market in india

Headquarters: Mumbai

Bank of Baroda received the ISO 22301:2019 Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) certification from the British Standards Institution (BSI).

BoB announces launch of pilot CBDC-based 'Loyalty/Cashback Programme' for merchants.

Bank of Baroda (BoB) announced the pilot launch of a 'Loyalty/Cashback Programme' functionality for merchants based on the 'programmability' aspect of the Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) in collaboration with a fintech company.

ADB commits \$200-million loan to expand urban services in Kolkata.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$200-million loan to enhance the development of climate- and disaster-resilient sewerage and drainage infrastructure in Kolkata, aiming to improve the city's livability.

SEBI Sets 30-Day Deadline for Deployment of NFO Proceeds.

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) established a new requirement that demands Asset Management Companies (AMCs) to invest New Fund Offer (NFO) gathered funds within a 30-day business period from unit allotment dates.

SEBI announced the new rule to be effective from April 1, 2025.

Amazon unveils first quantum chip 'Ocelot' days after Microsoft's Majorana 1.

Amazon has unveiled a prototype of its first-ever in-house quantum computing chip called Ocelot.

YES BANK and World Trade Center (WTC) Mumbai Sign MoU to Support MSME Export Growth.

Federal Bank has launched an "Annuity Deposit" product, a term deposit offering stable income over tenures ranging from 5 to 20 years.

PFC inks pact to provide Rs 26,800 crore finance to MP power utilities.

Power Finance Corporation (PFC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Madhya Pradesh government to provide Rs 26,800 crore in financing for the state's power utilities, supporting capital expenditure projects for entities like MPPGCL, MPPTCL, and MP discoms.

NITI Aayog has formed a committee to create a roadmap aimed at transforming AIIMS, New Delhi, into a premier institution for medical research and practice.

The mandate of committee led by NITI Aayog member V K Paul .

DPIIT and Paytm join hands to boost fintech and manufacturing startups in India.

RBI lowers risk weightage on Banks' exposure to NBFCs.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a significant reduction in risk weights on bank loans to Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) by 25 percentage points.

This move is aimed at improving credit flow and ensuring financial stability in the banking sector.

Background

In November 2023, RBI increased risk weights on bank exposures to NBFCs by 25% to 125%, leading

to tighter credit conditions and slowing down bank lending

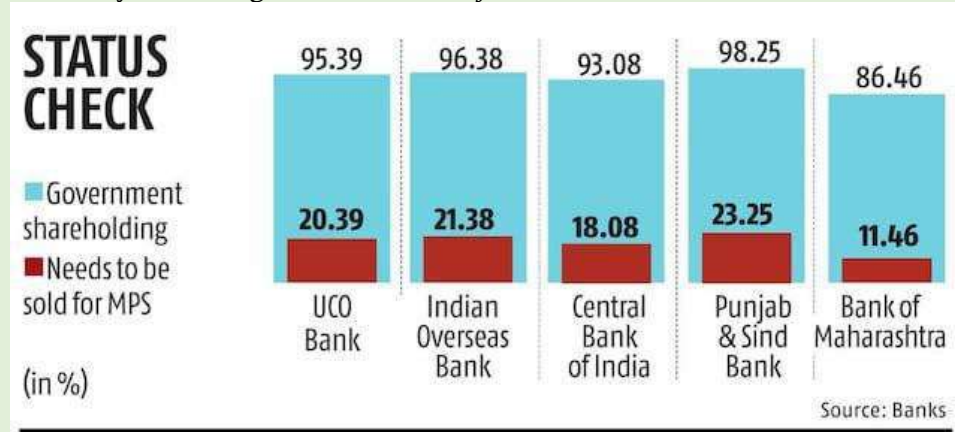
Objective : To enhance credit flow to NBFCs, thereby, improving credit availability for retail borrowers and small businesses.

Impact on Microfinance loans: RBI has also reduced risk weights on microfinance loans under regulatory retail to 75% from 125%.

The Indian government plans to sell up to 20% stake in five public sector banks (PSBs) to meet SEBI's minimum public shareholding norms, aiming to reduce its holding below 75%.

The banks in question are Bank of Maharashtra, Indian Overseas Bank, UCO Bank, Central Bank of India, and Punjab & Sind Bank.

Currently Govt's highest share in Punjab & Sind Bank 98.25%.



Tata Power has launched the 'Surya Urja ka Maha Kumbh' mission, an initiative to power 10 lakh homes by 2027 in line with PM Surya Ghar Yojana.

SIDBI signs MoU with Tata Capital to strengthen financing avenues for MSMEs.

South Indian Bank has introduced SIB QUICKPL, a fully digital personal loan platform designed for new customers.

The platform enables salaried and self-employed individuals with strong credit profiles to secure unsecured personal loans through a paperless process in 10 minutes.

Flipkart-backed super.money has bought buy-now-pay-later (BNPL) fintech startup BharatX to strengthen its credit offerings, particularly in the checkout financing space.

GIFT City partners with Zaggie to launch prepaid citizen card and visitor management system.

Markets regulator SEBI has imposed a Rs 5.05 crore penalty on Indian Clearing Corporation Ltd (ICCL) for non-compliance with cyber security and disaster recovery framework.

Operative Kisan Credit Card amount crosses Rs 10 lakh crore benefiting 7.72 crore farmers.

The finance ministry announced that the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme has provided over Rs 10 lakh crore in affordable loans to 7.72 crore farmers as of December 31, 2024, up from Rs 4.26 lakh crore in 2014.

The government, under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme (MISS), provides interest subvention of 1.5 per cent to banks for providing short-term agri loans through KCC up to Rs 3 lakh at a concessional interest rate of 7 per cent per annum.

An additional Prompt Repayment Incentive of 3 per cent is provided to farmers on timely repayment of loans, which effectively reduces the interest rate to 4 per cent for farmers.

Loans up to Rs 2 lakh are extended on a collateral-free basis, ensuring hassle-free access to credit for small and marginal farmers.

The finance minister, in Budget Speech 2025-26, announced to increase in the loan limit under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched the 10th Financial Literacy Week (FLW) 2025 with the theme "Financial Literacy: Women's Prosperity."

The event will be observed from February 24 to 28, 2025.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched Financial Literacy Week (FLW) for the first time in 2016 to promote financial awareness and empower the public to make informed financial decisions.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has eased withdrawal restrictions on New India Cooperative Bank, allowing depositors to withdraw up to Rs 25,000 .

RBI Raises Small Loan Limit for UCBs to ₹3 Crore.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has revised the small-value loan ceiling for Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs),

increasing it to ₹3 crore per borrower.

The central bank has revised the definition of small value loans for UCBs as loans of value not more than ₹25 lakh or 0.4 per cent (0.2 per cent earlier) of their Tier I capital, whichever is higher, subject to a ceiling of ₹3 crore (₹1 crore earlier) per borrower.

The ceiling for individual housing loan for Tier-3 UCBs (with deposits more than ₹1,000 crore and up to ₹10,000 crore) and Tier-4 UCBs (with deposits more than ₹10,000 crore) has been upped to ₹2 crore and ₹3 crore per individual borrower, respectively, up from ₹1.40 crore.

The ceiling for individual housing loan for Tier-1 UCBs (with deposits up to ₹100 crore) and Tier-2 UCBs (with deposits more than ₹100 crore and up to ₹1,000 crore) continues at ₹60 lakh and ₹1.40 crore per individual borrower, respectively.

Japanese Masato Kanda was elected as the 11th President of Asian Development Bank (ADB).

Masato Kanda will replace the current President, Masatsugu Asakawa.

State Bank of India (SBI), India's largest lender, has set a target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2055.

IRDAI has directed insurance companies to inject an initial capital of ₹300 crore by the end of February into Bima Sugam.

The capital requirement for Bima Sugam has increased to ₹500 crore from the initially envisaged ₹100-200 crore.

KKR, a global investment firm, is acquiring a controlling stake in Healthcare Global Enterprises (HCG), an Indian cancer care provider, for \$400 million.

RBI tells ARCs to maintain ₹300 crore in net owned fund by FY26.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released a 'Master Direction' for Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) mandating them to maintain a minimum net owned fund (NOF) of ₹300 crore in a phased manner by FY26.

Reliance Consumer Products sets up new Campa bottling plant in Guwahati, Assam.

BANKING, ECONOMY AND FINANCIAL AWARENESS

JANUARY 2025

Central government approved the Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (MCGS-MSMEs), guaranteeing loans up to ₹100 crore.

Features of the scheme

Guarantee Coverage : The scheme offers 60% guarantee coverage to Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) on loans up to ₹100 crore sanctioned to eligible MSMEs for the purchase of plant and machinery.

Eligible borrowers : MSMEs with a valid Udyam Registration Number

Loan coverage : Up to Rs 100 crore per MSME, with a minimum of 75 per cent of the project cost allocated for equipment or machinery.

Repayment terms : Loans up to Rs 50 crore have a repayment period of up to 8 years, with upto 2 years moratorium period on principal installments.

Scheme duration : 4 years from the issue of operational guidelines .

Upfront (initial) contribution of 5% of the loan amount shall be deposited at the time of application of guarantee cover.

Collateral-free loans : Banks and financial institutions can offer collateral-free loans to MSMEs .

Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) : Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs), Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), and All India Financial Institutions (AIFIs) .

Other Key MSME Financial Support Schemes in India.

CGTMSE (Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for MSEs) : Offers collateral-free loans up to ₹2 crore. Provides up to 85% guarantee coverage to reduce lender risk.

Emergency Credit Line Guarantee Scheme (ECLGS): ₹3 lakh crore relief package during COVID-19. 100% government-backed guarantee for loans.

MobiKwik has become the first fintech in India to launch a full-scale Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) wallet, e-rupee (₹), in collaboration with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Yes Bank.

The e₹ wallet, now available to all Android users of MobiKwik, enables peer-to-peer (P2P) and peer-to-merchant (P2M) transactions. Users can pay by scanning any UPI QR code using e₹, as the wallet is fully compatible with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI).

The wallet allows daily transactions of up to ₹50,000, with a limit of ₹10,000 per transaction. It supports denominations ranging from ₹0.50 to ₹500.

Note :- CRED launched the beta version of its e₹ wallet, developed in collaboration with the RBI and Yes Bank as the sponsor bank.

BSNL introduces BiTV to bring free, unlimited entertainment to mobile users across India in collaboration with OTTplay.

Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), in collaboration with OTTplay, India's leading streaming platform aggregator, has launched BSNL Entertainment, an innovative Internet TV service.

This service offers BSNL mobile users across India free access to over 450 live TV channels, including premium ones.

Avinash Mudaliar, Co-founder & CEO of OTTplay.

OTT stands for "over-the-top".

Finvasia partners with Yes Bank to launch AI-enabled super app 'Jumpp'.

Fintech firm Finvasia, has announced the launch of Jumpp, an AI-driven financial super app. Developed in collaboration with YES Bank, Jumpp is designed to simplify personal finance by combining banking, saving, payments, investing, and borrowing into one seamless platform.

IRDAI Caps Senior Citizen (aged 60 years and above) Health Insurance Premium Hikes at 10%.

Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has introduced a new regulation that caps annual premium increases for senior citizens' health insurance policies by a maximum of 10%.

Additionally, IRDAI has emphasised the need for standardisation in hospital empanelment procedures and the negotiation of fixed package rates for medical treatments. This approach mirrors the cost-control measures implemented under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY), a government initiative that seeks to make healthcare more affordable for vulnerable populations.

RBI Begins Insolvency Proceedings Against Aviom India Housing Finance for Defaults.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has begun insolvency proceedings against Aviom India Housing Finance, a housing finance company based in New Delhi.

RBI has appointed a three-member advisory committee to assist the appointed administrator, Ram Kumar, a former general manager at Punjab National Bank (PNB), who has been tasked with overseeing the resolution process.

In exercise of powers conferred under Section 45-IE (5) (a) of the RBI Act 1934, the Reserve Bank has constituted a three-member Advisory Committee to assist the Administrator in discharge of his duties.

Finance minister Nirmala Sitharaman is likely to announce the launch of a Rs 1,000 crore fund by Nabventures, a subsidiary of NABARD, for the benefit of startups in agriculture and allied sectors, working on climate-smart agriculture.

The government had launched a Rs 750 crore joint Agri fund for start-ups and rural enterprises (AGRI-SURE) in collaboration with Nabard, the agriculture ministry and private entities.

Out of the total Rs 750 crore corpus of the fund under the "Agri-SURE" scheme, Rs 250 crore each will be contributed by the agriculture ministry and Nabard.

The remaining Rs 250 crore will be mobilised from institutions including private investors.

Under AGRI-SURE, also managed by Nabventures, out of the total fund, Rs 300 crore will be directly invested in startups, while Rs 450 crore will function as a fund of funds, supporting venture investors operating in agriculture and allied sectors.

The fund is designed to operate for 10 years, extendable by two or more years and its a SEBI Registered category – Alternative Investment Fund

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced enhanced liquidity measures to address contraction in the banking system.

Swap auction: RBI will conduct a six-month USD/INR buy/sell swap auction worth \$5 billion, with the first leg on January 31, 2025.

OMO Purchases: The RBI will conduct open market operation (OMO) purchase auctions of Government Securities (G-Secs) totaling ₹60,000 crore in three tranches of ₹20,000 crore each on January 30, February 13, and February 20, 2025.

VRR Auction : A 56-day Variable Rate Repo (VRR) auction for ₹50,000 crore will be held.

This is the first time such a long-tenor VRR auction is being conducted.

SEBI has imposed a penalty of Rs 7 lakh on Motilal Oswal Financial Services for alleged lapses related to collecting client margins

Capital markets regulator SEBI cancelled the registration of four stock brokers.

The list of these entities include names of Single Window Securities, Sunness Capital India, GACM Technologies and Infotech Portfolio as they failed to meet the registration requirements.

Tata Steel India's first to make hydrogen transport pipes.

Tata Group's Tata Steel has become India's first steel company to develop pipes for hydrogen transportation.

The pipes, processed at Tata Steel's Khopoli plant using steel manufactured at its Kalinganagar plant in Odisha.

Kotak Mahindra AMC launches India's first Kotak MSCI India ETF.

Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company (Kotak Mutual Fund) has introduced the Kotak MSCI India ETF, India's first exchange-traded fund (ETF) tracking the MSCI India Index.

The new fund offer (NFO) opened for public subscription on January 29, 2025, and will close on February 12, 2025.

The minimum application amount during the NFO is ₹5,000, with no restrictions on additional investments. The price per unit during the NFO is ₹10.

ICCI, Cochin College signs MoU for industry-academia collaboration .

Indian Chamber of Commerce & Industry (ICCI) and Cochin College have signed MoU to foster industry-academia collaboration.

The partnership aims to bridge the gap between academic knowledge and industry practices, enhancing students' educational experience and employability.

IFCI board approves Rs 500 cr fund infusion via preferential issue of shares.

The Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI) was set up by the government on July 1, 1948, as the first development financial institution in the country.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) releases Payment System Report, December 2024.

It is a bi-annual report which analyses the trends in payment transactions carried out using different payment systems in the last 5 calendar years (CY) up to CY-2024.

Key findings

Digital payment transactions : In 2013 there were 222 crore digital transactions valued at Rs 772 lakh crore, it has increased 94 times in volume and more than 3.5 times in value in CY-2024.

Unified Payment Interface (UPI) : Volume of UPI transactions reflects a CAGR of 74.03 %, value of the transactions represented a CAGR of 68.14% in last 5 years.

Credit cards & Debit cards : Number of credit cards has more than doubled in five years whereas debit cards have remained relatively stable in last 5 years.

Global trends : India joined Project Nexus, facilitating multilateral linkage of fast payment systems (FPS) of four ASEAN Nations (Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore and Thailand) and India.

Project Nexus, conceptualized by Bank for International Settlements (BIS), enables instant cross-border retail payments by interlinking domestic FPSs.

RBI has digital Payments Index (DPI) increased 4.45% to 465.33 in September 2024, up from 445.5 in March 2024.

RBI – Digital Payments Index for September 2024.

The index for September 2024 stands at 465.33 as against 445.5 for March 2024.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been publishing a composite Reserve Bank of India – Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) since January 1, 2021

The RBI-DPI comprises of 5 broad parameters:- These parameters are

1. Payment Enablers (weight 25%).
2. Payment Infrastructure – Demand-side factors (10%).
3. Payment Infrastructure – Supply-side factors (15%).
4. Payment Performance (45%).
5. Consumer Centricity (5%).

According to the RBI's Digital Payments Index, "Payment Performance" holds the highest weight among all parameters, typically representing around 45% of the total index.

The RBI-DPI has been constructed with March 2018 as the base period, i.e. DPI score for March 2018 is set at 100.

RBI-DPI shall be published on RBI's website on a semi-annual basis from March 2021 onwards with a lag of 4 months.

SEBI develops iSPOT portal for reporting technical glitches by stock exchanges, other MIIs.

SEBI introduces Integrated SEBI Portal for Technical Glitches (iSPOT) to centralize and streamline reporting of technical issues by MIIs (stock exchanges, clearing corporations).

The iSPOT portal will serve as a centralised repository for such reports, improving data quality, traceability of submissions, and monitoring compliance requirements.

Vedanta Group will invest Rs 1 lakh crore more in Odisha for an integrated aluminium complex and an aluminium park in Rayagada district.

Vedanta Limited chairman Anil Agarwal said the company will set up an aluminium refinery with a production capacity of 6 million tonne per annum (MTPA) and a smelter with a capacity of 3 MTPA.

RBI has digital Payments Index (DPI) increased 4.45% to 465.33 in September 2024, up from 445.5 in March 2024.

Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) has launched the Trade Enablement and Marketing (TEAM) initiative to boost digital commerce for MSMEs.

About the TEAM Initiative:

The Trade Enablement and Marketing (TEAM) initiative is a government scheme designed to help MSMEs adopt digital commerce by leveraging the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).

Ministry: Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME).

Scheme Under: It has been launched under the "Raising and Accelerating MSME Productivity (RAMP)" Programme.

Aim:

To empower MSMEs by integrating them into the digital commerce ecosystem.

To promote inclusivity by ensuring 50% participation of women-led businesses.

To provide MSMEs with access to digital storefronts, payment solutions, and logistics support.

Targets:

Onboard 5 lakh MSMEs onto the ONDC network.

Conduct 150+ workshops in tier 2 and 3 cities, focusing on MSME clusters, women-led, and SC/ST-led businesses.

Implementation Partner: National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC).

Budget and Duration:

Budget: ₹277.35 crore.

Duration: Three years (2025-2028).

Indian Digital Economy to contribute to nearly one-fifth of national income by 2029-30.

The study is titled 'Estimation and Measurement of India's Digital Economy' and released by the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MEITY).

It utilizes the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Asian Development Bank (ADB) approach for measurement of digital economy.

Growth prospects: India's digital economy is expected to grow twice as fast as the overall economy.

India's digital economy is likely to rise to 13.42% by 2024-25.

Bengaluru based CRED launches beta version of e₹ wallet, becomes first fintech to integrate RBI's digital currency.

The product was developed in collaboration with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Yes Bank -- which would function as the sponsor bank and enable CBDC issuance for Cred -- the firm said in a statement.

At present, Cred is a third party application provider (TPAP) on India's real-time payment rails Unified Payment Interface (UPI).

The wallet supports transactions up to Rs 10,000 per transfer with a daily limit of Rs 50,000. Cred said that future updates will enable programmable merchant payments, CRED Pay integration and PIN-less transactions below Rs 500.

Fintech firm Slice is set to rebrand its name to Slice Small Finance Bank Ltd after its merger in North East Small Finance Bank.

The United Payments Interface (UPI) has fundamentally transformed India's digital payment landscape.

By the end of 2024, UPI accounted for 83% of the total payment volume in India.

This is an increase from 34% in 2019.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has reported that UPI transactions surged to 17,221 crore, contributing to an overall payment volume of 20,787 crore.

RBI supersedes board of Aviom India Housing Finance.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has removed the board of directors of Aviom India Housing Finance Private Limited, citing governance concerns and payment defaults.

The RBI appointed Ram Kumar, the former chief general manager of Punjab National Bank, as the administrator of the company.

The RBI took this action based on recommendations from the National Housing Bank (NHB).

SEBI launched 'Dharohar – Milestones in the Indian Securities Market,' a digital knowledge repository that highlights the history and evolution of India's securities market

NHB-promoted RMBS Development Company receives registration certificate from RBI.

RMBS Development Company Limited (RDCL) has received Certificate of Registration (CoR) from Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to commence operations

RBI Approves Establishment of NUCFDC.

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah will inaugurate the corporate office of the National Urban Cooperative Finance and Development Corporation (NUCFDC) in Mumbai.

The event will mark the launch of several initiatives aimed at achieving Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi's vision of "Sehkar Se Samridhi" (Prosperity through Cooperation).

The NUCFDC, established with the approval of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), aims to address challenges faced by approximately 1,500 Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs).

The RBI has mandated the NUCFDC to secure a paid-up capital of ₹300 crore by February 8, 2025, within one year of its registration.

Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM), powered by NPCI BHIM Services Limited (NBSL), has joined hands with FinTech Yatra 2025 to promote financial inclusion and digital literacy across India.

IDBI Bank has announced the reappointment of Rakesh Sharma as Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for another three-year term.

Rakesh Sharma was MD and CEO of Lakshmi Vilas Bank Ltd. from 2014 to 2015 and Canara Bank from 2015 to 2018.

RBL Bank & Piramal Finance partner to offer Co-Lending Business.

Lakhpati Didis' felicitated as strength of country's economy.

The Rural Development Ministry felicitated Lakhpati Didis on the occasion of the 76th Republic Day at the Sashakt Samudaya, Sashakt Lakhpati Didi program in New Delhi.

Speaking on the occasion, Minister of State for Rural Development Dr Chandra Shekhar Pemmasani highlighted that more than 10 crore women are associated with self-help groups and the participation of women has increased rapidly in the last 10 years.

He also hailed the Lakhpati Didis as the strength of the country's economy.

Lakhpati Didi Scheme.

Launched in: 2023

Nodal ministry: Ministry of Rural Development

Aim: To catalyze economic empowerment and financial independence among women in rural areas.

Criteria for identifying potential lakhpati Didi:

A Self Help Group member who has completed a minimum of two years and has availed of the Community Investment Fund (CIF).

The government aims to train 3 crore women to become influencers both at home and in their communities.

The objective is to shift the focus from social and financial inclusion to entrepreneurial success.

The programme is aimed at training women in self-help groups (SHGs) to earn a sustainable income of at least Rs 1 lakh per annum per household.

The Reserve Bank of India's Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS) saw a 32.81% increase in complaints in FY 2023-24, totaling 9.34 lakh.

The major complaint areas included loans, mobile banking, deposits, and credit cards.

The scheme provides a unified, customer-friendly grievance redressal mechanism across India, with a 30-day resolution goal.

The major categories of complaints included:

Loans and Advances: 85,281 complaints (29.01% of total), a 42.70% increase from the previous year.

Mobile/Electronic Banking: 57,242 complaints (19.48% of total), a 32.61% increase.

Deposit Accounts: 46,358 complaints (15.77% of total), a 34.45% increase.

Credit Cards: 42,329 complaints (14.40% of total), a 23.95% increase.

Top Contributors: Chandigarh, NCT of Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Uttarakhand had the highest complaints per lakh accounts.

Federal Bank Partners with Ecofy to Provide Solar Installations for MSMEs.

Federal Bank partnered with Ecofy, India's first green-only NBFC, to provide innovative financing solutions for MSMEs investing in commercial rooftop solar installations.

Annual Target: Finance 3,600 kW of rooftop solar installations.

Bajaj Finance and Bharti Airtel form a strategic partnership to create a digital platform for financial services.

RBI penalises Canara Bank, Bank of India, J&K Bank for non-compliance.

Jammu & Kashmir Bank was penalised ₹3.31 crore for breaches of directions relating to financial inclusion, Know Your Customer (KYC) norms, and loans and advances.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has slapped a penalty of ₹1.63 crore on Canara Bank for non-compliance with its guidelines on priority sector lending, interest rates on deposits, and financial inclusion.

Bank of India faced a ₹1 crore fine for failing to transfer eligible funds to the Depositor Education and Awareness Fund within the specified timeframe.

Government of India has sanctioned a ₹500 crore capital infusion into the Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI) for the financial year 2024-25.

Reliance Jio has launched JioSoundPay that provides sound alerts on JioBharat phones for UPI payments received.

Tata Electronics buys 60% stake in Pegatron local arm for iPhone plant.

Tata Electronics has bought a 60% stake in Taiwanese contract manufacturer Pegatron's India unit that operates an iPhone plant.

Government e-Marketplace crosses ₹4 lakh crore in GMV within 10 months of FY25.

Government e Marketplace (GeM) has surpassed last years' historic high Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) of ₹4 lakh crore within 10 months of the current Fiscal Year 2024-25 (FY).

As on January 23, GeM has clocked a GMV of ₹4.09 Lakh Crore, which marks a growth of nearly 50% over the corresponding period last FY.

Amazon Web Services (AWS) will invest \$8.3 billion in its Cloud infrastructure in Maharashtra, contributing \$15.3 billion to India's gross domestic product (GDP) by 2030.

India's third-biggest private sector lender Kotak Mahindra Bank has completed the acquisition of ₹3,300 crore personal loan portfolio of Standard Chartered Bank India.

IRCTC to team up with ITC, Tata and Harvest Gold for food delivery.

MSP of Raw Jute increased to Rs.5,650 per quintal for 2025-26 season.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the minimum support price (MSP) of raw jute (TD-3 grade) for the agricultural marketing season 2025-26 at Rs 5650 per quintal.

The MSP of Rs.5,650/- per quintal for 2025-26 season is an increase of Rs 315 per quintal as compared to the 2024-25 season.

Jute is also known as the golden fiber and India is the largest producer of raw jute in the world.

SEBI has proposed bit-sized systematic investment plans (SIP) of Rs.250 in a step to increase the mutual fund footprint in the under-served section of the country.

Hindustan Unilever acquires a 90.5% stake in beauty brand Minimalist, valuing it at ₹2,955 crore.

Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) acquired SIL Foods in January 2025.

Bengaluru-based Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) has announced the acquisition of Mumbai-based SIL Foods for an undisclosed sum.

Reliance Industries is set to provide Rs. 100 crore in funding to the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).

The investment is being made by Reliance for developing 11 varieties of grass species to serve as feedstock for compressed biogas (CBG) production in the country.

India Clarifies Tax Treaties with Mauritius, Cyprus, and Singapore.

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) in India has clarified that investments made under tax treaties with Mauritius, Cyprus, and Singapore will not be subject to retrospective scrutiny under the Principal Purpose Test (PPT).

The CBDT clarified that the PPT provision under Double Taxation Avoidance Agreements (DTAAs) would be applied only prospectively.

Netradyne Becomes India's First Unicorn of 2025 with \$1.34 Billion Valuation.

Netradyne, an AI-driven logistics solutions startup, has achieved unicorn status, becoming the first Indian startup of 2025 to reach this milestone.

Netradyne Founded in 2015 by Avneesh Agrawal.

Tata Tops India, Apple Leads Globally in 2025 Brand Rankings.

Brand Finance Global 500 report for 2025, Tata Group has solidified its status as India's most valuable brand, achieving a brand value of \$31.6 billion—a 10% increase from the previous year.

This marks the first time an Indian brand has surpassed the \$30 billion threshold.
 Ranked 60th among the world's top 100 brands, Tata Group has maintained its AAA- brand strength rating.
 Infosys: Achieved a 15% increase in brand value, reaching \$16.3 billion, and climbed to the 132nd position globally.
 Notably, Infosys has recorded the fastest compound annual growth rate (18%) among IT services brands over the past five years.
 LIC: Emerged as the fastest-growing Indian brand with a 36% surge in brand value, totaling \$13.3 billion. The company boasts a Brand Strength Index score of 88 out of 100, the highest among Indian brands in the global ranking.
 Apple: Retains the top spot with a brand value of \$574.5 billion.
 Microsoft: Holds the second position with a brand value of \$461.1 billion.
 Google: Ranks third with a brand value of \$413 billion

Microsoft's Satya Nadella tops HSBC Hurun Global Indians List 2024.

Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella has claimed the top spot in the inaugural HSBC Hurun Global Indians List 2024, which ranks 226 leaders of Indian origin heading the world's most valuable companies.
 Alphabet CEO Sundar Pichai and YouTube CEO Neal Mohan secured the second and third spots, respectively.

Zepto has introduced 'Zepto Pharmacy' 10 minute medicine delivery.
 Aadit Palicha and Kaivalya Vohra founded of Zepto.
 Palicha is the CEO of Zepto.

The Indian government extended the free import policy for tur (pigeon peas) until March 31, 2026.

This decision aims to ensure continued stable supplies and moderate prices of this essential pulse crop in the domestic market.

Tata AIG unveils CyberEdge , target 25% cyber insurance market share by 2030.

Tata AIG has launched CyberEdge, a cyber insurance solution aimed at protecting Indian businesses against various cyber risks.

Skydo gets RBI nod to operate as Payment Aggregator-Cross Border entity.

Skydo Technologies Private Limited has received in-principle authorization from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a Payment Aggregator-Cross Border (PA-CB) entity.
 Skydo founders Movin Jain and Srivatsan Sridhar.
 Srivatsan Sridhar : Co-Founder and CEO of Skydo.

RBI has set up a new standing external advisory committee, which will evaluate applications for universal banks and small finance banks (SFBs).

The committee headed by former RBI deputy governor M K Jain as the chairperson, has five members.
 The minimum capital for Small Finance is prescribed at Rs. 200 crore .
 Reserve Bank of India (RBI) requires Small Finance Banks (SFBs) to have a minimum net worth of ₹1,000 crore to transition into universal banks.

Indian government allowed the export of one million tonnes of sugar for the 2024-25 season.

The sugar production in India for the 2024-25 season is estimated to be 27 million tonnes.
 This is a decrease from the 32 million tonnes produced in the previous year.
 Uttar Pradesh is the largest producer of sugarcane in India, followed by Maharashtra and Karnataka.

Mudra Loans Disbursal Hits Record ₹3.39 Lakh Crore in Q3 FY25.

In the third quarter of the fiscal year 2024-25, the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) achieved a historic milestone by disbursing ₹3.39 lakh crore in loans, marking the highest quarterly disbursement since the scheme's inception in 2015.
 Increased Loan Limits: Effective October 24, 2024, the government raised the maximum loan amount under PMMY from ₹10 lakh to ₹20 lakh.
 This adjustment, announced during the Union Budget 2024-25, introduced the 'Tarun Plus' category, enabling successful borrowers to access higher credit limits.

RBI paves way for faster resolution of retail NPAs for ARCs.

ARCs are registered under the RBI and regulated under the Securitisation and Reconstruction of Financial Assets and Enforcement of Securities Interest Act, 2002 (SARFAESI Act, 2002).
 They function under the supervision and control of the RBI.
 ARCs can settle dues up to ₹1 crore without an independent advisory committee. The revised RBI

guidelines allow ARCs to handle small borrower dues directly, streamlining the settlement process. To commence the business of securitisation or asset reconstruction, an ARC is required to have a minimum net owned fund (NOF) of Rs 300 crore and thereafter, on an ongoing basis. They are also mandated to maintain a capital adequacy ratio of a minimum of 15% of its total risk-weighted assets.

Competition Commission of India (CCI) has imposed a penalty of Rs 40 lakh Goldman Sachs over Biocon deal failure .

Groww Mutual Fund launched India's first Nifty India Railways PSU ETF.

The ETF is an exchange-traded fund (ETF) that provides exposure to public sector undertakings (PSUs) in the Indian railway sector.

Nigeria has been officially admitted as a “partner country” of the BRICS bloc.

Nigeria becomes the ninth BRICS partner country, joining Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Thailand, Uganda, and Uzbekistan.

Full-Time Members: The bloc consists of Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Iran, Egypt, Ethiopia, United Arab Emirates and Indonesia.

Partner Nations: BRICS partner nations include Nigeria, Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Thailand, Uganda, and Uzbekistan.

Employee Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has extended the deadline for activating Universal Account Numbers (UAN) and linking Aadhaar with bank accounts.

Universal Account Number (UAN) is a number allotted to all salaried employees, who contribute a part of their income towards the Employee Provident Fund (EPF).

It is a 12-digit number that each member of the EPF is allotted against his/her name.

It is generated and allotted by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) and authenticated by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.

When an employee changes his job, his EPF account number and Member Identification Number (Member Id) change, but UAN remains the same

Financial Intelligence Unit (FIU-IND) and National Housing Bank (NHB) sign MoU for enhanced coordination and information exchange.

As per the RBI, Outward foreign direct investment (OFDI) by domestic firms has seen a jump of nearly 17% to \$37.68 billion in 2024.

In 2023, total overseas direct investment stood at \$32.29 billion.

In the last calendar year, overseas FDI by local companies in the form of equity stood at \$12.69 billion, a rise of 40% over the 2023.

Overseas Direct Investment (ODI) refers to an investment made by a company or individual in assets or businesses located in another country.

IMF cuts India's growth forecast to 6.5% from 7% for FY 25.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF) retained India's growth projection at 6.5% for FY26 and FY27, citing it as "in line with potential."

Canadian billionaire Prem Watsa-backed IIFL Finance raised funds from the global debt capital market (DCM).

This made IIFL Finance the third Indian firm to do so.

IIFL Finance raised \$325 million for a 3.5-year bond at 8.75%.

Who is Prem Watsa?

Prem Watsa is an Indian-Canadian billionaire businessman.

He is the founder, chairman, and chief executive of Fairfax Financial Holdings.

He is often called the "Canadian Warren Buffett".

He was awarded the Padma Shri, India's fourth highest civilian award, in 2020.

RBI Instructs Banks to Adopt ‘1600xx’ Number Series for Transactional Calls.

To address the rise in financial fraud, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has mandated that banks and other regulated entities (REs) exclusively use the ‘1600xx’ number series for transactional calls and the ‘140xx’ series for promotional calls.

This initiative is designed to strengthen the security of digital transactions and protect customers from fraudulent activities.

Key Directives from the RBI:

Designated Number Series: Banks must adopt the ‘1600xx’ series for transactional communications and the ‘140xx’ series for promotional messages. This differentiation is aimed at minimizing the risk of fraud.

Customer Database Monitoring: Financial institutions must regularly update their customer databases, using the Mobile Number Revocation List (MNRL) on the Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP) by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) to identify and eliminate invalid or revoked numbers.

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs): Banks should develop procedures for verifying and updating registered mobile numbers and enhance monitoring of accounts linked to revoked numbers to prevent misuse.

Compliance Deadline: All regulated entities must adhere to these guidelines by March 31, 2025, emphasizing the urgency of implementing these measures to safeguard customers against financial fraud.

HSBC India announced that it had received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to open 20 new branches across India.

The new branches will be located in cities such as Navi Mumbai, Lucknow, Mysuru, Nagpur, and Nashik.

Ministry of Steel has proposed merging NMDC Limited with KIOCL Limited.

KIOCL Limited, formerly known as Kudremukh Iron Ore Company Limited, is a Mini-Ratna CPSE under the administrative control of the Ministry of Steel. Established in 1976.

While NMDC Limited, a Navratna CPSE, is India's largest iron ore producer. In the financial year 2023-24, NMDC achieved a turnover of Rs 21,294 crore.

Indian Cabinet has approved a revival plan for Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (RINL) at a total cost of Rs. 11,440 crore, aiming to revitalize the company which operates the Visakhapatnam Steel Plant in Andhra Pradesh

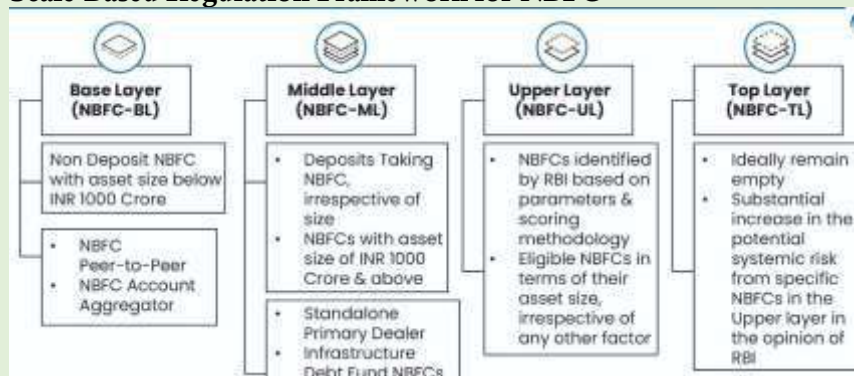
World Bank projects India's economy to grow by 6.7 per cent in the next fiscal year starting in April.

RBI releases list of Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFCs) in the Upper Layer (NBFC-UL) for 2024-25.

The list includes LIC Housing Finance Limited, PNB Housing Finance Limited, Shriram Finance Limited etc. and is in accordance with Scale Based Regulation (SBR), a regulatory framework for NBFCs. Once an NBFC is classified as NBFC-UL, it is subjected to enhanced regulatory requirement, at least for a period of 5 years.

The framework has been introduced to mitigate contagion or systemic risks, apply the principle of proportionality in regulation and strengthen quality and improve risk management of NBFCs.

Scale Based Regulation Framework for NBFC



About NBFC Regulation

Regulatory Powers: RBI regulates NBFCs under the RBI Act, 1934, with powers to register, inspect, and supervise NBFCs meeting the 50-50 principal business criteria.

50-50 Principal Business Criteria: Financial activity constitutes over 50% of total assets and gross income.

Requirements for NBFC Registration

Must be a company registered under Section 3 of the Companies Act, 1956.

Minimum Net Owned Fund (NOF) of ₹200 lakh.

RBI Liberalizes FEMA Rules for Cross-Border Transactions.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has liberalized norms under the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) of 1999 to promote the use of the Indian Rupee (INR) in cross-border transactions.

This initiative aims to stabilize the INR and encourage its internationalization, especially at a time when the currency is facing depreciation pressures.

What are the Changes Made in FEMA Regulations by RBI

Opening INR Accounts for Non-Residents : Overseas branches of Authorized Dealer banks can now open INR accounts for non-residents. This allows non-residents to settle all permissible current and capital account transactions with residents of India in Indian Rupees.

Repatriable INR Accounts: The RBI has enabled non-residents to settle transactions with other non-residents using balances in their repatriable INR accounts, such as Special Non-Resident Rupee Accounts (SNRR) and Special Rupee Vostro Accounts (SRVA).

Foreign Investment: Non-resident Indians (NRIs) can now use the balances in their INR accounts to make foreign investments, including Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in non-debt instruments. This strengthens the role of INR in global investment flows.

Foreign Currency Accounts for Exporters: Indian exporters can now open accounts in any foreign currency overseas to settle trade transactions. This includes receiving export proceeds and using those funds to pay for imports.

Power Finance Corporation (PFC) signed a 120 billion Japanese yen (JPY) loan agreement with the Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC).

This loan, part of JBIC's Global action for Reconciling Economic growth and Environmental preservation (GREEN) initiative, aims to finance PFC's renewable energy projects in India.

Punjab & Sind Bank is set to launch an instant loan scheme for the MSME sector this month, offering loans of up to Rs 25 lakh.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced daily variable rate repo (VRR) auctions in Mumbai to address liquidity issues in the banking system.

The first auction was held on January 16, 2025, with an amount of 500 billion rupees (\$5.78 billion).

US firm IBC to invest Rs.390 crore initially to set up lithium -ion giga factory in Karnataka.

National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL) has emerged as the sole bidder to acquire the distressed assets of Jaiprakash Associates at a price of Rs. 12,000 crore.

Ministry of Commerce & Industry marks 9 years of Startup India Initiative.

Startup India Initiative was launched as a flagship initiative of Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) in 2016.

Key-features of Startup India Initiative

Objective: To catalyse startup culture and build a strong and inclusive ecosystem for innovation and entrepreneurship in India.

Core Features:

Ease of Doing Business: Simplified compliance, self-certification, and single-window clearances.

Tax Benefits: Tax exemptions for 3 consecutive financial years.

Funding Support: ₹10,000 crore Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) supports early-stage funding.

Sector-Specific Policies: Like biotechnology, agriculture, and renewable energy.

Key Achievements.

Increase in Startups: DPIIT-recognised startups increased from 500 (2016) to 1.59 lakh (2025).

Startup Ecosystem: India became third-largest startup ecosystem in the world with over 100 unicorns.

Employment Generation: Of over 16.6 lakh direct jobs as of October 31, 2024.

Women Empowerment: 73,151 recognised startups have at least one woman director.

NPCI International partners with Magnati to expand UPI acceptance in UAE.

NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) has partnership with UAE-based payment solution provider Magnati to advance QR-based Unified Payments Interface (UPI) merchant payments via point-of-sale (POS) terminals in the Middle East.

Tata Capital raised \$400 million through a bond issue in January 2025.

This was the first time the company issued dollar-denominated bonds.

The bonds were sold to investors in Asia and Europe.

The bonds were sold at an interest rate of 5.389%

The bonds matured in 3.5 years

The bonds were sold to investors in Hong Kong, Singapore, and London.

The government has approved a fund raising plan to the tune of ₹10,000 crore for five state-run lenders through the Qualified Institutional Placement (QIP) route.

Other than Bank of Maharashtra, four other lenders, Punjab & Sind Bank, Indian Overseas Bank, UCO Bank and Central Bank of India have received approval to raise funds.

The government is trying to meet the 25% minimum public shareholding norms within these PSU Bank by August 2026.

The government holds a 79.6% stake in Bank of Maharashtra, while it owns a 98.25% stake in Punjab & Sind Bank, 96.38% stake in Indian Overseas Bank, 95.39% stake in UCO Bank and 93.08% stake in Central Bank of India at the end of the December quarter.

Reliance-backed hyperlocal delivery app Dunzo has gone offline following the departure of cofounder and CEO Kabeer Biswas after he joined Flipkart.

Reliance Power plans to invest over Rs 10000 crore in a solar plant and an integrated solar manufacturing facility in Andhra Pradesh.

First Phase of Bima Sugam to be Launched on Mid-2025.

Bima Sugam is a transformative project launched by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

This initiative aims to create a comprehensive digital platform for insurance transactions, akin to Amazon's model. Originally slated for an April 2025 launch, the first phase is now expected mid-2025.

The capital requirement for Bima Sugam has escalated to approximately ₹500 crore. This is increase from the earlier projections of ₹100-200 crore.

Prasun Sikdar is the first CEO of Bima Sugam.

The Insolvency and Bankruptcy Board of India (IBBI) has mandated the exclusive use of the eBKray auction platform for asset sales in liquidation processes starting April 1, 2025.

eBKray is a property listing and e-auction platform designed for banks and lending institutions .

India's reliance on imported crude oil climbed to 88.2% during the first six months of FY25, up from 87.6% in the same period of FY24.

India is the world's third largest crude oil importer.

India's main sources of crude oil imports are Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Russia, United States and the United Arab Emirates.

The top five oil-producing nations in 2024 were the United States, Saudi Arabia, Russia, Canada, and China.

The top oil-consuming countries in the world are the United States, China, India, Russia and Saudi Arabia.

World Bank has approved a \$35 million project aimed at improving education and empowering youth in Meghalaya.

The project, called MPOWER (Meghalaya Multisectoral Project for Adolescent Wellbeing, Empowerment, and Resilience), will benefit over 500,000 adolescents across the state, targeting high dropout rates and helping youth transition from school to employment

The government has extended the loan ceiling under the modified interest subvention (MIS) scheme from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh for Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans.

Kisan Credit Cards would facilitate short-term loans for 7.7 crore farmers, fishermen, and dairy farmers.

What is the Kisan Credit Card scheme?

Kisan Credit Card (KCC) Scheme, launched in August 1998, across the country with the objective of providing adequate and timely credit to the farmers, including Self Help Groups (SHGs) or Joint Liability Groups of Farmers including tenant farmers, share croppers etc.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has raised the collateral-free loan limit for farmers from Rs 1.6 lakh to Rs 2 lakh, effective January 1, 2025.

PhonePe and ICICI Lombard General Insurance partnered to offer insurance for people traveling to the 2025 Maha Kumbh Mela.

Reserve Bank innovation Hub and IIMA ventures launched Swanari TechSprint 3.0 , a programme aimed at fostering women centric Fintech startup in India.

KredX received the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) approval to launch its Trade Receivables Discounting System (TReDS) platform, DTX (Domestic Trade Exchange).

DTX is KredX's TReDS platform that uses advanced technology to provide a user-friendly experience for MSMEs .

What is TReDS?

TReDS is a government-backed program that allows MSMEs to electronically discount trade receivables

The RBI issued guidelines for TReDS in 2018 under the Payment & Settlement Systems Act, 2007 .

Turnover threshold of buyers for mandatory onboarding on the TReDS platform to be reduced from 500 crore to 250 crore.

What is the timeline for registration on TReDS?

All companies with a turnover exceeding INR 250 crore, along with CPSEs involved in procurement from MSMEs, are required to register on the TReDS platform by March 31, 2025

According to a recent UN report, India's economy is projected to grow by 6.6% in 2025 and 6.7% in 2026.

This information comes from the United Nations' "World Economic Situation and Prospects 2025" report.

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has launched its first Cybersecurity Hackathon 2024-25, with the theme Code Against Malware”.

Emami has recently rebranded its men's grooming product "Fair and Handsome" to "Smart and Handsome".

New Brand Name: "Smart and Handsome"

Company: Emami

Previous Brand Name: "Fair and Handsome".

Brand ambassador : Kartik Aaryan.

The rebranding of the ₹250-crore brand, which enjoys a market leadership of around 65 per cent in India's male grooming category.

Government to Provide ₹35,000 Crore LPG Subsidy to IOC, BPCL, and HPCL.

Indian government is likely to provide a subsidy of ₹35,000 crore to the state-owned oil companies Bharat Petroleum Corporation Ltd (BPCL), Indian Oil Corporation Ltd (IOC), and Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Ltd (HPCL).

IOC, BPCL and HPCL are likely to get Rs 10,000 crore during the current 2024-25 fiscal and the remaining Rs 25,000 crore in the next.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) lifted restrictions on Asirvad Micro Finance Limited and DMI Finance Private Limited.

The restrictions were due to concerns about the companies' pricing policies, such as their Weighted Average Lending Rate (WALR) and Interest Spread

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is currently ranked as the second largest central bank gold buyer globally, with the National Bank of Poland holding the top spot as the largest buyer in 2024.

RBI's gold purchases:

The RBI added 8 tonnes of gold to its reserves in November 2024, bringing its total year-to-date purchases to 73 tonnes.

Poland's leading position:

The National Bank of Poland (NBP) purchased 21 tonnes of gold in November, totaling 90 tonnes for the year, placing them as the largest gold buyer.

Tuhin Kanta Pandey was appointed as the Revenue Secretary of India in January 2025.

Arunish Chawla was appointed as the Secretary of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM).

Tuhin Kanta Pandey has also been designated as the Finance Secretary of India.

The Indian government revised its November 2024 gold import estimates from \$14.8 billion to \$9.84 billion, a reduction of \$5 billion.

RBI consolidates instructions on credit information of customers.

With customers facing inordinate delays in data updation by credit information companies (CICs) and credit institutions (CIs) like banks and finance companies, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has directed them that complainants should be given a compensation of Rs 100 per calendar day in case their complaint is not resolved within a period of 30 calendar days from the date of the initial filing of the complaint by a customer with a CI or CIC

At present, four credit information companies are given certificates of registration by the RBI. These companies are Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited (CIBIL), Equifax Credit Information Services Private Limited, Experian Credit Information Company of India Private Limited and CRIF High Mark Credit Information Services Private Limited.

According to the National Statistical Office (NSO), India's real GDP growth for FY 2024-25 is expected to slow to 6.4 percent, compared to the 8.2 percent growth recorded in the provisional estimates for FY 2023-24.

Microsoft will invest \$3 billion (about Rs 25,700 crore) to expand its cloud computing and artificial intelligence capabilities in India.

The tech giant will also train 10 million people in AI skills in India by 2030.

India Exim Bank has raised USD 1 billion through 10-year USD-denominated bonds in the international market.

This marks the first dollar bond issuance by an Indian entity in 2025.

India Exim Bank has raised USD 1 billion through 10-year USD-denominated bonds in the international market.

Union Minister for Steel and Heavy Industries H.D. Kumaraswamy has launched the second round of

PLI Scheme for Specialty Steels, called PLI Scheme 1.1, in New Delhi.

The first round of the Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme for Specialty Steel was notified in July 2021 by the Ministry of Steel with a budgetary outlay of ₹ 6,322 Crore.

The revised version of the scheme, termed 'PLI Scheme 1.1' introduces relaxed norms to encourage greater industry participation.

The scheme will remain open for applications from January 6th to January 31st, 2025 and will be implemented during the production period of FY 2025-26 to FY 2029-30.

Key Features of the Scheme

PLI Scheme 1.1 covers five (5) product categories in line with the existing PLI Scheme namely: –

Coated / Plated Steel Products,
High Strength / Wear-resistant Steel,
Specialty Rails,
Alloy Steel Products & Steel wires and
Electrical Steel.

The scheme will operate within the funds originally allocated for the scheme, i.e., Rs.6,322 crore

Nxtra, Bizongo lead emerging unicorns.

INDIA'S UNICORN CLUB may soon welcome five new members, as startups valued at or above \$900 million prepare to cross the \$1-billion valuation threshold by 2025.

Leading the pack is Airtel-backed Nxtra Data, valued at \$986 million post-money, followed closely by Bizongo at \$980 million. Bluestone (\$965 million), Turtlemint and Leap (both \$900 million) round out the list of emerging contenders, according to Crunchbase data.

State Bank of India (SBI) has begun offering collateral-free study loans of up to ₹50 lakh for students heading out to top foreign universities.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved HDFC Bank to acquire up to 9.5% of the share capital in Kotak Mahindra Bank, AU Small Finance Bank, and Capital Small Finance Bank.

The approval is valid until January 2, 2026

State Bank of India recently launched two new deposit schemes namely, Har Ghar Lakhpati and SBI Patrons, designed to provide customers with greater financial flexibility and enhanced value.**About Har Ghar Lakhpati Scheme:**

It is a pre-calculated recurring deposit scheme designed to help customers to accumulate Rs 1 lakh or multiples thereof.

The new scheme simplifies the process of achieving financial goals, allowing customers to plan and save effectively.

This product is also available to minors, encouraging early financial planning and savings habits.

The minimum tenure of recurring deposits is 12 months (one year), and the maximum is 120 months (10 years).

About SBI Patrons Scheme:

This is a specialized fixed deposit scheme tailored for senior citizens aged 80 years and above.

It offers enhanced interest rates, recognizing the long-standing relationship many senior customers have with the bank.

SBI Patrons is available to existing and new term deposit customers.

SBI Patron's depositors would earn an additional 10 basis points higher interest rate than what is offered to senior citizens.

BharatPe to Sell 25% Stake in Unity Small Finance Bank.

BharatPe plans to sell up to 25% of its 49% stake in Unity Bank.

The company aims to raise approximately \$800 million (Rs 6,500 crore) through this stake sale.

RBI mandates that BharatPe's parent company, Resilient Innovation Private Limited, reduce its stake in Unity Bank to 10% by 2029.

The Secretary of the Department of Financial Services (DFS) has launched a revamped e-auction portal called 'Baanknet', which consolidates information on all properties listed for e-auction by public sector banks (PSBs).**What is Baanknet?**

It is a newly launched e-auction portal that consolidates information about properties put up for auction by public sector banks (PSBs).

It operates as a one-stop destination for buyers and investors, showing a wide range of properties such as residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural assets.

As per the latest annual report published by the IRDAI, Rs 20,062 crore lies unclaimed by insurers by the end of FY 2023-24.

All insurers having unclaimed amounts of policyholders for a period of more than 10 years.

The government recently announced the formation of an 18-member panel headed by NITI Aayog member Ramesh Chand to revise the base year of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and suggest a road map for switching over to the Producer Price Index (PPI).

It was established to revise the base year of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) from 2011-12 to 2022-23.

Propose a revised commodity basket for the WPI and the Producer Price Index (PPI) with the base year 2022-23, considering structural changes in the economy.

UPI hits record with ₹16.73 billion in transactions worth ₹23.25 lakh crore in December 2024.

UPI transactions reached 16.73 billion in December 2024, an 8% increase from November. The total transaction value was ₹23.25 lakh crore.

RBI's new guidelines will close dormant, inactive, and zero balance accounts starting January 1, 2025.

Account holders must take steps to reactivate or maintain their accounts to avoid closure.

Reactivate inactive accounts by making transactions and engaging with dormant accounts at the bank branch.

Zero balance accounts will be closed to prevent misuse and enhance KYC compliance.

New FD rules with NBFCs and HFCs will simplify premature withdrawals and communication.

Types of Accounts Facing Closure

1. Dormant Accounts:

Accounts that have not shown any transaction for two or more years will be classified as dormant. These accounts are more susceptible to misuse and fraud, making their closure essential for maintaining banking security.

2. Inactive Accounts:

If an account has had no transactions for over 12 months, it will be considered inactive. To prevent closure, account holders must reactivate the account by making at least one transaction.

3. Zero Balance Accounts:

Accounts that have been maintaining a zero balance for an extended period may also be closed. This step is intended to eliminate the misuse of such accounts and ensure compliance with Know Your Customer (KYC) norms.

Steps to Avoid Account Closure

To ensure your account remains active and open, customers are advised to take the following actions:

Reactivate Inactive Accounts: If your account has been inactive for over 12 months, make a transaction to reactivate it.

Engage with Dormant Accounts: Accounts that have been dormant for two years should be reactivated by visiting the bank branch.

Maintain a Positive Balance: Avoid leaving your account with a zero balance for long periods to keep it active.

Along with the account closures, RBI has introduced new rules for fixed deposits (FDs) with Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) and Housing Finance Companies (HFCs). The new regulations simplify terms for premature withdrawal and aim to improve communication between financial institutions and depositors.

RBI tightens liquidity norms for deposit-taking HFCs.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has implemented revised norms requiring deposit-taking housing finance companies (HFCs) to maintain higher levels of liquid assets against their deposits.

Effective January 1, 2025, these companies must hold liquid assets equivalent to 14 per cent of their outstanding deposits. This includes 8 per cent in unencumbered approved securities, calculated as a percentage of public deposits.

Furthermore, the RBI has mandated that by July 1, 2025, the total liquid assets requirement will increase to 15 per cent, including 10 per cent in unencumbered approved securities.

Prior to this update, deposit-taking HFCs were required to maintain 13 per cent of their public deposits as liquid assets. The phased increase to 15 per cent ensures a more robust liquidity framework, aiming to safeguard depositors' interests and enhance financial stability.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) lifted restrictions on Sangli Sahakari Bank in January 2025 after 2.5 years.

The decision was taken after a review of the bank's financial position, concluding that it was in the public interest to remove the restrictions

Union Ministry of Finance has made no change in the interest rates on the various schemes under the National Small Saving Scheme, for the last quarters of the 2024-25 fiscal year.

The interest rate will remain unchanged from 1st January to 31st March 2025.

1. Saving Accounts:

The minimum account opening requirement is Rs 500 and no maximum limit.

The interest rate is 4 % per year.

It is the only savings account in India that is not regulated by the Reserve Bank of India.

2. National Citizen Savings Scheme:

It is for persons above 60 years.

The minimum account opening requirement is Rs 1000 and the maximum is Rs 30 lakhs.

the interest rate is 8.2 % per year and it is paid every quarter.

The duration of the scheme is 5 years.

3. Sukanya Samridhi Yojana:

For girl children below 10 years of age.

Accounts can be opened in a maximum of two girls' names.

Rate of Interest 8.2 % per year.

Minimum account opening Rs 250 and maximum 1.50 lakhs in a financial year.

Deposit for a maximum period of 15 years from the opening of the account.

The account can be closed after 21 years from the date of opening of the account or at the time of marriage of the girl after she attains 18 years of age.

4. National Saving Certificates (NSC):

The minimum account opening amount is Rs 1000 and no maximum limit.

Interest rate -7.7% per year.

The duration of the scheme is 5 years.

The principal and interest amount is paid after 5 years.

5. Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP):

The minimum account opening is Rs 1000 and no maximum limit.

The interest rate is 7.5% and the deposit amount doubles in 115 months.

The principal and interest amount is paid after 115 months.

6. Mahila Samman Saving Certificates :

Minimum account opening Rs 1000 and maximum Rs 2 lakh. It is for women only.

Interest rate 7.5% per year.

The duration of the scheme is 2 years.

The principal and interest amount is paid after 2 years.

7. Public Provident Fund:

Only one account per person can be opened in the post office or banks.

The account can be opened in the name of minors.

Minimum account opening Rs 500 and maximum Rs 1.5 lakh in a financial year.

Interest rates are 7.1% per year.

Duration -15 years.

Scheme-Wise Interest Rates for January to March 2025.

Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana: 8.2%

Public Provident Fund (PPF): 7.1%

Post Office Savings Deposit Schemes: 4%

Kisan Vikas Patra (Matures in 115 months): 7.5%

National Savings Certificate (NSC): 7.7%

Monthly Income Scheme: 7.4%

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) extended the deadline for Third-Party App Providers (TPAPs) to comply with the 30% transaction cap on UPI transaction volumes till 31st December, 2026.

This decision impacts major TPAPs like PhonePe and Google Pay, which collectively hold over 80% of UPI transactions.

To comply with the 30% cap, TPAPs exceeding the limit must halt onboarding new customers.

NPCI: It was established by RBI and Indian Banks' Association under the provisions of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.

TPAPs: They are entities that offer UPI-based financial services through mobile apps or platforms, acting

as intermediaries between users and banks (referred to as sponsor banks).
TPAPs are not part of banks or financial institutions.

UCB stakeholders race to meet ₹300 crore capital target by RBI deadline.

Urban Cooperative bank (UCB) stakeholders, including the Union Ministry of Cooperation and the National Federation of Urban Cooperative Banks and Credit Societies Ltd (NAFCUB), are racing against time to ensure that the umbrella organisation (UO) for UCBs has the required ₹300 crore capital by the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) February 7, 2025 deadline.

Power Grid inks USD 200 mn green loan pact with SMBC.

Power Grid Corporation of India has inked a green loan pact with Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation (SMBC).

This facility denominated in JPY for a US Dollar equivalent of 200 million with a greenshoe option of USD 150 million highlights the strategic collaboration between Power Grid and SMBC to develop critical infrastructure for renewable energy evacuation and integration into the national grid.

IDBI Bank's board of directors approved raising ₹10,000 crore through long-term bonds.

The bonds will be issued in phases to finance infrastructure projects and affordable housing.

NaBFID invests Rs 745 crore in long-term bonds issued by NDR InvIT.

National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) has invested Rs 745 crore in long-term bonds issued by NDR InvIT.

NDR InvIT is an Infrastructure Investment Trust managed by NDR InvIT Managers and sponsored by NDR Warehousing Private Limited.

These 15-year bonds.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) recently introduced the Mutual Funds Lite (MF Lite) framework to simplify compliance for entities launching passively managed mutual fund schemes.

Shriram Housing Finance Rebrands as Truhome Finance.

BANKING, ECONOMY AND FINANCIAL AWARENESS

DECEMBER 2024

RBI proposed a name lookup facility for NEFT and RTGS to verify beneficiary names, mandating implementation by April 1, 2025.

NPCI will develop and onboard banks, with the feature accessible via internet, mobile banking, and branches.

DIFFERENCE BETWEEN NEFT, RTGS AND IMPS 			
BASIS OF COMPARISON	NEFT	RTGS	IMPS
Minimum transfer value	Re. 1	Rs. 2 lakh	Re. 1
Payment options	Online and offline	Online and offline	Online
Maximum transfer value	No limit	No limit	Rs. 2 lakh
Settlement type	Half hourly basis	Real time	Real time
Inward transaction charges	No charges	No charges	Decided by the individual member banks and PPIs

RBI's Financial Stability Report Flags Rising NPAs, Global Economic Risks.

Financial Stability Report (FSR) is published by RBI bi-annually on behalf of the Financial Stability and Development Council (FSDC).

Government Finance: The central government's debt-to-GDP ratio is expected to decrease from 62.7% in 2020-21 to 56.8% by 2024-25.

Economic Growth Projections: The report projects that the Indian economy will expand by 6.6% in FY25 (2024-25), driven by a revival in rural consumption, increased government spending, and strong services exports.

Rising Non-Performing Assets (NPAs): The report indicates a potential rise in the share of bad loans among commercial banks.

Under baseline stress scenarios, the Gross Non-performing Asset (GNPA) ratio could increase from 2.6% in September 2024 to 3% by March 2026.

The FSR for December 2024 highlighted that the gross non-performing assets (NPAs) of banks fell to a 12-year low.

The non-performing assets for gold loans increased by 30% in the first quarter of 2024, mostly due to a slowing economy.

This increase is directly proportional to borrowers' increased debt levels. Individuals have found it more difficult to repay their loans as their income levels declined due to the economic slowdown.

Commercial banks' NPAs increased by 62%, to Rs 2,445 crore by June 2024, up from Rs 1,513 crore in March 2024. Non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) experienced a 24% increase, raising their NPAs to Rs 4,251 crore from Rs 3,636 crore during the same period.

About Non-Performing Assets (NPAs)

These are loans or advances where the principal or interest payment is overdue for more than 90 days. Banks treat loans as assets because the interest paid on them is a significant source of income. When customers can't make the payments, the loan stops earning for the bank and is classified as a non-performing asset.

Banks classify NPAs into three categories:

1. Substandard Assets are NPAs that have been overdue for less than or equal to 12 months.
2. Doubtful Assets are substandard assets that have remained in that category for more than 12 months.
3. Loss Assets are considered uncollectible. Their value is so low that they are not worth continuing as a bankable asset, though some recovery might still be possible.

Adani Group announced in December 2024 that it would sell its stake in Adani Wilmar to Wilmar International for over \$2 billion.

Adani Wilmar is a joint venture between the Adani Group and Wilmar International, a Singapore-based commodity trader.

Adani Enterprises sold its entire 44% stake in Adani Wilmar to Wilmar International.

Wilmar International acquired a maximum of 31.06% stake in Adani Wilmar.

Indian government is planning to double the subsidy for chip design, increasing it from Rs. 15 crore to Rs. 30 crore, as part of its new semiconductor incentive scheme "Semicon 2.0" aimed at fostering a robust chip design ecosystem within the country

The Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) extended the deadline for the Vivad Se Vishwas scheme to January 31, 2025, from December 31, 2024.

The scheme was announced in Union Budget 2023-24.

The Vivad Se Vishwas scheme is modeled on the 2019 Sabka Vishwas Scheme for indirect taxes. It facilitates the settlement of disputed tax, interest, and penalties.

The scheme also grants immunity from prosecution under the Income-tax Act for matters included in the declaration.

The minimum export price (MEP) for natural honey was extended to \$2,000 per tonne until December 31, 2025.

The MEP was first imposed in March 2024.

The extension was made under the Foreign Trade (Development & Regulation) Act, 1992 and Foreign Trade Policy, 2023.

private sector banks (PVBs) outperformed public sector banks (PSBs) in priority sector lending (PSL) in 2023-24.

This was the first time that PVBs met all PSL targets, including sub-targets for major areas like agriculture.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) requires banks to allocate a certain percentage of their adjusted net

bank credit (ANBC) to PSL.

The target is 40% for public, private, and foreign banks, and 75% for small finance banks (SFBs).

PVBs met these targets by investing in priority sector lending certificates (PSLCs).

PVBs became the major sellers of PSLCs in 2023-24, accounting for 49% of total sales.

The total trading volume of PSLCs increased by 26% in 2023-24.

The "Dharavi Redevelopment Project" has been officially renamed as "Navbharat Mega Developers".

The redevelopment of Dharavi, considered one of Asia's largest slums, located in Mumbai.

The project is a partnership between the Maharashtra government (through the Dharavi Redevelopment Authority) and the Adani Group.

Reliance Industries Limited's refinery in Jamnagar, Gujarat, recently completed 25 years since its commissioning in 1999.

Envisioned by Dhirubhai Ambani, the refinery has the world's largest crude processing capacity with the highest complexity index.

Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL) won the Gold Award at the 2024 AP State Energy Conservation Award.

The award was given for RINL's efforts to conserve energy in the iron and steel sector.

The award was given by the State Energy Conservation Mission of Andhra Pradesh.

Reserve Bank of India Innovation Hub has partnered with Vivifi Finance for a pilot project to provide unsecured loans to gig workers, including cab and food delivery drivers.

The project uses alternate data for loan underwriting and aims to integrate these workers into formal banking channels

DIGIDHAN Mission driving India's leadership role in digital payments: Finance Ministry.

India has strengthened its leadership role in digital payments, with the DIGIDHAN Mission driving the consistent growth in transactions that have surged to an unprecedented 223 lakh crore from January to November 2024.

BHIM-UPI has recorded over 15,547 crore transactions during the January-November phase this year.

HSBC India and Taj Group launched the HSBC Taj Credit Card in December 2024.

This card is India's first premium co-branded hospitality credit card. It was launched in collaboration with Visa.

DBS Bank India has launched the 'DBS Study Abroad Total Assist' program for non-resident Indians (NRIs) and high net-worth individuals (HNIs) to help them navigate the challenges of overseas education.

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has announced the introduction of 'ICICI Pru Wish', a health product catering to women' specific critical illnesses and surgeries.

This product has been developed by the company in collaboration with Reinsurance Group of America, Incorporated (RGA), a global life and health reinsurer.

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) acquired Karkinos Healthcare for ₹375 crore to expand its health services portfolio

RBI flags eightfold surge in bank fraud amounts in first half of FY25.

Bank fraud cases witnessed a sharp rise in the first half of FY25, with reported incidents climbing to 18,461, involving ₹21,367 crore, according to the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) 'Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2023-24.'

This marked an eightfold jump in the amount compared to ₹2,623 crore across 14,480 cases during the same period last year.

For the 2023-24 fiscal as a whole, however, the RBI noted that the amount involved in frauds was the lowest in a decade, and the average value was the lowest in 16 years.

Digital frauds accounted for a significant share, with internet and card frauds making up 44.7% of the amount and 85.3% of the cases reported in FY24. Private sector banks accounted for 67.1% of the total cases, while public sector banks had the highest share in terms of the amount involved.

UltraTech Cement has approved acquiring around 8.69% stake in Star Cement for up to Rs 851 crore.

The country's current account deficit (CAD) slightly improved to \$11.2 billion, which is 1.2% of the GDP, in the July-September 2024 quarter.

This is a marginal decline from \$11.3 billion or 1.3% of GDP during the same period the previous fiscal year.

April-September Period (H1 FY2024-25):

CAD was \$21.4 billion (1.2% of GDP) compared to \$20.2 billion (1.2% of GDP) in H1 2023-24.

Definition : CAD is the difference between exports and imports of goods and services, indicating the health

of the external sector.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced that the government would borrow ₹3.94 lakh crore through Treasury bills (T-bills).

This borrowing was planned for the January-March quarter of the financial year.

The borrowing was to be done through 91-day, 182-day, and 364-day T-bills.

UPI Payments Using Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs).

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a significant change regarding Prepaid Payment Instruments (PPIs), allowing holders of full-KYC PPIs to make and receive UPI payments through third-party mobile applications like Google Pay, PhonePe, and Paytm.

Key Points Announcement by RBI

RBI's recent decision permits full-KYC PPIs (e.g., digital wallets, gift cards) to be linked with third-party UPI a

pplications for payments.

This change was introduced to facilitate easier, more efficient financial transactions and to increase financial inclusion.

Types of Eligible PPIs

1. Mobile Wallets

Paytm

PhonePe

Other digital wallets

2. Physical Cards

Gift cards

Travel cards

Metro cards

3. Digital Wallets

Online shopping wallets.

KYC is mandatory for full services.

The maximum balance limit is ₹2 lakhs.

Regulated by RBI under the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007.

Wistron announced a \$20 million investment in a new factory line in Karnataka, India.

Wistron is a Taiwanese electronics company that supplies Apple iPhones.

Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited (APSEZ) ordered eight tug boats from Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL) for ₹450 cor

Prime Minister's Citizen Assistance and Relief in Emergency Situations (PM CARES) Fund received ₹912 crore in donations during the financial year 2022-23.

Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency (IREDA) has allocated over Rs 3,000 crore to support green energy projects in Odisha.

As the state aims to achieve a 10 GW renewable energy capacity by 2030.

The gross non-performing assets (GNPAs) ratio of scheduled commercial banks (SCBs) declined to the lowest in more than 13 years at 2.5 per cent at the end of September 2024, a Reserve Bank of India (RBI) report.

The improvement in the asset quality of banks, measured by their GNPA ratios, commenced in 2018-19.

GNPAs of SCBs reduced by 15.9% YoY to Rs 4.8 lakh crore as on March 31, 2024, said the report.

The GNPA ratio declined to 2.7% at end-March 2024, the lowest in 13 years, from 3.9 % at end-March 2023.

RBI Committee on Framework for Responsible & Ethical Enablement of AI.

To develop a framework for responsible and ethical enablement of artificial intelligence (FREE-AI) in the financial sector, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an eight-member expert committee.

The committee will suggest a comprehensive and resilient framework for artificial intelligence (AI) framework for the Indian financial sector.

The committee has to submit its report within six months of its constitution.

The chairman of the expert committee is Professor Pushpak Bhattacharyya of IIT Bombay.

The book value of assets acquired by 27 Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs) from lenders has surpassed the Rs. 10 lakh crore mark, marking a significant milestone in the Indian financial sector; this information is based on data from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Milestone achieved: The total book value of assets acquired by ARCs from lenders has crossed the Rs. 10

lakh crore mark for the first time.

Sumitomo Mitsui Financial Group (SMFG) has recently infused Rs 3,000 crore into its India-based non-banking finance arm, SMFG India Credit (formerly Fullerton India Credit), through a rights issue. The Rs 3,000 crore equity infusion includes Rs 300 crore allocated to its wholly owned subsidiary, SMFG India Home Finance.

Dividends from CPSEs at Rs 48,375.77 crore, set to exceed FY25 Budget Estimates of Rs 56,000 crore. Dividends from central public sector enterprises (CPSEs) have turned into a steady and robust source of revenue for the Centre and are set to outshine proceeds from disinvestment and are likely to exceed the Budget Estimate of Rs 56,000 crore for the fiscal.

Arunish Chawla appointed as new Revenue Secretary.
He will succeed Sanjay Malhotra, who was appointed as RBI Governor.

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation inaugurated 10,000 newly established M-PACS. 10,000 newly established Multipurpose Primary Agricultural Credit Societies (M-PACS), along with dairy and fisheries cooperative societies were inaugurated.
Union Government aims to establish 2 lakh new PACS within the next 5 years.

PPI wallets decline 20%, cards record 27% growth this year.
The total number of prepaid payment instrument (PPI) wallets saw a 20.4 per cent year-to-date (YTD) decline, dropping from 1.44 billion in January to 1.14 billion in November.

Number of wallets with top banks

Paytm payment bank
Airtel payment bank
Hdfc bank.

In Non banks top

PhonePe
One Mobiwik system
Ola financial services.

Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) notified Environment Relief Fund (Amendment) Scheme, 2024.

Notification, amending the Environment Relief Fund (ERF) Scheme 2008, has been issued in exercise of powers conferred under Section 7A of Public Liability Insurance Act (PLIA), 1991.
Section 7A of PLIA provides for establishment of Environment Relief Fund (ERF), which is utilized for providing immediate relief to victims of accidents involving hazardous substances.

Key Amendments

Administration: It vests the Environment Relief Fund (ERF) in the Central Government.

Fund Manager: Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) replaces United India Insurance Company Limited as the fund manager for five years with effect from 1st January, 2025.

Razorpay has announced that it will be granting all of its 3,000 employees an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) worth Rs. 1 lakh each, essentially distributing a total of Rs. 30 crore in ESOPs across its workforce.

Harshil Mathur, cofounder and CEO of Razorpay.

India is currently the sixth largest exporter of solar photovoltaic (PV) panels globally, with its solar PV exports reaching \$1.83 billion in 2023.

Key points

Rank: 6th largest exporter worldwide
Export value in 2023: \$1.83 billion
Market share growth: India's share in global solar PV exports has increased from 0.4% in 2013 to 2.51% in 2023.

India Extends Duty-free Import Of Yellow Peas Till Feb 2025.

India has extended the timeline for duty-free imports of yellow peas by two more months until February 2025, according to an official notification from Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT)

According to the Annual Survey of Unincorporated Sector Enterprises (ASUSE) 2023-24, the number of unincorporated establishments in India grew by approximately 12.84%, not 23%, during the fiscal year 2023-24, with the "Other Services" sector within the unincorporated sector showing the highest growth at around 23.55%.

Key points about the growth of unincorporated establishments:

Overall growth: 12.84% increase in the number of unincorporated establishments.

Highest growth sector: "Other Services" sector saw a 23.55% growth.

Data source: This information comes from the ASUSE report released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).

NFRA slaps Rs 2 crore fine on Deloitte Haskins for lapses in ZEEL audit.

The National Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) has imposed a penalty of Rs 2 crore on Deloitte Haskins & Sells and fined two chartered accountants for lapses in the audit of Zee Entertainment Enterprises Ltd (ZEEL) during FY2018-19 and FY2019-20.

DGCA imposes ₹10 lakh fine on Akasa Air for denying boarding to 7 passengers.

Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) has imposed a penalty of ₹10 lakh on Akasa Air for not paying compensation to seven passengers after denying them boarding on its Bengaluru-Pune flight on September 6.

BPCL plans \$11 billion refinery project in southern Andhra Pradesh.

Bharat Petroleum Corp plans to invest \$11 billion in southern Andhra Pradesh state for a new refinery and petrochemical project to meet rising fuel demand in the world's fastest-growing major economy.

IOCL to invest ₹61,000 cr. in naphtha cracker project in Odisha.

Indian Oil Corporation Ltd. (IOCL) will sign a memorandum of understanding with Odisha government next month for setting up a naphtha cracker project at port town of Paradip at an estimated investment of ₹61,000 crore

IRDAI annual report: India's insurance penetration dips from 4% to 3.7% in 2023-24.

According to regulator Irdai's annual report released, India's insurance penetration was 3.7% in FY24 compared to 4% in 2022-23.

The insurance penetration for the life insurance industry marginally declined from 3% in the previous year to 2.8% in 2023-24.

The penetration for the non-life insurance industry remained unchanged at 1% during 2023-24, as in 2022-23.

ADB to Provide \$500 Million Loan to Support Sustainable Infra Projects in India.

Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a USD 500 million (about Rs 4,250 crore) loan to support green and sustainable infrastructure projects aligned with the country's climate commitments.

The ADB loan, with a sovereign guarantee, will be extended to the India Infrastructure Finance Company Ltd (IIFCL).

HDFC Bank has become the first domestic bank to execute a gold forward deal from GIFT City, Gujarat.

The deal was executed by HDFC BANK GIFT City IBU in collaboration with Hindustan Platinum Pvt.

Aditya Birla Capital goes live on all three core financial services on ONDC.

Non-banking finance company (NBFC) Aditya Birla Capital has gone live on all three core financial services—lending, insurance, and mutual fund investments—available on the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) platform.

Central Government has abolished the "no-detention" policy for Classes 5 and 8 in schools governed by it including Kendriya Vidyalayas and Jawahar Navodaya Vidyalayas.

It was done through a gazette notification titled "Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Rules, 2024".

This amendment allows schools to detain students who fail to meet promotion criteria.

What is Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education (Amendment) Rules, 2024?

The Right to Education (RTE) Act, 2009, was amended in 2019 to eliminate the no-detention policy. The Rules to implement the amended Act were delayed and passed in 2024 to keep them in sync with the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) following the introduction of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Following the RTE amendment Act, 2019, 18 states and UTs, including Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, and Tamil Nadu, have abolished the policy.

Haryana and Puducherry are yet to decide, while states like Andhra Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh continue to implement it

Indian Bank fined ₹5.85 lakh by Central Bank of Sri Lanka for non-compliance.

Public sector lender Indian Bank was fined ₹5.85 lakh by the Central Bank of Sri Lanka - Financial Intelligence Unit for non compliance on financial transaction reporting.

Indian Bank operates in Sri Lanka through two branches, located in Colombo and Jaffna.

Japanese automakers Honda and Nissan announced a merger that is expected to be completed by August 2026.

Honda and Nissan will be delisted from the Tokyo Stock Exchange (TSE).

Oil India (OIL) plans to invest Rs ₹25000 crore by 2040 in green energy through its subsidiary OIL Green Energy.

Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has mandated that telecom operators offer separate special tariff vouchers (STVs) for voice and SMS.

Long-term plans : The validity of STVs has been extended from 90 days to 365 days.

Online recharges: TRAI has removed the requirement for color-coded vouchers.

The GST Council announced different tax rates for popcorn based on its sugar or spice content.

Non-branded popcorn mixed with salt and spices - 5% GST

Pre-packaged and branded popcorn- 12% GST

Caramel popcorn- 18% GST

2,623 wilful defaulters owe Rs 1.96 lakh crore to banks.

According to information provided by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), 2,623 unique borrowers who are classified as wilful defaulters.

These borrowers have a total outstanding debt of Rs 1,96,049 crore with scheduled commercial banks as of March 2023.

The data pertains to borrowers with aggregate exposures of Rs 5 crore and above.

Gitanjali Gems, the company established by fugitive diamantaire Mehul Choksi, has been named as India's biggest wilful defaulter, with unpaid bank loans of Rs 8,516 crore (\$1bn).

The second biggest defaulter on the list is ABG Shipyard, with bank debts of Rs 4,684 crore (\$550m).

NHPC has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Bihar government to invest ₹5,500 crore for setting up solar power and green hydrogen projects in the state.

Physics Wallah signs MoU with Andhra govt to build AI-focused Institute Of Eminence .

Alakh Pandey, Founder & CEO, PW said, "We are committed to invest up to ₹1,000 crore by GSV Ventures - US and other investors.

Paytm announced a Covid-19 insurance plan which covers loss of pay, quarantine expenses and treatment costs.

This is Paytm's first product in the Insurance Sector.

Launched in partnership with Reliance General Insurance, the plan covers a maximum covers of Rs.2 lakh for loss of pay, quarantine expenses and treatment costs .

Available to individuals aged three months to 60 years, the policy is valid for 1 year with a 15- day waiting period for claims.

According to the recent Cabinet decision, the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for milling copra has been increased by Rs. 422 per quintal, reaching Rs. 11,582 per quintal, while the MSP for ball copra has been raised by Rs. 100 per quintal, settling at Rs. 12,100 per quintal.

Key points:

Milling Copra MSP: Increased by Rs. 422 to Rs. 11,582 per quintal.

Ball Copra MSP: Increased by Rs. 100 to Rs. 12,100 per quintal.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fined IndusInd Bank and Manappuram Finance for violating regulatory norms.

The RBI imposed a penalty of ₹27.3 lakh on IndusInd Bank and ₹20 lakh on Manappuram Finance.

Reason for the penalty.

IndusInd Bank :- The bank was fined for opening savings accounts for ineligible entities. This was a violation of the Reserve Bank of India (Interest Rate on Deposits) Directions, 2016.

Manappuram Finance : The company was fined for failing to verify customer PANs and for assigning multiple identification codes to some customers instead of a Unique Customer Identification Code (UCIC).

Bajaj Auto Debuts Two New Electric Variants Of Chetak Scooter.

Bajaj Auto will begin exporting Chetak 35-Series to international markets by the first quarter of the next financial year (FY26).

The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved UltraTech Cement's acquisition of India Cements .

The deal was worth over Rs 7,000 crore.

UltraTech Cement will acquire 32.72% of India Cements' paid-up equity share capital from its promoters

UltraTech will also acquire up to 26% of India Cements' paid-up equity share capital from public shareholders

IFC invests Rs 630 cr in NDR InvIT to bolster sustainable warehousing.

IFC has invested USD 75 million (about Rs 630 crore) in domestic currency Sustainability Linked Bond issued by NDR InvIT in a strategic move to boost sustainable warehousing infrastructure and promote logistics sector.

This Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) is sponsored by NDR Warehousing Private Limited.

Key points about the investment:

Amount: \$75 million (equivalent to roughly Rs. 630 crore)

Investor: International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group

Issuing entity: NDR InvIT, a warehousing Infrastructure Investment Trust

Bond type: Sustainability-linked bond (SLB)

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Bank of Baroda (BoB) extended their partnership for five years.

TCS will help the bank integrate with government schemes like PMJJBY, PMSBY, and APY.

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved USD 800 million Amaravati Integrated Urban Development Program for building Andhra Pradesh's greenfield capital city Amaravati.

\$42 million ADB loan to restore and stabilise Maharashtra's coastline.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed an agreement with the government of India to provide a \$42 million loan for the Maharashtra Sustainable Climate-Resilient Coastal Protection and Management Project.

India to surpass China as the top source of global oil consumption growth in 2024 and 2025.

Adani Group plans to invest approximately Rs. 20,000 crore to establish a thermal power plant in Bihar.

Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$350 million loan agreement.

The loan is part of the Strengthening Multimodal and Integrated Logistics Ecosystem (SMILE) program.

The program aims to improve India's logistics and manufacturing sectors.

YES BANK and FICCI FLO launched YES PowherUp, a program designed to empower women entrepreneurs in India.

The initiative aims to address the challenges faced by women-led businesses and support their growth and success by providing tools and resources.

Tata Power Renewable Energy joins Canara Bank to boost PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijali Yojana.

The Central Board of Directors of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) held their 612th meeting in Guwahati under the chairmanship of new RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra.

SEBI grants LIC three more years to achieve 10% public shareholding.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has granted an additional three years of time to the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to achieve 10 per cent public shareholding.

Under Rule 19(2)(b)(iv) of the Securities Contracts (Regulation) Rules, 1957, a company must have a 10 per cent public shareholding in 5 years from the date of listing.

Accordingly, with the SEBI's extension, the revised timeline for the insurance corporation to achieve 10 per cent public shareholding is on or before May 16, 2027.

The central government has earlier granted a one-time exemption to Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to achieve 25 per cent Minimum Public Shareholding (MPS) within 10 years since its listing on the exchanges.

the government currently holds 96.5 per cent stake in the company.

Aditya Birla Housing finance signs MoU with National Housing Bank.

The partnership aims to provide housing finance solutions to help achieve the Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana (PMAY) goal of "Housing for All".

The government has proposed a new bill 'BULA (Banning of Unregulated Lending Activities)' which seeks to make unregulated lending a cognisable and non-bailable offense.

The central government has introduced a draft bill to combat unregulated lending, which follows recommendations from the Reserve Bank of India's Working Group on Digital Lending.

The bill is known as the Banning of Unregulated Lending Activities (BULA) and aims to protect borrowers from unauthorized lenders.

Unauthorized lenders face severe penalties.

They could receive prison sentences of up to seven years and fines between Rs 2 lakh and Rs 1 crore.

For those using coercive recovery methods, penalties increase to 3 to 10 years in prison, along with higher

PLANNING STRICT ACTION

- Entities who harass borrowers face severest punishment – jail term of three to 10 years and fine can be between ₹5 lakh and twice the loan amount
- Unregulated lenders face two-to-seven years in prison, with fine that can be extended up to ₹1 cr
- Repeat offenders can be sent to jail for up to 10 years and face penalty of up to ₹50 crore
- In case of companies, individuals who conduct business will be held liable
- CBI will have powers to search and seize without warrant



Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) has achieved ISO 27001 certification for its robust information security management system.

GIFT City's certification signifies its readiness to address the evolving challenges of information security in a digital-first world.

Bata India partners with Zepto for 10-minute footwear delivery.

Bata India has partnered with quick commerce platform Zepto to offer fast delivery of its fashion and festive footwear collections.

Hyundai Motor India has re-appointed Unsoo Kim as the Managing Director for three years.

Micromax and Phison partner to launch joint venture MiPhi.

Electronics company Micromax and Taiwan's storage chip company Phison have set up a joint venture, MiPhi, to design and manufacture artificial intelligence-enabled storage chipsets modules locally.

SEBI slaps Rs 6 lakh fine on EbixCash, Ebix for disclosure lapses.

SEBI slapped a fine of Rs 6 lakh on EbixCash Ltd and its promoter entity Ebix Inc for flouting disclosure norms related to the company's proposed initial public offering (IPO).

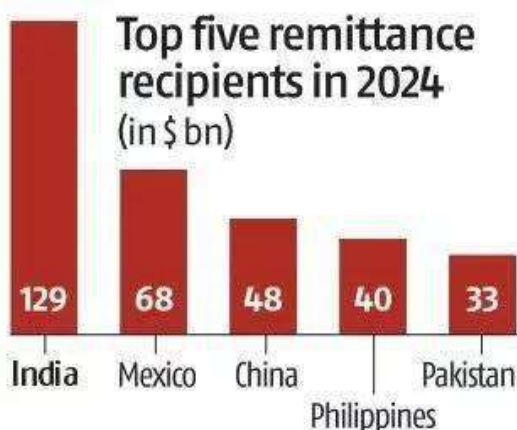
NITI Aayog released a report on "S.A.F.E. Accommodation – Worker Housing for manufacturing growth".

The report explores the crucial role of secure, affordable, flexible, and efficient (S.A.F.E.) accommodations for industrial workers in boosting India's manufacturing sector.

India is poised to elevate its manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP from the current 17% to 25% as part of achieving Viksit Bharat by 2047.

India is the largest recipient of remittances in 2024, with an estimated inflow of \$129 billion, followed by Mexico, China, Philippines, and Pakistan.

The growth rate of remittances in 2024 is estimated at 5.8%, up from 1.2% in 2023.



Source: World Bank blog post

South Asia is expected to see the highest increase in remittances (11.8%), driven by strong flows to India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

Remittances continue to outpace other financial flows, including Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

FDI has declined by 41% over the past decade, while remittances have increased by 57%.

Market regulator SEBI is establishing the Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA) as a Performance Validation Agency (PVA).

This agency will offer validation services for research analysts (RAs), investment advisors (IAs), and algorithm providers seeking verification.

A Credit Rating Agency (CRA) shall act as PaRRVA with a recognized stock exchange serving as PaRRVA Data Centre (PDC).

PaRRVA will be responsible for verifying risk-return metrics for Investment Advisors (IAs), Research Analysts (RAs), Algorithmic Trading professionals, and individuals authorized by the Board to provide these services

Shriram Finance raised \$1.27 billion through a syndicated external commercial borrowing (ECB) in various currencies.

This was the largest such loan secured by a domestic private non-banking financial company (NBFC).

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has lifted all restrictions placed on ECL Finance Ltd and Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd, both part of the Edelweiss Group.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has proposed the launch of a new platform aimed at helping investors trace inactive and unclaimed Mutual Fund (MF) folios.

The service, called MITRA (Mutual Fund Investment Tracing and Retrieval Assistant), will allow investors to track their overlooked or forgotten MF investments.

According to the paper, inactive folios will be those in which "no investor initiated transaction/s (financial and non-financial) have taken place in the last 10 years but unit balance is available".

Delhi and Bengaluru Lead in India's Crypto Investment.

Delhi and Bengaluru emerged as players in India's cryptocurrency landscape, and contributed notably to the national investment portfolio, especially in the Layer-1 category.

According to a recent report, Delhi and Bengaluru accounted for 30.5% of India's overall crypto investments, showcasing its growing influence.

Delhi-NCR led the nation with 20.9% of crypto investments. Bengaluru followed with 9.6% while Mumbai secured third place with 6.5%.

Together, these three cities contribute to over 36% of India's cryptocurrency market.

Meme coins represented 13% of all crypto investments, with Dogecoin leading at 55% followed by PEPE and BONK.

DPIIT signs MoU with HDFC Bank to strengthen startup ecosystem and foster innovation.

Data Security Council of India (DSCI) has partnered with Privy by IDfy to launch PriView, a free-to-use tool that generates privacy notices for companies.

The government has revised the Aircraft (Security) Rules, 2023, under which a person making hoax bomb threats can be fined up to Rs 1 crore.

The Ministry of Civil Aviation issued a gazette notification adding Section 30A to the Aircraft (Security) Rules, 2023.

Adani Group-owned Ambuja Cements has announced the merger of Sanghi Industries and Panna Cement Industries with itself.

UK government has cleared Bharti Global's acquisition of a 24.5 percent stake in British telco giant BT.

Bank of Baroda (BoB) has launched phygital branches in cities like Mumbai, Hyderabad, and Bengaluru.

Phygital branches are a combination of physical and digital banking services.

HSBC partners Taj for luxury credit card with five star benefits.

HSBC India and Indian Hotels have introduced the HSBC Taj Credit Card, described by the partners as the first premium co-branded hospitality card, catering to luxury enthusiasts.

Kotak unveils Kotak BizLabs to accelerate and empower Startups.

Tata Steel launches India's first all-women shift at Noamundi iron mine.

Tata Steel has operationalised an all-women shift at its Noamundi iron mine in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district, an initiative introduced in the country for the first time.

World Bank has recently approved a \$325 million loan for an agriculture project in Uttar Pradesh.

India, aimed at boosting farmers' incomes by enhancing crop productivity, adopting climate-resilient practices, and improving market linkages through initiatives like digital integration and better access to finance; this project is called the "Uttar Pradesh Agriculture Growth and Rural Enterprise Ecosystem Strengthening (UP-AGREES)" project.

Yes Bank launches Yes Business powered by IRIS Biz to empower MSMEs.

The Centre on Monday unveiled a credit guarantee scheme (CGS) to help small farmers who engage in distress selling.

The scheme provides a corpus of Rs 1000 crore to help farmers- especially small and marginal- access post-harvest loans using electronic warehouse receipts.

Nuclear Power Corporation of India (NPCIL) has raised ₹ 4,600 crore through 15-year bonds at a coupon rate of 7.14 per cent.

SEBI launches Association of Registered Research Analysts of India (ARRAI).

Its formation and the launch of this website signify a step towards fostering collective growth, ethical practices, and investor trust in the Indian financial market.

BEML partners with NHPC to develop solutions for hydroelectric power plant.

Defence PSU Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML) has signed a MOU with National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) to develop solutions for hydroelectric power plants.

BOBCARD unveils a women-centric credit card with free health perk vouchers.

BOBCARD Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Bank of Baroda, announces the launch of the TIARA Credit Card — a first-of-its-kind, women-centric credit card designed to support, empower, and celebrate women's financial autonomy.

BOBCARD launches the TIARA Credit Card, a first-of-its-kind women-centric card offering financial empowerment and lifestyle support.

Public sector banks record net profit of ₹85,520 crore in first half FY2024-25.

HSBC, World Bank's IFC launch \$1 bln trade finance programme for emerging markets.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised the collateral-free agricultural loan limit from ₹1.6 lakh to ₹2 lakh per borrower, effective January 1, 2025.

Enhanced Credit Accessibility : Increases access to loans, particularly for small and marginal farmers (over 86% of the sector).

Streamlined Loan Disbursement : Simplifies the loan process, encouraging higher uptake of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans.

JP-Morgan-backed fintech company In-Solutions Global (ISG) has secured full authorisation as a payment aggregator under the Reserve Bank of India's regulatory framework.

Standard Chartered Bank India, launches "Fema Centre of Excellence" to help clients navigation and comply with the dynamic regulatory environment and enhance efficiencies.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) reduced its stake in NMDC from 7.61% to 5.59% between September 2023 and December 2024.

This was a 2.01% decrease in the company's shareholding.

The ₹5,000-crore auction of the new Sovereign Green Bond (SGrB) with 30-year tenure was concluded successfully.

It is a notable improvement over the weak response to the Sovereign Green Bonds with 10-year tenure (the investors bid for these bonds at a lower price due to their relatively illiquid nature).

The State Bank of India (SBI) Chairman C.S. Setty heads a committee to recommend a new list of accounts for transfer to the National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL).

The committee was set up by the Department of Financial Services (DFS).

The committee was formed to address challenges faced by NARCL, also known as the "Bad Bank".

Asian Development Bank has approved a \$788.8 million loan for the Amaravati project. In Japanese Yen, the loan value is 121.97 billion.

ADB and NaBFID signed LoI to address India's Infrastructure Funding Gap.

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and India's National Bank for Financing Infrastructure Development (NaBFID) signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) to address the substantial funding gap in India's infrastructure sector.

The Government of India and ADB have signed a USD 500 million loan to support green infrastructure projects in alignment with India's climate goals.

World Bank approved a \$200 million project to help Kerala farmers adapt to climate change and boost agri-entrepreneurship.

The project is called the Kerala Climate Resilient AgriValue Chain Modernization (KERA) Project.

Coca-Cola is selling a 40% stake in its Indian bottling arm, Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB), to Jubilant Bhartia Group for \$1.47 billion.

Coca-Cola has reached a deal with the Jubilant Bhartia Group to offload a 40% stake in Hindustan Coca-

Cola Holdings Pvt Ltd for Rs 12,500 crore.

The Revenue Secretary, Union Ministry of Finance, Sanjay Malhotra, has been appointed the 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

He will assume office on 11 December 2024 after the incumbent Governor, Shaktikanta Das, retires on 10 December 2024.

Sanjay Malhotra has been appointed for three years.

Under section 8 of the Reserve Bank of India Act 1934, the Central government appoints the Governor and four Deputy Governors of the RBI.

According to the RBI Act 1934, the Governor or the Deputy Governor can be appointed for a maximum term of five years and is eligible for reappointment.

It means that one term of the Governor or the Deputy Governor can be up to 5 years.

ICICI Bank partners with Commonwealth Bank of Australia to strengthen Australia - India Trade.

Reserve Bank has approved the open offer of Burman family the promoters of FMCG major Dabur to acquire an additional 26% stake in NBFC firm Religare Enterprises Ltd (REL).

SEBI expands optional T+0 settlement for top 500 stocks in phased rollout.

SEBI expanded the scope of its optional T+0 (same day) settlement cycle to cover the top 500 stocks by market capitalisation.

In a circular, the markets regulator announced that the phased rollout of the T+0 settlement option would commence on January 31, 2025, with the bottom 100 companies among the top 500 stocks being integrated first.

Canara Bank and Bank of Baroda expand MSME lending initiatives.

Bank of Baroda and Canara Bank, are boosting MSME credit outreach.

Canara Bank held a two-day nationwide program across 238 MSME clusters, while Bank of Baroda introduced two schemes, 'Baroda Mahila Swavalamban' for women entrepreneurs and 'Baroda Smart OD' for GST-registered MSMEs.

HSBC India in collaboration with Mastercard launches premium credit card for private clients.

Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows into India have surpassed the \$1 trillion mark in the April 2000-September 2024 period.

Key Highlights

Major Source Countries: Mauritius: (25%) of total FDI inflows; Singapore (24%); USA: 10% Other Key Sources: Netherlands, Japan, UK, UAE, Germany, Cyprus & Cayman Islands

Key Sectors Attracting FDI: Services sector (16% of total FDI inflows); Computer software and hardware (15%); Trading (7%); Telecommunications (6%).

Paytm's parent company, One97 Communications, is selling its 5.4% stake in the Japanese payments company "PayPay" to SoftBank for approximately \$280 million (around Rs 2,364 crore).

RBI Governor clarified that India has not taken steps toward de-dollarisation and is rather focused on de-risking its domestic trade from geopolitical upheavals.

President-elect Donald Trump's threat to impose 100% tariff on BRICS nations planning to have a common currency to challenge the dominance of U.S. dollar in global trade.

What is de-dollarization?

About: It aims to reverse dollarization (historical domination of US dollar in global market) causing a significant reduction of its use in world trade and financial transactions.

Recent Trends: Countries like India, Brazil, Russia, China and Indonesia are shifting to local currency trade to challenge US dollar dominance.

India has allowed trade invoicing in Indian Rupees (INR) with various countries, including Russia.

The recent BRICS Summit (Kazan, 2024) also discussed the potential for a common BRICS currency.

RBI allows SFBs to extend Credit Line through UPI.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently decided to permit Small Finance Banks (SFBs) to extend pre-sanctioned credit lines through Unified Payment Interface (UPI).

Credit Line through UPI by SFBs

Under this facility, payments through a pre-sanctioned credit line issued by a Bank to individuals, with prior consent of the individual customer, are enabled for transactions using UPI System.

Previously, in September 2023, RBI allowed operations of pre-sanctioned credit limits through UPI by Scheduled Commercial Bank to individuals.

Significance: Aims to deepen financial inclusion and enhance formal credit, particularly for 'new to credit'

customers.

About SFBs

Origin: Announced in Union Budget 2014-15.

Objective: To further financial inclusion by -

provision of savings vehicles primarily to unserved and underserved sections of the population, and supply of credit to small business units; small and marginal farmers; micro and small industries; and other unorganised sector entities, through high technology-low cost operations.

Registration: As a public limited company under Companies Act, 2013.

Licensed under: Section 22 of Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

Capital requirement: Minimum paid-up voting equity capital of ₹200 crore (except for such SFBs which are converted from Urban Cooperative Banks).

Priority Sector Lending (PSL) norms: Required to extend 75% of its Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) to the priority sectors, as classified by RBI.

RBI has increased the interest rate cap on Foreign Currency Non-Resident Bank Deposits or FCNR (B) deposits.

Now FCNR (B) deposits with tenure ranging from 1 year to less than 3 years have been allowed to be raised at short term Alternative Reference Rate (ARR) deposit rate of 4%.

Earlier this limit was 2.50%.

Similarly, deposits with maturity period of 3 to 5 years may be offered interest at ARR plus 5%.

Earlier this limit was 3.50%.

This exemption on FCNR will be available only till March 31, 2025.

RBI has also decided to introduce a benchmark, Secured Overnight Rupee Rate, based on the secured money market.

About Foreign Currency Non-Resident (Banks) Deposits

It is a deposit scheme that enables the Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), Persons of Indian Origin (PIOs) and Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) to invest their foreign earnings in Indian fixed deposit accounts.

The deposit is held in foreign currencies like the US dollar, British pound sterling, Australian dollar, Euro and Canadian dollar.

The FCNR deposit can be held as a term deposit, ranging from 1 year to 5 years.

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has unveiled the Secured Overnight Rupee Rate (SORR) as a new benchmark for the interest rate derivatives market.

This significant move aligns with global best practices, promising greater transparency and reliability in India's financial markets.

What is SORR?

The Secured Overnight Rupee Rate (SORR) is a benchmark rate based on secured money market transactions, including market repo and tri-party repo (TREPS). Developed with the support of Financial Benchmarks India Limited (FBIL), SORR aims to provide a robust, manipulation-resistant benchmark that accurately reflects market dynamics.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced the creation of an AI-powered model named MuleHunter.AI to tackle the growing issue of digital fraud involving "mule" bank accounts.

What is MuleHunter.AI?

MuleHunter.AI is an AI-model that enables detection of mule bank accounts being used for committing financial frauds.

Developed by: Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), Bengaluru (a subsidiary of the RBI).

Who is the Money Mule?

Money Mule is a term used to describe innocent victims who are duped by fraudsters into laundering stolen/ illegal money via their bank account(s).

When such frauds are reported, the money mule becomes the target of police investigations because it is their accounts that are involved, while the actual criminals remain undetectable.

What are Mule Accounts?

A mule account refers to a bank account that is used by criminals to launder illicit funds

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has given Banks a ₹1.16 lakh crore liquidity injection by announcing a 50 basis points cut in the cash reserve ratio from 4.5 per cent of their deposits to 4 per cent.

The two-tranche CRR cut of 25 basis points each.

Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) Reduction and Monetary Policy Updates:

The RBI has reduced the CRR by 50 basis points in two tranches, bringing it to 4%.

This move aims to inject ₹1.16 lakh crore into the banking system, addressing liquidity stress caused by

factors like tax outflows and increased currency in circulation.

The repo rate remains unchanged at 6.5% for the 11th consecutive time, aligning with the neutral monetary policy stance amidst rising inflation and economic uncertainties.

Inflation forecast for FY2025 has been revised to 4.8% (from 4.5%), while GDP growth estimates were lowered to 6.6% (from 7.2%), reflecting slower economic activity and high inflation's impact on consumer demand.

Paytm's wholly-owned Singapore unit approves stake sale in PayPay.

Paytm Singapore has approved the sale of Stock Acquisition Rights (SARs) held in PayPay Corporation, Japan (PayPay).

Reserve Bank of India's intensified regulatory actions against banks in 2024 have culminated in fines totalling as much as Rs 28.95 crore, as of December 06, 2024.

These penalties, targeting a wide range of violations, from KYC lapses to interest rate mismanagement.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) penalized UCO Bank the most, at Rs 2.68 crore, for violating banking regulations.

This made UCO Bank the largest defaulter among public sector banks (PSBs) that year.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fined Axis Bank ₹1.91 crore for non-compliance with banking regulations.

This was the highest penalty imposed on any private bank in 2024.

IDFC FIRST Bank has unveiled the first-of-its-kind AI powered holographic digital avatar of the country's most celebrated and legendary actor Amitabh Bachchan.

As announced in the Statement on Developmental and Regulatory Policies dated December 06, 2024, it has been decided to reduce the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) of all banks by 50 basis points in two equal tranches of 25 basis points each to 4.0 per cent of net demand and time liabilities (NDTL).

Accordingly, banks are required to maintain the CRR at 4.25 per cent of their NDTL effective from the reporting fortnight beginning December 14, 2024 and 4.00 per cent of their NDTL effective from fortnight beginning December 28, 2024.

With a view to monitoring compliance of maintenance of statutory reserve requirements viz. CRR and SLR by the SCBs, the Reserve Bank of India has prescribed statutory returns i.e. Form A return (for CRR) under Section 42 (2) of the RBI Act, 1934 and Form VIII return (for SLR) under Section 24 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

BharatPe, a leading UPI payment platform, has launched 'Shield,' a comprehensive fraud protection plan aimed at securing digital UPI transactions.

The new offering extends protection from fraudulent digital transactions up to Rs.5,000.

Andhra Pradesh has entered into an agreement with Google under which the tech giant will help the state in adoption of artificial intelligence (AI) in various fields including healthcare.

SEBI has eased norms regarding settlement of accounts by brokerages for those clients who have not traded over the last 30 days.

Under the revised rules, if the client trades after 30 calendar days and before the upcoming settlement dates of the monthly running account settlement cycle, the settlement of the client can be done on dates as notified by the exchanges in the annual calendar.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has given its nod to Canara Bank to divest its shareholding in Canara Robeco Asset Management Company Ltd and Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company by 13% and 14.5% respectively through Initial Public Offer (IPO).

National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) plans to raise Rs 1,000 crore through green bonds to fund environmentally friendly projects on the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway.

Bank of Baroda and EPFO partnered to disburse pensions in West Bengal.

Bank of Baroda and EPFO (Employees' Provident Fund Organisation) partnered to disburse pensions in West Bengal under the Employees' Pension Scheme (EPS) of 1995.

Indian Bank has launched an innovative digital campaign, 'Khabar Nahi, Khabardar Bano', aimed at educating customers about the increasing threat of cyber frauds and empowering them with practical safety measures.

The campaign, developed by Goldmine Advertising.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the wallet limit for UPI Lite from ₹2,000 to ₹5,000.

The UPI Lite wallet limit is now Rs. 5,000, up from the previous limit of Rs. 2,000, and the per transaction limit is now Rs. 1,000, previously at Rs. 500.

UPI123Pay transaction limit: The per-transaction limit for UPI123Pay has been raised from ₹5,000 to ₹10,000 to support higher-value transactions.

NPCI has launched UPI Lite, an on-device wallet option for UPI to enable small-value transactions in an offline mode.

World Bank has approved a \$188.28 million loan to Maharashtra, India, to promote balanced development across its districts.

Amazon launches new AI models called "Nova".

Amazon introduces Nova AI models, a powerful family of generative, multimodal solutions designed to transform industries

Vodafone has sold 7.92 crore or 3% stake in Indus Towers.

Vodafone used ₹1,910 crore (\$225 million) to increase its stake in Vodafone Idea from 22.56% to 24.39%.

Bharti Airtel signed a multi-billion dollar deal with Ericsson to extend their partnership for 4G and 5G services in India.

Ericsson will deploy centralized radio access network (RAN) and Open RAN-ready solutions.

The Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) plans to levy a fee of Rs 1.20 on transactions above Rs 250.

This fee is to help ONDC fund its infrastructure development and services.

India's largest airline, IndiGo, has been listed among the world's worst airlines in the 2024 rankings released by AirHelp, a European agency specializing in air passenger claims and compensation.

IndiGo was ranked 103rd out of 109 airlines worldwide, with a score of 4.80.

Razorpay partners MHA and I4C to boost digital payments security.

Fintech firm Razorpay has announced its support for the Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C).

India contributes to 46 per cent of the world's digital payment volume.

FinBox launches Industry's first Account Aggregation based data platform.

India-based credit infrastructure provider FinBox has launched its first Account Aggregation based Customer Data Platform.

The company's aim is to enable lenders, such as banks and NBFCs, to access customer data points and get real-time insights.

Bank Bill passes LS, allows one account, 4 nominees.

The Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024, introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 9, 2024, aims to amend multiple banking-related laws to streamline operations and modernize regulations. It amends the following Acts:

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act, 1934

Banking Regulation Act, 1949

State Bank of India Act, 1955

Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Acts, 1970 and 1980.

Key Amendments & Provisions of Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024

Redefinition of "Fortnight" for Cash Reserves:

Current Definition:

A fortnight is defined as Saturday to the second following Friday (14 days).

New Definition:

From the 1st to the 15th of each month, or

From the 16th to the last day of the month.

Tenure of Directors in Co-operative Banks:

Existing Rule: Directors (other than the chairman or whole-time director) cannot serve more than 8 consecutive years.

New Rule: Extends the tenure to 10 consecutive years for co-operative banks.

Increase in Threshold for Substantial Interest in Companies:

Existing Threshold: Substantial interest in a company is defined as holding shares worth more than ₹5 lakh or 10% of the company's paid-up capital, whichever is lower.

New Threshold: Raises this to ₹2 crore. The government may modify this amount through notifications.

43,30,121 accounts opened under Mahila Samman saving certificate scheme till 31.10.2024.

About Mahila Samman Savings Certificate (MSSC) Scheme:

This is a one-time scheme announced in Budget 2023 and will remain available for a two-year period, i.e., up to March 2025.

It is a risk-free scheme dedicated towards women's and girls' of all age groups.

The scheme offers a maximum deposit facility of up to Rs 2 lakh in the name of women or girls for a tenor

of 2 years.

Eligibility:

Any individual women.

The minor account can also be opened by the guardian.

A minimum of Rs. 1000 and any sum in multiples of one hundred rupees may be deposited in an account subject to a maximum of Rs. 2 lakhs.

Interest Rate: It offers a fixed interest rate of 7.5 percent. Interest shall be compounded on a quarterly basis and credited to the account.

The Maturity period/Lock-in period of the scheme is 2 years from the date of opening of the account.

However, the account holder can withdraw up to 40% of the account balance after one year from the account opening date as a partial withdrawal.

UPI transactions on RuPay credit cards nearly doubled in the first seven months of the 2024-25 financial year.

From April to October 2024, UPI transactions on RuPay credit cards were ₹638 billion.

This was a 91% increase from ₹334 billion in the entire of FY24.

Maharashtra led with UPI transactions worth ₹692 crore, followed by Tamil Nadu at ₹692 crore.

Uber launched India's first water transport service in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir.

This service allows users to book shikara rides on Dal Lake through the Uber app.

India has contributed \$2 billion to BRICS Bank.

India has contributed nearly \$2 billion to the BRICS New Development Bank (NDB), and 20 externally aided projects, with loans amounting to \$4,867 million in areas such as transportation

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) lifted the supervisory restrictions imposed on Navi Finserv, a non-banking financial company (NBFC) led by Sachin Bansal.

Sachin Bansal– CEO of Navi Finserv

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) devolved Rs 3,497.99 crore of a 10-year green bond auction to primary dealers (PDs) due to weak demand.

This was part of a Rs 5,000 crore auction.

The Group of Ministers (GoM) is expected to recommend a rejig on 150 goods and services, including textiles, to the GST Council.

The GoM is also likely to suggest a new slab of 35% for tobacco and tobacco-related products, against the current rate of 28%.

The GoM agreed on several GST rate changes to simplify the GST framework and enhance revenue collection.

The GoM has suggested lowering rates for textiles, bicycles, exercise books, and luxury items.

The GST rate structure for textiles applies a 5% tax on items priced up to ₹1,000 and a 12% tax on those priced above ₹1,000.

Public Sector Banks' MUDRA Loans Performance.

The Public Sector Banks (PSBs) and their Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) have achieved till date only 42% of the target for the disbursement of MUDRA loan in FY25.

- It was possible for the Bank of Baroda to pay out only 16% of annual MUDRA target within the first seven months of FY25.

- The largest PSB, State Bank of India has achieved 44% of its annual target.

- Canara Bank has touched 52% of its annual target.

- Union Bank of India has touched 57% of FY25.

- As of October 25, MUDRA loans of ₹ 28,511 crore amounting to 12.4% of the annual target for PSBs are still under process.

The government increased the limit of MUDRA loans under Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) to ₹ 20 lakh from ₹ 10 lakh.

Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) has approved incentive claims of ₹ 246 crore submitted by Mahindra & Mahindra and Tata Motors under the ₹ 25,938 crore PLI scheme for the automobile and auto components industry.

State Bank of India recently launched two new deposit schemes namely, Har Ghar Lakhpati and SBI Patrons, designed to provide customers with greater financial flexibility and enhanced value.

About Har Ghar Lakhpati Scheme:

It is a pre-calculated recurring deposit scheme designed to help customers to accumulate Rs 1 lakh or multiples thereof.

The new scheme simplifies the process of achieving financial goals, allowing customers to plan and save effectively.

This product is also available to minors, encouraging early financial planning and savings habits.

The minimum tenure of recurring deposits is 12 months (one year), and the maximum is 120 months (10 years).

About SBI Patrons Scheme:

This is a specialized fixed deposit scheme tailored for senior citizens aged 80 years and above.

It offers enhanced interest rates, recognizing the long-standing relationship many senior customers have with the bank.

SBI Patrons is available to existing and new term deposit customers.

SBI Patron's depositors would earn an additional 10 basis points higher interest rate than what is offered to senior citizens.

UPI transactions in November saw a 7% decline in volume, reaching 15.48 billion transactions, while the total value of these transactions amounted to Rs. 21.55 trillion.

Key points:

Volume decline: The number of UPI transactions in November dropped by 7% compared to the previous month.

Transaction volume: The total volume of UPI transactions in November stood at 15.48 billion.

Transaction value: The total value of UPI transactions in November was Rs. 21.55 trillion.

State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a nation-wide drive to re-activate inoperative accounts, including Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) accounts, in a bid to improve the proportion of current account, savings account (CASA) deposits in domestic deposits.

Bajaj Fiance has decided to exit the co-branded credit card space as it has ended its eight year tieup with RBL Bank and DBS Bank India.

UPI processed an impressive ₹23.49 Lakh Crores across 16.58 billion financial transactions in October 2024, marking a 45% year-on-year growth from 11.40 billion transactions in October 2023.

India's digital payments revolution is gaining international momentum, with both UPI and RuPay expanding rapidly across borders.

Currently, UPI is operational in seven countries, including key markets like the UAE, Singapore, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, France, and Mauritius.

Singapore contributed 50% of total FDI into India in July-September quarter.

FPI inflows to India rose 43 per cent to USD 13.6 billion in the July-September quarter of 2024-25, data made available by DPIIT showed.

Over USD 7.5 billion or 50 per cent of the total FDI came from Singapore.

Singapore led foreign equity contributions with an inflow of \$7.53 billion, followed by Mauritius (\$5.24 billion), Netherlands (\$3.58 billion), UAE (\$3.47 billion) and the United States (\$2.57 billion).

BANKING, ECONOMY AND FINANCIAL AWARENESS

NOVEMBER 2024

Union Finance Ministry released a consultation paper proposing to raise the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit in the insurance sector from 74% to 100%.

The FDI limit in the insurance sector was previously increased from 49% to 74% in February 2021.

Net Owned Funds for foreign reinsurers is also proposed to be reduced from Rs 5,000 crore to Rs 1,000 crore.

IRDAI is being empowered to specify lower entry capital (not less than Rs 50 crore) for underserved or unserved segments on a special-case basis.

IRDA is determined to achieve its mission of 'Insurance for all by 2047', with aggressive plans to address the industry's challenges.

India is the fifth largest life insurance market in the world's emerging insurance markets, growing at a rate of 32-34% each year.

At present, there are 25 life insurance companies, and 34 general insurers in the country.

Government of India and ADB sign \$98 million loan to promote plant health management in India's horticulture.

Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) today signed a loan of \$98 million to improve access for horticultural crop farmers to certified disease-free planting material, which will enhance

their crop yields, quality, and resilience to climate impacts.

SEBI has recently imposed a fine of Rs. 9 lakh on Reliance Securities for violating market norms and stockbroker regulations.

RBL Bank has mutually agreed with Bajaj Finance to cease the issuance of new co-branded credit cards.

HDFC Bank market cap crosses ₹14 lakh crore for the first time as stock hits fresh high.

HDFC Bank is India's third most-valuable listed company after IT major Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), which has a market cap of ₹15.60 lakh crore and Reliance Industries (RIL) with a market cap of ₹17.50 lakh crore.

TCS partners with IIT Kharagpur to launch advanced research centre.

Samsung gets first woman CEO outside founding family for 1st time in 86 yrs.

Samsung named Kyung-Ah Kim as the CEO of Samsung Bioepis, the first woman to lead a Samsung company outside of the founding family in 86 years.

HDFC Bank introduces 'Pragati Savings Account' targeting farmers, self-employed, and rural residents in India.

The Pragati Savings Account was previously known as the Farmer Savings Account.

The government has sought requests for proposal (RFPs) for setting up 20 MSME Technology Centres under Public-Private Partnership (PPP) mode. For the first time, private players will partner with the industry to provide technological, incubation, and business advisory support.

MSMEs account for over 110 million jobs or 23% of the country's labour force. They contribute 27% of India's GDP, account for 38.4% of the total manufacturing output and contribute 45% of the country's total exports.

State Bank of India (SBI) raised ₹50,000 crore through domestic bonds in the financial year 2024-2025.

This was done through a combination of AT1 bonds, tier 2 bonds, and long-term infrastructure bonds.

AT1 bonds: ₹5,000 crore

Tier 2 bonds: ₹15,000 crore

Long-term infrastructure bonds: ₹30,000 crore.

All the bonds had a tenor of 15 years, except for the AT1 bonds, which were perpetual.

The AT1 and tier 2 bonds had a call option after 10 years or any anniversary date thereafter.

The AT1 bonds were rated AA+ with a stable outlook

The tier 2 and long-term bonds were rated AAA with a stable outlook.

Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has signed a three-year contract extension for SPARSH, India's pension system for defence personnel.

The digital platform has significantly transformed pension processing for over 30 lakh defence pensioners.

What is SPARSH?:

SPARSH stands for "System for Pension Administration (Raksha)" and is a government initiative to efficiently distribute pensions to retired defence personnel.

Meesho unveils multilingual Gen AI-powered voice bot for human-like support.

Sanjeev Barnwal, co-founder and chief technology officer of Meesho.

Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has today approved the Income Tax Department's PAN 2.0 Project.

According to the CCEA press release, the project will cost Rs 1,435 crore.

Union Information and Broadcasting Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw said that citizens will obtain a free QR Code upgrade for their PAN Card.

"There will be a unified portal, completely paperless and online,".

What is PAN 2.0 Project?

The PAN 2.0 plan of government intends to make the Permanent Account Number a common business identity across all digital platforms used by government organizations.

What is a PAN Card?

PAN is an abbreviation of Permanent Account Number. The Income Tax Department of India assigns an alphanumeric, 10-digit unique number to each taxpayer.

PAN Card is issued by the Income Tax Department with help from authorised district-level PAN agencies, UTI ITSL (UTI Infrastructure Technology and Services Limited), and Protean e-Gov Technologies Limited (formerly National Securities Depository Limited-NSDL).

Paytm launched an auto top-up feature for UPI Lite transactions .

This feature allows users to automatically recharge their UPI Lite balance when it falls below a set limit.

Users can make payments of up to ₹500 per transaction without entering a PIN .
The daily limit for payments is ₹2,000 .

Punjab National Bank (PNB) has become a signatory to the globally recognised Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF).

PNB is India's second largest public sector bank.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved the Central Bank of India's entry into the insurance business.

The approval was given for a joint venture with the Generali group.

The joint venture will be under Future Generali India Insurance Company Ltd (FGIICL) and Future Generali India Life Insurance Company Ltd (FGILICL).

The Central Bank of India will also need approval from the IRDAI, the sectoral regulator.

The Union Education Minister and Labour Minister recently launched a World Bank report, which is titled "Jobs at Your Doorstep – A Jobs Diagnostics for Young People," which focuses on job opportunities and skill development in six states of India – Himachal Pradesh, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Odisha, and Rajasthan.

Sony Pictures Networks India (SPNI) has secured the media rights for the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) tournaments from 2024 to 2031.

Reserve Bank of India has directed RBL Bank to pay a fine of ₹61.4 lakh for violating its 'Know Your Customer' or KYC directions.

NTPC Green Energy has signed an agreement with the New and Renewable Energy Development Corporation of Andhra Pradesh (NREDCAP) to develop renewable energy projects worth Rs. 2 lakh crore in Andhra Pradesh.

State Bank of India has introduced a customised vehicle loan product for Uber's fleet partners to support the growth of the ride-hailing industry.

Central Bank of India was allowed to bid up to Rs 900 crores or acquire a stake of 24.91% in FGIICL and 25.18% in FILICL, whichever was lower.

The bank acquired the targeted stake with an investment of Rs 508 crores.

Earlier on October 15th, Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the acquisition of 24.91% shareholding in Future Generali India Insurance and 25.18% shareholding in Future Generali India Life Insurance.

Tata Power signs MoU with ADB for \$4.25 bn clean energy project financing.

Tata Power has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan, to explore financing options for key energy infrastructure projects in India.

This partnership is expected to contribute to India's aim to reach 500GW renewable energy target by 2030.

India Maldives to settle cross border transaction in local currency.

India and the Maldives have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to settle their cross-border transactions in their local currency.

Normally, these transactions were settled in US dollars, but now an effort will be made to settle them in Indian Rupees and the Maldivian Rufiyaa.

IIT-Bombay's in house start-up incubator SINE to launch Rs 100-cr VC fund.

IIT Bombay's technology business incubator, Society for Innovation and Entrepreneurship (SINE) on Thursday said it is planning to launch a ₹100-crore VC fund to support deep tech startups.

It plans to scale up the number of startups it supports to over four-fold over the next ten years.

RBL Bank has appointed Indian chess player Gukesh Dommaraju as its brand ambassador.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) has agreed to provide Tata Power with \$4.25 billion to fund clean energy power projects in India.

Yes Bank has partnered with Vegapay to launch a new platform called 'Credit Line on UPI'.

This platform will allow YES Bank to offer customised credit programs to its customers through UPI.

India & Guyana sign MoUs on setting up UPI-like system, cooperating in hydrocarbons and agriculture.

Amazon has expanded its cross-border logistics programme Global Selling Seller Exports and Delivery (SEND), which will help Indian exporters ship goods abroad.

Indian apps dominate Google Play's Best of 2024 Awards as AI integration surges.

Google Play announced its Best of 2024 awards for India, with artificial intelligence-powered fashion styling application 'Alle' claiming both "Best App" and "Best for Fun" categories.

Karnataka has signed five MOUs with Microsoft, IBM, Intel, Accenture, and the BFSI consortium to skill one lakh individuals in the State.

National Stock Exchange (NSE) has revised the eligibility criteria for stocks listed on other exchanges to get directly listed on its mainboard platform.

The exchange has raised minimum net worth of such companies to Rs 75 crore for each of the three previous years from the existing Rs 10 crore.

National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is in talks with 10 countries to introduce the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Rupay.

For UPI, we have signed up with three countries, but implementation may take a few more weeks. With Namibia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Peru, the commercial agreements have been signed.

Currently, UPI is available in seven countries — France, the UAE, Singapore, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Nepal.

SEBI introduced reforms to the SME (small and medium enterprises) IPO process to make the market safer for investors, and enhance the framework for equity derivatives.

SEBI has proposed several changes to make the SME IPO process safer for investors. These changes include increasing the minimum SME IPO size to Rs 10 crore, raising the IPO application size to Rs 4 lakh, limiting promoters' offers for sale to 20%, and establishing a compliance monitoring agency for listed SMEs.

SEBI proposes raising the minimum application size for SMEs' IPOs from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2 lakh to protect smaller retail investors, as SME IPOs tend to carry higher risks.

SEBI Plans to make IPO offer documents public for at least 21 days, as opposed to the current practice of making them public closer to the IPO opening.

SEBI recommends that SMEs should have a minimum operating profit of Rs 3 crore in two of the previous three years before filing for an IPO. Currently, there is no such requirement.

SEBI has proposed raising the minimum subscription for SME IPOs from ₹1 lakh to ₹2 lakh, with a potential increase to ₹4 lakh, aiming to enhance investor protection.

The PM E-DRIVE scheme, launched by the Government of India, provides subsidies and incentives for electric cargo 3-wheelers and other electric vehicles (EVs).

The scheme is in effect from October 1, 2024 to March 31, 2026 with a financial outlay of ₹10,900 crore.

IBL and BFIL sign MoU with Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare.

IndusInd Bank Limited (IBL) and Bharat Financial Inclusion Limited (BFIL) announced a collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare (MoA & FW), Government of India, to launch the Bharat Sanjeevani Krishi Utthan initiative.

This initiative aims to support the government's flagship program, "Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs)" providing a robust framework to empower FPOs across the country.

Tata Power has entered into a strategic partnership with Druk Green Power Corporation Ltd (DGPC) to develop at least 5,000 MW of clean energy generation capacity in Bhutan.

According to the Investment Information and Credit Rating Agency (ICRA), India's installed renewable energy capacity is projected to reach 250 GW by March 2026.

FM unveils specially minted ₹100 commemorative coin to mark centenary of SBI's Horniman Circle Branch.

Alongside the coin launch, she also unveiled the 5th edition of The Evolution of the State Bank of India, chronicling a transformative era in the bank's journey between 1981 and 1996.

From 100 branches at the time of the 1920 amalgamation to 22,640+ branches today, with plans to add 500 more in FY 2025, SBI continues to expand its reach.

The bank operates 63,000+ ATMs, engages 80,300 banking correspondents, and serves over 50 crore customers.

SBI commands a 25% share in debit card spending, 22% in mobile banking transactions, and a 29% ATM footprint

DIPAM Issues Revised Capital Restructuring Norms for CPSEs.

The Ministry of Finance revised guidelines for capital restructuring by CPSEs.

Dividend Payment Mandate: All CPSEs (Central Public Sector Enterprises) are required to pay a minimum annual dividend of 30% of net profit (PAT) or 4% of net worth, whichever is higher.

For financial sector CPSEs (e.g., NBFCs), the minimum dividend is 30% of PAT, subject to legal provisions.

Buyback Option: CPSEs with a net worth exceeding ₹3,000 crore, a cash and bank balance above ₹1,500 crore, and a market price consistently below book value for six months, may consider a share buyback to enhance shareholder value.
The Competition Commission of India (Commission) today imposed a penalty of Rs. 213.14 crore on Meta for abusing its dominant position.
Sachin Bansal's Navi became India's fourth-largest UPI platform in October 2024, surpassing Cred. <u>Other UPI platforms in India:</u> PhonePe is the market leader with around 48 percent share. Google Pay has around 37 percent share. Paytm is a distant third at 7 percent.
Bharti Global completes acquisition of 24.5% stake in BT Group. Bharti Global, the investment arm of Bharti Enterprises, has successfully acquired a 24.5% stake in BT Group, making it the majority shareholder in the UK's second-largest telecom company.
HDFC Bank's 'Vigil Aunty' shares how she helps people 'Stay Safe, Stay Vigil' at Cyber Security Summit. At the HDFC Bank Cyber Security Summit, organized in collaboration with Times of India , Vigil Aunty spoke about the role she seeks to play in this important initiative.
State Bank of India has raised ₹10,000 crore at a coupon rate of 7.23 per cent through its seventh infrastructure bond issuance, payable annually for a tenor of 15 years.
55th Goods and Services Tax (GST) Council meeting was held in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. Reduction in the GST rate on Fortified Rice Kernel (FRK) to 5%. Popcorn: when popcorn is mixed with sugar (e.g. caramel popcorn), it would attract 18% GST. About GST Council As per Article 279A, inserted by the Constitution (101st) Amendment Act, 2016 , GST Council shall consist:- Union Finance Minister (Chairperson). Members: (Total 33 members, of which 2 members from the Centre and 31 members from States and Union Territories)
Decision of the GST Council: It is taken by a majority of not less than three-fourths of weighted votes (75%) of the members present and voting. Premiums on Health Insurance: GST exemption is proposed for health insurance premiums up to Rs. 5 lakh, except for senior citizens. Policies with coverage exceeding Rs. 5 lakh will continue to attract an 18% GST rate. Popcorn: GST Council clarified (no new tax imposition) that caramelized popcorn is taxed at 18% GST. Ready-to-eat popcorn with salt and spices attracts 5% GST if not pre-packaged and labeled, and 12% if pre-packaged and labeled. Caramelised popcorn is classified as sugar confectionery, and attracts 18% GST while salted popcorn is a namkeen and subject to 5% GST.
Karnataka Bank Debuts KBL Peak Loan and KBL Genius for Students. The bank launched KBL Peak-education loan with high coverage up to 2 crore and an extensive product suite-and KBL Genius-a student savings account that features free cyber insurance.
Public Sector Banks Gear Up for MSME Credit Risk Assessment Model Launch. The model is designed to evaluate loan applications ranging between Rs 25 lakh and Rs 5 crore, offering banks a uniform framework to assess the creditworthiness of MSMEs. Four banks—Bank of India, Punjab & Sind Bank, Canara Bank, and Indian Bank—are preparing to roll out the model on November 25. Six additional PSBs, including Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India, UCO Bank, Central Bank of India, and Indian Overseas Bank, are also on track to implement the system soon, underscoring the banking sector's unified push towards standardised risk assessment. Indian Bank and SBI will assess loan up to Rs.5 crore through this model. Initially, 9 PSBs such as Bob , Canara Bank, Bom and others will allow loan only up to Rs.25 lakh. Bank of India will offer loan up to Rs.1 crore.
Tata Electronics to buy 60% stake in Apple supplier Pegatron's iPhone plant in Tamil Nadu. Tata Electronics is set to acquire a 60 per cent majority stake in Taiwanese contract manufacturer Pegatron's iPhone plant in Tamil Nadu. Tata Electronics will hold 60 per cent of the JV and run its daily operations, while Pegatron will hold the

remaining 40 per cent.

Punjab National Bank (PNB) launched the PNB Palaash Debit Card, which is made from recycled PVC plastic.

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance launches 'Increasing Income' feature for annuity product.

ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has introduced the industry's first 'Increasing Income' feature in its regular pay annuity product, ICICI Pru Guaranteed Pension Plan Flexi.

This feature offers a 5% annual increase in the annuity pay-out, helping retirees manage inflation and maintain their standard of living.

Food-delivery platform Zomato introduced its 'District' application for iOS and Android users.

The app will provide dining services to customers and enable booking tickets for movies, sports, live performances, etc.

Niti Aayog's Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) has partnered with Urban Company to empower women in the beauty and wellness sector.

The initiative will provide training and support to women-owned micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) to help them scale up their businesses.

The State Bank of India (SBI) plans to borrow up to \$1.25 billion in 2024, which would be India's largest dollar-denominated bank loan of the year.

The loan will be for five years.

The interest margin will be 92.5 basis points over the Secured Overnight Financing Rate.

CTBC Bank, HSBC Holdings Plc, and Taipei Fubon Bank are arranging the loan.

The loan will be raised through SBI's branch in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).

India's Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal has surpassed Rs 3 lakh crore in procurement this fiscal year.

In 2023-24, the portal handled procurement of Rs 4 lakh crore by government departments of centres and states and public sector enterprises.

South Korea's KONEPS is the largest such platform in the world. GeM stands at the second position. It is followed by Singapore's GeBIZ.

Microsoft collaborates with NASA on Earth Copilot, an AI guide to our planet's data.

Microsoft and NASA have joined forces to develop Earth Copilot, a software tool that uses artificial intelligence and cloud computing to simplify the process of searching and analyzing Earth science data.

Unifi Asset Management receives SEBI approval to launch mutual fund operations.

Unifi Asset Management, a subsidiary of Unifi Capital, has received final approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to begin its mutual fund operations.

Sarath Reddy, Founder of Unifi Capital.

Unifi Capital was set up in 2001 as a registered portfolio manager. It managed assets worth about Rs 27,000 crore in equity and debt as of October 31 through its Portfolio Management Service (PMS) and Alternate Investment Fund (AIF) platforms in India and abroad.

SEBI imposed a fine of Rs 26 crore on Reliance Big Entertainment for failing to pay penalties in a fund diversion case.

ADB to Boost Climate Lending by \$7.2 Billion with First-Ever U.S., Japan Guarantees.

Asian Development Bank (ADB) increased its climate finance by up to \$7.2 billion after the United States and Japan provided sovereign guarantees for some existing loans.

The guarantees will extend over a period of 25 years, with the additional lending expected to be deployed within the next five years.

Reliance, Disney India complete media assets merger for ₹70000 crore joint venture.

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) has completed the merger of its media assets with the India business of Walt Disney for an \$8.5 billion (₹70,352 crore) joint venture (JV) that will be controlled by the Mukesh Ambani-led conglomerate.

Reliance holds a 63.16% stake, of which 16.34% is with RIL and 46.82% with Viacom18. The remaining 36.84% stake is with Walt Disney.

The deal involves merging Viacom18's media and JioCinema businesses into Star India Private Limited.

Gautam Gambhir is the brand ambassador for CoinDCX's "Learn Karo. Crypto Karo." campaign.

Union Minister Pralhad Joshi proposed a task force to help India achieve its goal of 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030.

India has already achieved 212 GW of energy from non-fossil fuel sources and is on track to exceed the 2030 target.

Matrimony.com launches fintech platform to offer wedding loans. Chennai-based matchmaking service provider, Matrimony.com, has introduced a new financial technology platform designed to provide financial assistance for marriages.
National Stock Exchange of India (NSE) and Zomato have partnered to provide financial literacy to Zomato's delivery partners. The program aims to help delivery partners make informed financial decisions and become financially independent.
ONDC partners with Nazara to launch in-game shopping platform 'gCommerce'. Listed gaming major Nazara Technologies has integrated with the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC) to launch 'gCommerce', an in-game monetisation platform that integrates e-commerce within games. The platform aims to bolster revenue options for Indian game developers, who face challenges like low in-app purchase (IAP) conversion rates and poor yields from advertising.
Tata Power Renewable Energy Commissions One of India's Largest Floating Solar Projects of 126 MW in Omkareshwar, Madhya Pradesh. The engineering procurement and construction (EPC) contract worth ₹596 crore was awarded by NHPC.
State Bank of India has launched an innovation hub in Singapore to drive financial innovation and digital transformation. The hub, launched in partnership with APIX, will provide a dedicated space for fintechs and startups to design next-generation financial solutions.
GenWise and Axis Bank have partnered to create UPI payments for senior citizens in India.
Razorpay teams up with Peak XV & Lightspeed to invest in India's early-stage B2B startups.
Fintech major Razorpay has launch of the Razorpay Venture Investment Program to invest in early-stage B2B (business to business) startups in India over the next five years. The Razorpay Venture Investment Program will be instituted in collaboration with Peak XV Partners and Lightspeed, and aims to identify and invest in over 50 early-stage.
Nvidia and Softbank pilot world's first AI and 5G telecom network. Nvidia and SoftBank Corp have successfully piloted the world's first artificial intelligence and 5G telecoms network. This innovation allows both AI and 5G workloads to function simultaneously. The network is termed an artificial intelligence radio access network (AI-RAN). AI-RAN integrates AI capabilities within the 5G network infrastructure. SoftBank is a Japanese company.
PhonePe and NPCI Bharat BillPay Ltd. partner to launch ClickPay for easy bill payments. ClickPay is a unique payment link that enables customers to make recurring online bill payments (electricity, water, gas, loan, etc) and removes the need to remember tedious account details associated with each biller/service.
Adani Group Chairman Gautam Adani will invest \$10 billion in US energy security and infrastructure projects
Mastercard launches Pay Local to empower digital wallet providers with new ways to pay. Mastercard has launched Mastercard Pay Local, a global service that seamlessly connects consumers and merchants by allowing consumers to make card-based payments using local digital wallets. Leading wallets in Asia Pacific, such as DANA in Indonesia, Touch 'n Go in Malaysia, Bakong in Cambodia, and LankaPay in Sri Lanka, will leverage Mastercard Pay Local to allow consumers to make payments. Mastercard Pay Local builds upon existing partnerships with leading wallet providers, including Alipay and Weixin Pay in the Chinese Mainland and Octopus in Hong Kong.
Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has mandated that businesses with a turnover of more than ₹250 crore must be onboarded to the Trade Receivables E-Discounting System (TReDS) by March 31, 2025. This is a reduction from the earlier threshold of ₹500 crore. TReDS is an online electronic platform and an institutional mechanism that provides for factoring of trade receivables of MSME sellers.
Reserve Bank of India (RBI) retained the State Bank of India, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs). About Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs): The RBI had first announced the framework dealing with D-SIBs in 2014.

What is D-SIBs?

Banks classified as “Too Big To Fail (TBTF)” due to their size, interconnectedness, and critical role in the economy.

Their failure could disrupt the financial system and economic activity.

Which Banks are D-SIBs?

State Bank of India (SBI) (2015)

ICICI Bank (2016)

HDFC Bank (2017).

Need for D-SIBs

Prevent systemic risk and ensure the uninterrupted availability of essential banking services.

Reduce moral hazard by imposing additional capital requirements and regulatory oversight.

Different Buckets under D-SIBs

Banks are placed in buckets based on systemic importance:

1. SBI: Bucket 4

2. HDFC Bank: Bucket 3

3. ICICI Bank: Bucket 1.

Capital Requirements

Additional Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) requirements based on bucket:

1. SBI : 0.80% of Risk Weighted Assets (RWAs).

2. HDFC Bank: 0.40% of RWAs.

3. ICICI Bank: 0.20% of RWAs.

Higher surcharges applicable from April 1, 2025.

Selection Criteria

Banks with size >2% of GDP are assessed.

A composite score is calculated based on size, cross-jurisdictional activity, complexity, substitutability, and interconnectedness.

Banks above a threshold score are classified as D-SIBs.

Bucket	Banks	Additional Common Equity Tier 1 requirement as a percentage of Risk Weighted Assets (RWAs)
5	-	1%
4	State Bank of India*	0.80%
3	-	0.60%
2	HDFC Bank*	0.40%
1	ICICI Bank	0.20%

SBI has been shifted from bucket 3 to bucket 4, and HDFC Bank from bucket 1 to bucket 2. ICICI Bank continues to maintain its previous categorization of bucket 1.

The higher D-SIB surcharge for SBI and HDFC Bank will be applicable from April 1, 2025. The additional Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) requirement will be in addition to the capital conservation buffer.

NPCI Unveils UPI Safety Awareness Campaign to Champion Safe Digital Payment Practices.

To raise awareness on the safe use of digital payment services and prevent scams, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has launched a UPI Safety Awareness Campaign, Main Moorkh Nahi Hoon. As the campaign's brand ambassador, renowned actor Pankaj Tripathi will star in a series of six and films.

Air India-Vistara merger completed; Singapore Airlines gets 25.1% stake.

Air India Group has completed the operational and legal merger between Air India and Vistara, enabling Singapore Airlines (SIA) to hold a 25.1 per cent stake in the merged entity.

Vistara was a 51:49 joint venture between the Tata group and Singapore Airlines.

L&T Technology Services acquires US-based Intelliswift for \$110 million.

L&T Technology Services (LTTS) has announced the acquisition of Intelliswift, a California-based software and artificial intelligence (AI) company, in a deal valued at \$110 million.

This acquisition aims to strengthen LTTS's expertise in software product development, platform engineering, digital integration, data, and AI.

INDIA – Amul, a leading dairy brand from India, is set to make its debut in the European market after its successful launch in the US market.

SEBI has asked qualified stock brokers (QSBs) to offer a UPI-based block mechanism or a 3-in-1 trading account to clients from February 1, 2025.

What is the 3-in-1 trading account?

This account combines a savings account, a demat account, and a trading account.

It allows investors to earn interest on their funds while they remain in their savings account.

What is the UPI-based block mechanism?

This mechanism allows investors to set aside funds in their bank accounts for trading in the stock market. It aims to reduce the risks associated with defaults by trading members and clearing members

RBI & SEBI issues framework for reclassification of FPI to FDI.

What is the new framework issued by the RBI for reclassifying FPI as FDI?

The RBI has issued guidelines that require Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) to get the necessary government approvals and consent from investee companies when their equity holdings exceed the 10% limit and they want to reclassify their holdings as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI).

In sectors where FDI is prohibited, the reclassification option will not be available. The FPI must comply with all FDI regulations, including sectoral limits, entry routes, and investment limits, and ensure that the investee company agrees to the reclassification.

What is an FPI's equity holding limit under the new RBI guidelines?

According to RBI guidelines, an FPI's investment in an Indian company should be less than 10% of total paid-up equity capital. If this limit is exceeded, the FPI must either divest or reclassify the excess holdings as FDI within five trading days of the trade settlement.

Food delivery major Zomato has launched an initiative called "Food Rescue" to reduce food wastage. Deepinder Goyal is our Founder and is the MD & CEO of Zomato.

India becomes the biggest fuel supplier to European Union countries! Exports of fuel like Diesel jumped 58% in the period Jan-Sep 2024. (FE).

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman inaugurated five specialized "Nari Shakti" branches of Union Bank of India in Bengaluru, Chennai, Visakhapatnam, and Jaipur.

These branches aim to boost financial inclusion and support for women entrepreneurs, especially in the manufacturing and service sectors..

Hindalco Industries Limited was ranked the world's most sustainable aluminum company for the fifth year in a row in 2024.

The company received a score of 87 out of 100 in the S&P Global Corporate Sustainability Assessment (CSA).

The S&P Global CSA is a rating system that evaluates publicly listed companies based on environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman that the Rs 100 crore credit guarantee scheme for MSMEs.

Target set for Banks to lend ₹5.75 lakh crore to MSMEs in FY 2024-25.

Union Finance and Corporate Affairs Minister Nirmala Sitharaman said that a target has been set for Public Sector Banks to lend 5.75 lakh crore rupees to MSMEs for this financial year.

The Minister was speaking at the National MSME Cluster Outreach Programme organised by SIDBI in Bengaluru.

The Finance Minister said the Public Sector Banks' lending to MSMEs grew by 9.2 per cent, as against 25 per cent by private banks and 39 per cent by NBFCs.

The Minister further informed that the proposed new credit guarantee scheme, which ensures term loans of 100 crore rupees to MSMEs, will go before the Cabinet soon.

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman outlined the target for total credit growth of Rs 5.75 lakh crore, Rs 6.21 lakh crore, and Rs 7 lakh crore to MSMEs in the financial years 2024-25, 2025-26, and 2026-27, respectively.

Coca-Cola will launch Vitaminwater in India.

What's Vitaminwater?

A nutrient-enhanced water beverage, Sold in various fruit-based flavors in the US, and Includes zero-sugar variants.

Coca-Cola, Sprite, and Fanta are sparkling soft drink brands.

Cashfree Payments Pilots Cross Border Payments.

Fintech startup Cashfree Payments has pilot launched cross border payments in partnership with Swiggy, Zepto, Nature's Basket, Nykaa, Bookmyshow, Redbus and Vedantu.

RBI has slapped a Rs.59.20 lakh fine on South Indian Bank for non-complying with regulations related to interest rate on deposit and customer service.

India is on its way to achieving the target of 500 gigawatts (GW) of renewable energy capacity by 2030.

India reached an impressive 90 gigawatts of installed solar capacity, moving steadily forward towards its

broader goal of 500 gigawatts of renewable energy capacity by 2030. India is also setting up its size on New Horizon, with a target to produce 5 million metric tons of the green hydrogen by 2030.
Tata Steel launches India's first all-women shift at Noamundi iron mine. Tata Steel has operationalised an all-women shift at its Noamundi iron mine in Jharkhand's West Singhbhum district, an initiative introduced in the country for the first time.
Tata Power will invest ₹550 crore to set up solar and wind power facilities at Noida International Airport (NIA) with 13 MW of solar and 10.8 MW of wind energy.
Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has expanded the Fully Accessible Route (FAR) to include 10-year Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs). This marks a significant step towards promoting sustainable financing and encouraging greater participation from non-resident investors in India's green initiatives. This initiative aims to attract foreign capital to fund India's sustainable development projects while enhancing the appeal of Indian Government Securities (G-Secs) on the global stage. Eligible investors mean any "person resident outside India" as defined in Section 2(w) of the Foreign Exchange Management Act, 1999, and include Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs), Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs), and other authorized entities. Key Highlights: Inclusion of Sovereign Green Bonds: For the first time, 10-year SGrBs have been designated as "specified securities" under FAR. These bonds aim to fund public sector projects that support sustainability. Issuance Schedule: SGrBs issued during the second half of the 2024-25 fiscal year (October 1, 2024-March 31, 2025). Target Investment: Out of the ₹6.61 lakh crore set to be raised through government securities in this period, ₹20,000 crore will be raised via four SGrBs issuances (two with 10-year tenure and two with 30-year tenure). Each issuance will be worth ₹5,000 crore
Bharti Telecom bought 1.2% of Bharti Airtel shares from India Continent Investment Limited (ICIL). This acquisition made Bharti Telecom's stake in Bharti Airtel 40.33%. ICIL's stake in Bharti Airtel reduced to 3.31% from around 4.51%
TCS bags multi-year deal from Air France-KLM for transition to advanced AI.
The government approved an equity infusion of Rs 10,700 crore for FCI in the financial year 2024-25. This will boost the agricultural sector and ensure the welfare of farmers.
ADB Approves \$200 Million Loan to Enhance Livability in Uttarakhand. Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a \$200 million loan to help upgrade water supply, sanitation, urban mobility, and other urban services in the state of Uttarakhand.
Indian government has proposed merging Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) to reduce their number from 43 to 28. The government's consolidation plan aligns with the 'One State-One RRB' goal. Current Status : 12 states, including Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, and West Bengal, currently have more than one RRB. About Consolidation of Regional Rural Banks RRB consolidation began following the recommendations of the Dr. Vyas Committee (2001). Consolidation Phases: Initiated in 2004-05, reducing RRBs from 196 to 43 by 2020-21 across three phases. The ongoing fourth consolidation phase aims to further reduce the number to 28. Andhra Pradesh will see consolidation of four RRBs. Uttar Pradesh and West Bengal will each see consolidation of three RRBs
<u>Regional Rural Banks</u> Regional Rural Banks (RRB) were set up on the recommendation of Narasimham committee on Rural Credit 1975 .
The government of India promulgated the Regional Rural Bank Ordinance in 1975 which was replaced by the Regional Rural Bank Act 1976.
Five RRBs were set up in India on 2 October 1975 .
The first, Prathama Bank, was set up in Moradabad (U.P.) sponsored by Syndicate Bank.
At present there are 43 RRBs in India.
<u>Who can set up RRB?</u> The power to set up RRB is vested with the government of India .

The government of India can set up one or more RRBs in a State or Union Territories on the request of the sponsoring bank.

Who regulates the RRBs in India ?

RRBs are regulated by the Reserve Bank of India while the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) supervises the RRBs.

Ownership structure and capital requirement

Under the RRB act 1976 the authorized capital of the RRB was Rs 5 crores .

The RRBs are owned by Central government, concerned state government and a sponsoring commercial banks in the following ratios ;

Central government 50%,

State government 15% and the

Sponsoring Commercial banks being 35%.

Changes made by RRB amendment act 2015

The authorised capital of the RRB has been raised from Rs 5 crore to Rs 2000 crores .

The minimum issued capital of the RRB has been raised from Rs 25 lakhs to Rs 1 crore.

It provides that the combined shareholding of the Central government and the sponsoring banks shall not be less than 51% in any case.

Objectives of the RRB

The RRB were established with the objectives of providing credit, saving and other banking facilities to the small and marginal farmers, agricultural labourers, artisans and small entrepreneurs in the rural areas.

Current Status of RRBs in India

As on 31 March 2021, there were 43 RRBs sponsored by 12 commercial banks operating in 26 States and 3 Union Territories (Jammu & Kashmir, Ladakh and Puducherry).

There is no RRB in the state of Sikkim and Goa.

11 Public sector banks and one private sector bank Jammu and Kashmir bank are the sponsors of the RRBs.

Punjab and Sindh Bank is the only public sector bank which has not sponsored any RRB.

Priority Sector Lending (PSL) Target: RRBs must allocate 75% of their total outstanding advances to PSL , compared to 40% for Scheduled Commercial Banks.

IDFC First Bank offers real-time tracking of money sent abroad through Swift.

IDFC First Bank has become the first Indian lender to offer real-time tracking service for money sent abroad in collaboration with Society for Worldwide Interbank Financial Telecommunications (SWIFT).

Karur Vysya Bank (KVB) has been assigned an 'A1+' rating for its short-term fixed deposits aggregating ₹12,000 crore and an 'AA' rating (Stable) for its fixed deposits by CARE Ratings.

Larsen & Toubro (L&T)'s ₹2,000 crore data centre located in Sriperumbudur, Tamil Nadu.

Larsen & Toubro to buy 21% stake in E2E Networks for Rs 1,407 crore.

Larsen & Toubro (L&T) has proposed to acquire a 21 per cent equity stake in E2E Networks, an Indian Cloud and AI Cloud provider, at a cost of Rs 1,407 crore.

Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT) has permitted tax officers to waive or reduce the interest payable on tax payments by assesseees, subject to specific conditions.

As per a circular, dated November 4, a Principal Chief Commissioner of Income Tax (PrCCIT) can decide on reducing or waiving interest due of over Rs 1.5 crore.

For interest due above Rs 50 lakh and below Rs 1.5 crore, Chief Commissioner of Income Tax (CCIT) rank officers will decide on the waiver/reduction, while Principal Commissioner of Income Tax (PrCIT) or Income Tax Commissioners can decide on interest due up to Rs 50 lakh.

Under Section 220 (2A) of the Income Tax (I-T) Act, if a taxpayer fails to pay the tax amount specified in any demand notice, he/she is liable to pay interest at 1% per month for the period of delay in making the payment.

HCLTech to set up new AI-Cloud lab in Singapore.

HCLTech announced it is setting up a new Singapore-based artificial intelligence (AI) / Cloud native lab that is expected to be opened in 2025

Government e-Marketplace (GeM) launches 170 seed categories on the portal.

The Government e-Marketplace (GeM) has launched 170 new seed categories on its portal to simplify access to quality agricultural and horticulture seeds ahead of the upcoming cropping season

Suzuki Motor Corporation has unveiled its first mass-production battery electric vehicle (BEV) model, the e VITARA, in Milan, Italy.

Karnataka partners with Microsoft to fast-track approvals for industrial projects.

SEBI allows mutual funds to invest in foreign funds with 25% exposure to India.

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) allows mutual funds (MFs) to invest in overseas funds and unit trusts (UTs) with up to 25% exposure to Indian equities.

Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has unveiled an online Re-KYC service to simplify the Know Your Customer (KYC) update process for its customers.

This digital initiative allows clients to update their KYC information without visiting a branch, enhancing convenience and accessibility

Ujjivan Small Finance applies for universal banking license with RBI.

Eligibility for SFBs to transitioning into UBs

Net Worth: SFBs must have a minimum net worth of Rs 1,000 crore.

Status: SFBs must be scheduled banks with a satisfactory track record of performance for a minimum of 5 years.

Financial Health:

Profitability: Should have net profits in the last two Financial Years.

Asset Quality: Gross non-performing assets (G-NPA) and net NPA (N-NPA) must be less than or equal to 3% and 1%, respectively, over the last two FYs.

About Ujjivan Small Finance Bank.

Founded : 1 February 2017

Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra

MD & CEO : Sanjeev Nautiyal

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank Limited is an Indian small finance bank based in Bangalore, which commenced operations on 1 February 2017.

Ujjivan Financial Services holds an 80 percent stake in the bank.

Ujjivan Small Finance Bank is licensed under Section 22 (1) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 to carry out small finance bank business and received Scheduled Bank status from the Reserve Bank of India in August 2017.

Banks have requested to integrate with the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Centralised Information Management System (CIMS) platform to monitor Liberal Remittance Scheme (LRS) limits.

This integration would allow for real-time verification of LRS limit usage.

What is LRS?

The LRS full form is Liberalised Remittance Scheme. It is a foreign exchange policy initiative introduced by the Reserve Bank of India in 2004. It intended to simplify and streamline the process of remitting funds outside India.

This scheme helped Indians overcome international fund transfer restrictions as set by the FEMA (Foreign Exchange Management Act), 1999.

The LRS scheme applies to the residents of India, and thus, the remittance takes place through a savings account. Non-Residential Indians are not supposed to have any savings accounts in Indian banks.

Liberalised Remittance Scheme limit

Under the LRS, a resident individual can remit up to USD 250,000 per financial year for permissible transactions. The LRS limit for education, medical treatment, employment, emigration, travel, investment, etc., is the same as mentioned

Tax on Liberalised Remittance Scheme

Profits gained from overseas investments made through LRS are taxable in India depending on the investment's holding period. Investments over two years are considered long-term capital gains and impose a tax of 20% on the total profit earned.

Under the LRS scheme, you are liable to pay a 5% TCS (Tax Collected at Source) for remittances exceeding the limit of Rs. 7,00,000. However, you can claim a refund for the deducted TCS while filing ITR (income tax return) using Form 26AS.

The threshold limit for TCS on remittances under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme (LRS) has been increased from Rs. 7 lakh to Rs. 10 lakh.

SEBI slaps Rs 50 lakh fine on Sunil Lulla for violating market norms in Eros International matter.

Capital markets regulator SEBI has slapped a fine of Rs 50 lakh on promoter and former MD of Eros International Media Sunil Arjan Lulla in a case related to the violation of regulatory norms.

Punjab & Sind Bank (PSB) launched an e-Bank Guarantee (e-BG) facility in partnership with National e-Governance Services Ltd (NeSL).

The e-BG facility replaces the paper-based process for issuing bank guarantees.

The e-BG facility is paperless and available in digital form to registered beneficiaries on the NeSL portal.

The e-BG facility can be used for a variety of purposes, including: Shipping, Logistics, Railways, and Air Cargo.

The e-BG facility can help businesses save time and reduce the risk of fraud.

SEBI proposes Rs 1 cr minimum investment, demat form for securitisation.

SEBI has proposed a minimum ticket size or investment threshold of Rs 1 crore for the RBI-regulated originators and unregulated entities engaged in securitisation activities.

The proposal also introduced limitations on the number of investors in private placements, allowing securitised debt instruments (SDIs) issued privately to be offered to a maximum of 200 investors.

public offers for securitized debt instruments (SDIs) must remain open for a minimum of 3 days and a maximum of 10 days, with all advertisement requirements adhering to the guidelines set for non-convertible securities by SEBI.

Minimum duration: A public offer cannot be open for less than 3 days.

Maximum duration: The offer period cannot exceed 10 days.

SBI MF becomes first to surpass ₹10 lakh crore AUM, outpacing ICICI and HDFC.

SBI Mutual Fund (SBI MF) has made headlines by becoming the first fund house in India to surpass the ₹10 lakh crore mark in assets under management (AUM), reaching ₹10.99 lakh crore in the September quarter, a notable increase from ₹9.88 lakh crore in June.

This achievement places SBI MF ahead of its closest competitors, ICICI Mutual Fund and HDFC Mutual Fund, which have AUMs of ₹8.41 lakh crore and ₹7.47 lakh crore, respectively.

Mahindra Finance gets approval to launch co-branded credit cards with RBL Bank.

UPI sets new record in Oct with 16.58 bn transactions worth Rs 23.5 trn.

There were 16.58 billion Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions worth Rs 23.5 trillion in October, the highest numbers for the digital system since it became operational in April 2016.

Markets regulator SEBI has proposed raising the threshold for identifying High Value Debt Listed Entities (HVDLEs) to ₹1,000 crore from ₹500 crore at present to reduce compliance burdens.

Currently, an entity having an outstanding value of listed non-convertible debt securities of ₹500 crore and above are referred to as 'High Value Debt Listed Entities'.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES 2025

APRIL 2025

J P Nadda launches the Unified Health Insurance Scheme of Odisha.

Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Jagat Prakash Nadda, launched a unified health insurance scheme of the Odisha government in Cuttack, Odisha, on 11 April 2025.

The Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) of the central government was formally launched in the state as part of the unified insurance scheme.

The minister also launched the newly introduced Ayushman Vayo-Vandana Yojana in the state.

Roll out of AB-PMJAY and merger of the Gopabandhu scheme

In January 2025, the Odisha government signed an agreement with the National Health Authority, which implements the AB-PMJAY scheme, to implement the scheme in the state. Odisha was the 34th State/Union Territory to join the AB-PMJAY scheme.

Recently, Delhi became the 35th state/Union Territory to join the AB-PMJAY scheme.

The previous Naveen Patnaik-led Biju Janata Dal government in Odisha had refused to join the AB-PMJAY and instead launched its health insurance scheme, Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana.

After the BJP government came to power in the state in 2024 renamed the Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana into Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana.

With the launch of the AB-PMJAY in the state, the Gopabandhu scheme has been merged with the AB-PMJAY.

Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM).

The Delhi government is set to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to implement the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM).

About PM-ABHIM:

It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) with certain Central Sector Components which has total outlay of Rs. 64,180 Crores for the scheme period (2021-22 to 2025-26).

The scheme envisages a new generation of reforms to integrate and strengthen health service delivery and public health action.

The measures under the scheme are aimed at strengthening health systems and institutions in order to provide a continuum of care at all levels, namely primary, secondary, and tertiary, as well as preparing health systems to respond effectively to current and future pandemics and disasters.

10th anniversary of Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana & MUDRA.

The government of India's Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana completed 10 years on 8th April 2025. The Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) scheme and the Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd (MUDRA) were launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 8th April 2015.

The aim of the scheme and MUDRA was to provide easy loan access to the small and micro business enterprises in the country, with special focus on the weaker section of the society.

MUDRA Loan

Under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, loans are provided to non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises. These loans are called MUDRA loans.

The loans are provided by the Reserve Bank of India-regulated Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Small Finance Banks, Micro Financial Institutions (MFIs), and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs).

Categories of MUDRA loan

There are four categories of loans designed to help business enterprises during their various growth stages.

Sishu Stage

Maximum loan up to Rs 50,000.

The loan is designed for startups and new business ventures, for first-time entrepreneurs.

Kishore Stage

Loans of more than Rs 50,000 and up to Rs 5 lakhs.

It is designed to support enterprises that want to expand their business.

Tarun Stage

Loans of more than Rs 5 lakhs and up to Rs 10 lakhs.

It is designed to meet the higher funding needs of an established business enterprise.

Tarun Plus

It was introduced recently.

Loans of more than Rs 10 lakhs and up to Rs 20 lakhs.

The loan is provided to those entrepreneurs who have successfully repaid previous loans under the 'Tarun' category.

The category is designed to cater to the financial needs of micro-enterprises.

Overdraft under PMJDY comes under Mudra Loan

Overdrafts up to Rs 10,000 provided under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) are also considered a MUDRA loan.

Achievements of MUDRA

Over 52 crore loans worth more than 32 lakh crore rupees have been sanctioned to date.

Around half of the Mudra beneficiaries belong to SC, ST, and OBC Communities, and over 70% of the beneficiaries are women.

About MUDRA

The Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd (MUDRA) was set up as a company in 2015 under the Companies Act 2013.

It is a subsidiary of the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).

It is registered as an NBFC with the Reserve Bank of India.

Headquarters: Mumbai

Function of MUDRA

It is responsible for monitoring the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana.

It is responsible for developing and refinancing all Micro-enterprises sectors.

It provides refinancing facilities to the micro-enterprise sector in the country.

Delhi becomes the 35th State/UT to Join Ayushman Bharat Scheme.

Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) led government in Delhi has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the central government on 5 April 2025 to join the centrally sponsored scheme Ayushman

Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY).
Delhi becomes the 35th State/Union Territory to join the AB-PMJAY scheme.
Only the Mamata Banerjee government of West Bengal has not joined the scheme.
The previous Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) government led by Arvind Kejriwal, which rule Delhi for over 10 years refused to join the AB-PMJAY scheme.

The National Health Authority is the implementing agency of the AB-PMJAY.

Total Coverage of Rs 10 Lakhs in Delhi

The beneficiaries in Delhi under the AB-PMJAY scheme will get medical health insurance coverage of Rs 10 lakhs per annum per family.

The central government schemes provide for medical coverage of Rs 5 lakhs per year per family. The Delhi government will provide an additional coverage of Rs 5 lakhs per family.

Thus, the total health insurance coverage per family in Delhi will be Rs 10 lakhs per annum per family.

About AB-PMJAY

The Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) is part of the flagship Ayushman Bharat health scheme of the government of India.

The other component of the Ayushman Bharat flagship scheme is the Health and Wellness Center.

The National Health Protection Scheme of the central government was renamed as PM-JAY.

It is the world's largest medical insurance scheme.

Benefits of the AB- PMJAY

It is a cashless medical insurance scheme.

The eligible families get Rs 5 lakh per year insurance for secondary and tertiary care hospitalisation.

A family member or all the members combined can get health insurance benefits of Rs 5 lakh per year in eligible public or private sector hospitals.

The central government and the state government share the insurance premium.

Eligibility

Initially, the scheme was for the identified poor and vulnerable families (approximately 55 crore beneficiaries), based on the deprivation and occupational criteria of the Socio-Economic Caste Census 2011 (SECC 2011) for rural and urban areas, respectively.

The scheme was later extended to include 37 lakh Accredited Social Health Activists (ASHAs), Anganwadi Workers, and Anganwadi Helpers and their families.

There is no restriction on family size.

In 2024, the government included senior citizens of 70 years and above under the scheme.

Implementing Authority

National Health Authority under the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare is the implementing authority of the AB-PMJAY.

Union Government approves Central Vibrant Villages Programme-II.

Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSC) Vibrant Villages Programme -II in a meeting held on 4 April 2025.

Prime Minister virtually chaired the meeting from Bangkok, Thailand, as he is on a state visit to Thailand on 3rd and 4th April 2025.

The Vibrant Villages Programme -II will complement the Vibrant Villages Programme -I, launched by the central government in 2023.

Duration of the Vibrant Villages Programme -II

The duration of the Vibrant Villages Programme -II is from 2024-25 to 2028-29.

Allocation of Funds

The total allocation for the scheme is Rs 6,839 crore.

It is 100 % funded by the central government.

Nodal Ministry for the Vibrant Villages Programme -II

The Vibrant Villages Programme -I & II is being implemented by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

States/UT to be covered under Vibrant Villages Programme -II

The Vibrant Villages Programme -II will cover the 17 States/Union Territories of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and the Union Territory of Ladakh and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

The scheme aims to develop the backward villages located in these blocks along the international borders so that the people do not migrate from these areas, and also do not fall prey to hostile enemy propaganda.

Focus will be on creating opportunities for livelihood for these people through the promotion of

tourism, skill development & entrepreneurship.

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Dr Mohan Yadav launched the four-day School Chale Hum campaign in the state capital, Bhopal, on 1st April 2025.

The Chief Minister also launched the Education Portal 3.0, which will streamline and digitize school education processes

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES 2025

MARCH 2025

PM Internship Scheme

Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently launched a dedicated mobile application for the Prime Minister Internship Scheme and urged more companies to join the programme.

About PM Internship Scheme:

PM Internship Scheme is a remarkable initiative launched by the Indian government, designed to provide valuable internship opportunities for the youth of India.

It aims to provide young individuals aged 21-24 years from low-income households with 12-month internship opportunities in the country's top 500 companies.

The pilot phase targets 25 lakh youth, with a five-year goal to facilitate internships for one crore young individuals.

These internships span 24 sectors, including oil, gas, energy, travel, hospitality, automotive, banking, and financial services.

Eligibility Criteria:

Passed 10th, 12th, ITI, Polytechnic, or Diploma courses.

Fresh graduates from non-premier institutions.

Anyone from a household that includes a person who earned an income of Rs.8 lakh or less in a year.

No family member has a government job.

Financials and Budget Allocation

Overall Budget: ₹2 lakh crore allocated under the PM's Package for Employment and Skilling.

Scheme-Specific Allocation: ₹2,000 crore for 2024-25, with a revised estimate of ₹380 crore for 2024-25 and ₹10,831 crore allocated for 2025-26.

Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM).

The Delhi government is set to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare to implement the Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM).

About PM-ABHIM:

It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) with certain Central Sector Components which has total outlay of Rs. 64,180 Crores for the scheme period (2021-22 to 2025-26).

The scheme envisages a new generation of reforms to integrate and strengthen health service delivery and public health action.

The measures under the scheme are aimed at strengthening health systems and institutions in order to provide a continuum of care at all levels, namely primary, secondary, and tertiary, as well as preparing health systems to respond effectively to current and future pandemics and disasters.

Ladki Bahin Yojana

The Maharashtra government disbursed ₹17,500 crore to 2.38 crore women under the Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana till December 2024, stated the Economic Survey tabled in the State Assembly.

About Ladki Bahin Yojana:

The Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, commonly referred to as the Ladki Bahin Yojana, is a key welfare program introduced by the Maharashtra Government in 2024.

Objective: It aims to provide financial support to economically disadvantaged women aged 21 to 65, promoting their rehabilitation, economic development, and empowerment.

Eligibility Criteria: To qualify for the Ladki Bahin Yojana, the applicant must be a permanent resident of Maharashtra.

Age Limit: The applicant should be between 21 and 65 years old.

Family Income: The combined annual income of the applicant's family must not exceed ₹2.5 lakh.

Income Tax: No family member should be an income taxpayer.

Benefits: Under this scheme, eligible women will receive Rs 1,500 per month through Direct Benefit

Transfer (DBT).

World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB), along with key partners have launched Mission 300.

About Mission 300:

It is an ambitious initiative to provide electricity to 300 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030. It aims to accelerate the pace of electrification in Sub-Saharan Africa while ensuring that the transition to more diversified and cleaner sources of energy meets growing demand, brings economic growth, and creates jobs.

MISHTI Scheme

Gujarat has become the national leader in mangrove afforestation, covering 19,020 hectares in two years under the MISHTI scheme.

About MISTI Scheme:

The MISHTI (Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes) scheme, launched in 2023, aims to expand India's mangrove cover and enhance coastal resilience.

Focuses on ecological restoration and livelihood generation for coastal communities.

Launched In: Union Budget 2023-24, with implementation from 2023 to 2028.

Under Ministry: Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEF&CC).

"MISHTI" comes after India joined the 'Mangrove Alliance for Climate' launched during the 27th Conference of Parties (COP27) to the UNFCCC held in Egypt in November 2022.

The scheme is primarily focused on the Sundarbans delta, Hooghly Estuary in West Bengal, India.

Unified Pension Scheme (UPS).

The Government of India is advancing ₹7,000 crore for the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS).

This funding is part of a larger proposal for over ₹51,000 crore in additional expenditures.

The UPS is designed to provide assured retirement payouts for Central government employees.

The scheme will commence on April 1, 2025, benefiting around 23 lakh employees.

Mains points of the Unified Pension Scheme:

A person who has worked for the central government for at least 10 years is eligible for a pension.

The minimum assured pension will be Rs 10,000 per month.

Central Government employees with at least 25 years of service will get an assured pension of 50 per cent of the average basic pay drawn over the last 12 months prior to retirement.

Pension will be proportionate to the duration of the employee's employment.

Family members will get 60% of the employee's pension immediately before her/his demise.

The benefit of inflation indexation is that the pension amount will be increased based on the increase in the inflation rate.

The scheme will use the All India Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers for inflation indexation purposes.

Mahila Samriddhi Yojana

On International Women's Day 2025, the newly elected BJP government in Delhi launched the Mahila Samriddhi Yojana.

This scheme aims to provide financial support to women from economically weaker sections.

Each eligible woman will receive ₹2,500 monthly.

The Mahila Samriddhi Yojana targets women aged 21 to 60.

Eligible participants must have an annual income of up to ₹3 lakh.

The government has allocated ₹5,100 crores in the budget for this initiative.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2025

NAMASTE Scheme.

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment distributes PPE Kits and Ayushman Cards to Sewer and Septic Tank Workers under NAMASTE Scheme.

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment (SJ&E) distributed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits and Ayushman health cards to Sewer and Septic Tank Workers under the flagship scheme of National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE).

About NAMASTE Scheme:

The objective of the "National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem" (NAMASTE) scheme is to

formalize and institutionalize the persons engaged in hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks and promoting safe and mechanized cleaning through trained sanitation workers.

It is jointly supervised by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).

Implementing agency: It is implemented by the National Safai Karmacharis Finance Development Corporation (NSKFDC) under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE).

Duration: It would be implemented for three years from FY 2023-24 to FY 2025-26.

Target Groups: Sewer and septic tank sanitation workers (SSWs) and waste pickers in urban areas of India

Market Intervention Scheme

The agriculture ministry has revised guidelines for the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS), increasing the procurement limit of crops to 25% from 20%.

About Market Intervention Scheme:

It is implemented on the request of the State/UT Government for procurement of various perishable agricultural/horticultural commodities such as tomato, onion and potato etc. for which Minimum Support Price (MSP) is not applicable.

It is implemented only when there is a minimum reduction of 10% in the prevailing market price as compared to the previous normal year.

Revised Market Intervention Scheme Guidelines:

It made MIS a component of the integrated scheme of PM-AASHA.

The procurement/coverage limit of production quantity of crops has been increased from the existing 20 percent to 25 percent.

The States have also been given the option to pay the difference between the Market Intervention Price (MIP) and the selling price directly into the bank account of the farmers in place of physical procurement.

Reimbursement: The operational cost incurred in storage and transportation of crops from the producing State to other consuming States will be reimbursed by Central nodal agencies like NAFED and NCCF, in the interest of farmers.

PM-AJAY Scheme

Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment chaired a meeting of the central advisory committee for PM-AJAY scheme.

About PM-AJAY Scheme:

The Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM- AJAY) is a 100% Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

It is aimed at reducing poverty among the SC communities through various initiatives like the generation of additional employment and improving socio-economic indicators in SC dominated villages.

It is a merged scheme of three Centrally Sponsored Schemes, namely Pradhan Mantri Adarsh Gram Yojana (PMAGY), Special Central Assistance to Scheduled Castes Sub Plan (SCA to SCSP), and Babu Jagjivan Ram Chhatrawas Yojana (BJRCY).

Objectives:

To increase the income of the target population by way of various income generating schemes, skill development and infrastructure development.

To reduce the poverty among the target population and bring them above the poverty lines.

Eligibility Criteria:

The Scheduled Castes persons living below the poverty lines are eligible for getting benefits under this scheme.

In case of Infrastructure Development, the villages having 50% or more SC population are eligible for grants under the Scheme.

It is being implemented since 2021-22 as three components, which are as under:

Development of SC dominated villages into an 'Adarsh Gram' component

Grants-in-aid for District/State-level Projects for socio-economic betterment of SCs' component

Construction of Hostels in Higher Educational Institutions' component.

GREAT Scheme

Center has approved 04 Start-Ups in the field of Technical Textiles.

The central government has approved 04 Start-Ups with a grant under the 'Grant for Research & Entrepreneurship across Aspiring Innovators in Technical Textiles (GREAT)' scheme.

About GREAT Scheme:

It was launched in August 2023 with the aim to develop the Startup Ecosystem in Technical Textiles in India.

It has evolved under the Research, Development, and Innovation Component of National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM).

It encourages young innovators, scientists/technologists, and startup ventures in the field of Technical Textiles to translate their ideas into commercial technologies/products and make India self-reliant.

It supports individual entrepreneurs or start-ups for functional prototypes or commercialization of their technologies for Technical Textile.

It supports innovations under application areas in all segments of Technical Textiles such as Agro-textiles, Building-textiles, Cloth-textiles, Geotextiles, Home-textiles, Industrial-textiles, Medical-textiles, Mobile-textiles, Oeko-textiles, Packaging- textiles, Protective-textiles, Sports-textiles, etc.

Funding: A grant-in-aid of up to Rs 50 lakh for up to a period of 18 months will be provided.

National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM):

Objective: To increase the penetration of technical textiles in India and leverage the sector's extraordinary growth rate.

Goal: Position India as a global leader in Technical Textiles.

Key Components:

Research, Innovation, and Development

Promotion and Market Development

Export Promotion

Education, Training, and Skill Development

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Textiles.

PRASHAD Scheme

The Parliamentary Standing Committee on Transport, Tourism, and Culture has raised concerns over the slow progress of projects under the Spiritual Tourism Circuits and the PRASHAD (Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Augmentation Drive) scheme.

The committee has urged the government to establish clear-cut Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and to obtain prior clearances and approvals from relevant authorities for the timely completion of these projects.

About PRASHAD Scheme:

Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spirituality Augmentation Drive (PRASAD) scheme was launched by the Ministry of Tourism in 2014.

It is an initiative that aimed at transforming the cultural preservation and spiritual travelling across identified pilgrimage destinations.

The name of the scheme was changed from PRASAD to "National Mission on Pilgrimage Rejuvenation and Spiritual Heritage Augmentation Drive (PRASHAD)" in October 2017.

Under the PRASHAD Scheme, several religious cities/sites in have been identified for development such as Amaravati and Srisailem (Andhra Pradesh), Kamakhya (Assam), Parasuram Kund (Lohit District, Arunachal Pradesh), Patna and Gaya (Bihar).

Funding: It is funded on a 100% public funding model for eligible project components. Additionally, the scheme incorporates voluntary contributions through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives and Public-Private Partnerships (PPP).

National Youth Parliament Scheme (NYPS) 2.0.

Minister of State in the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs provided information about the National Youth Parliament Scheme 2.0 to the Rajya Sabha.

About National Youth Parliament Scheme (NYPS) 2.0

The National Youth Parliament Scheme (NYPS) was launched on November 26, 2019 by the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs.

The National Youth Parliament Scheme (NYPS) 2.0 aimed at engaging the youth in understanding and participating in democratic processes.

The scheme is designed to strengthen democratic values, promote discipline, and foster tolerance among young citizens while educating them about parliamentary practices, government functioning, and constitutional principles.

Objectives of NYPS 2.0:

Strengthen Democracy: To deepen the roots of democracy among the youth.

Inculcate Discipline and Tolerance: To encourage healthy habits of discipline and respect for diverse viewpoints.

Educate About Parliamentary Practices: To familiarize students with the procedures and functioning of Parliament.

Enhance Knowledge of Governance: To improve understanding of government operations and constitutional values.

Promote Democratic Living: To inspire youth to lead a democratic way of life.

The NYPS 2.0 web-portal promotes participation in three distinct ways:

Institution Participation:

Eligibility: Educational institutions can organize Youth Parliament sittings.

Categories:

Kishore Sabha: For students from classes VI to XII.

Tarun Sabha: For undergraduate and postgraduate students

Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana (PM-SYM).

Union Budget 2025-26, the allocation under the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana (PM-SYM) has been increased by 37% compared to the previous year's budget allocation.

About PM-SYM:

It is a government scheme meant for the old-age protection and social security of unorganized workers.

It is a Central Sector Scheme administered by the Ministry of Labour and Employment and implemented through Life Insurance Corporation of India and CSC eGovernance Services India Limited (CSC SPV).

LIC is the Pension Fund Manager and responsible for pension pay out.

The amount collected under the PM-SYM are invested as per the investment pattern specified by the Government of India.

Eligibility:

Should be an Indian Citizen

Unorganised Workers (working as street vendors, agriculture-related work, construction site workers, workers in industries of leather, handloom, mid-day meal, rickshaw or auto wheelers, rag picking, carpenters, fishermen, etc.

Age group of 18-40 years

Monthly income is below Rs. 15000 and not a member of EPFO/ESIC/NPS (Govt. funded).

Features:

It is a voluntary and contributory pension scheme.

Minimum Assured Pension: Each subscriber under the PM-SYM shall receive minimum assured pension of Rs 3000/- per month after attaining the age of 60.

Matching contribution by the Central Government: It is a pension scheme on a 50:50 basis where prescribed age-specific contributions shall be made by the beneficiary and the matching contribution by the Central Government.

Family Pension:

During the receipt of pension, if the subscriber dies, the spouse of the beneficiary shall be entitled to receive 50% of the pension received by the beneficiary as a family pension. Family pension is applicable only to spouse.

Exit:

Even if the subscriber wants to opt out of the scheme before 10 years, the share of the subscriber will be given back along with the interest amount accrued.

Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana.

Finance Minister announced the Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana in the Union Budget 2025-26, targeting 100 districts with low agricultural productivity.

About Pradhan Mantri Dhan Dhanya Krishi Yojana:

It is a new initiative aimed at supporting farmers in 100 regions facing challenges in agriculture.

Ministry: Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

Outlay: No separate allocation, but Rs 1,000 crore allocated for pulses, Rs 500 crore for fruits and vegetables, and Rs 100 crore for hybrid seeds.

Aim: To boost agricultural productivity, crop diversification, post-harvest storage, irrigation facilities, and credit access in 100 low-productivity districts.

Features:

Convergence of existing schemes and specialized measures.

Focus on sustainable agriculture and crop diversification.

Improved post-harvest storage at panchayat and block levels.

Enhanced irrigation and credit facilities.

Targets small and marginal farmers, rural women, and landless families.

Government includes 10 New Agricultural Commodities under e-NAM.

The government of India has expanded the list of agricultural commodities traded on the electronic-National Agricultural Market (e-NAM) platform and included 10 new agricultural commodities. With the addition of the 10 new commodities the total agricultural commodities traded on e-NAM is 231. The 10 newly added agricultural commodities are Dried Tulsi Leaves; Besan (Chickpea Flour); Wheat Flour; Chana Sattu (Roasted Chickpea Flour); Water Chestnut Flour; Asafoetida; Dried Fenugreek Leaves; Water Chestnut; Baby Corn; Dragon Fruit.

About e-NAM

The e-NAM is an electronic platform that was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 14th April 2016.

It is an all-India electronic trading portal that has created a national market for permitted agricultural commodities.

The e-NAM is fully funded by the government of India and is implemented by the Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC), under the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare.

Skill India Programme

Union Cabinet extends Skill India Programme till 2026.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has restructured and extended the central sector scheme "Skill India Programme" till 2025-26.

The Skill India Mission was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 to create a trained workforce in India to meet the needs of the industry and help in the economic development of the country. The government of India later launched various schemes to realize the objectives of the Skill India Mission.

Three key skilling schemes of the central government -Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0, Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS), and the Jan Shikshan Sansthan Scheme have been consolidated into a comprehensive "Skill India Programme".

The Outlay for the Skill India Programme from the period 2022-23 to 2025-26 is Rs 8,800 crore.

The Skill India programme is being implemented by the Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

The components of the Skill India Programme are -Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0, Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS), and the Jan Shikshan Sansthan.

Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) 4.0:

The Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana (PMKVY) was launched by the government of India in 2015.

The PMKVY scheme has been rebooted by the government depending upon the needs of industry and the economy.

The PMKVY 4.0 was announced in the Union Budget of 2023-24 and it is being implemented from 1 April 2022 till 31st March 2026.

The PMKVY 4.0 focuses on new-age courses for Industry 4.0 like coding, AI, robotics, mechatronics, IOT, 3D printing, drones, and soft skills.

PM National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS)

The government of India launched the Prime Minister National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS) in August 2016. Presently the National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (NAPS)-2 is under implementation.

The scheme is for individuals aged 14 to 35 years.

Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) scheme:

The Scheme of Jan Shikshan Sansthan was launched as Shramik Vidyapeeth in 1967.

It was renamed as the Jan Shikshan Sansthan in 2000 and it was transformed from the Union Ministry of Education to the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship in 2018.

The Jan Shikshan Sansthan is implemented through a network of non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

The scheme is a community-centric skilling initiative, to make vocational training accessible, for women, rural youth, and economically disadvantaged groups and caters to the age group of 15 -45 years of age.

National Commission for Safai Karamcharis.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has extended the tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis for a period of three years till 31 March 2028.

The tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis was to lapse on 31st March 2025

About the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis

The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis was set up as a statutory body in 1994 by the government

of India under the provision of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993. As per the provision of the act, the tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis was three years. The central government periodically amended the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act in 1997 and 2001 and extended its term by three -three years. The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act was allowed to lapse on 29 February 2004 by the government and was converted into a non-statutory body. The government has periodically extended the term of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis. The non-statutory body National Commission for Safai Karamcharis comes under the **Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.**

National Critical Mineral Mission.

The government of India has approved the National Critical Mineral Mission, which aims to make the country self-reliant in critical minerals by encouraging the exploration of minerals within India and encouraging Indian companies to acquire mineral blocks outside the country. The proposed total outlay for the National Critical Mineral Mission is Rs 34,300 crore . The central government will provide Rs 16,300 crore for the mission through the union budget while the public sector and private companies are expected to invest Rs 18,000 crore. The duration of the Mission is seven years from 2024-25 to 2030-31. Union Ministry of Mines is the apex nodal body for implementing the National Critical Mineral Mission in the country. The government of India has identified 30 minerals -Molybdenum, Antimony, Beryllium, Vanadium, Zirconium, Bismuth, Cobalt, Copper, Gallium, Germanium, Graphite, Niobium, Nickel, PGE, Phosphate, Potash, REE, Rhenium, Hafnium, Indium, Lithium, Silicon, Strontium, Tantalum, Tellurium, Tin, Titanium, Tungsten, Selenium, and Cadmium- as critical minerals.

Atal Pension Yojana

APY enrolments have skyrocketed from 1.54 crore in March 2019 to a staggering 7.33 crore by January 2025, recording a CAGR of 29 per cent. The financial year 2024-25 alone saw over 89.95 lakh new enrolments. Uttar Pradesh has the highest enrolments, followed by Bihar, Maharashtra, West Bengal and Tamil Nadu.

About APY:

Launched: By Ministry of Finance in 2015.

Objective: To create a universal social security system for all Indians, especially underprivileged and workers in unorganized sector.

Key-Features:

Minimum guaranteed pension of Rs.1,000/- or 2,000/- or 3,000/- or 4,000 or 5,000/- per month. Pension will start after attaining the age of 60 years depending on the contributions by subscribers.

Eligibility: Any citizen of India between the age of 18 and 40.

Should have a savings bank account/ post office savings bank account.

Administered by : Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).

The tax benefits include the additional deduction of Rs 50,000 under section 80CCD(1).

PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

Over 3.80 lakh households getting free power under PM Surya Ghar.

About the PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana.

About: It is a centrally sponsored scheme aimed at providing free electricity to households by subsidizing the installation of rooftop solar panels.

Launch & Ministry: February 15, 2024 by the Ministry for New and Renewable Energy (MNRE).

Aim: Provide up to 300 units of free electricity per month to one crore households.

Subsidies and Incentives: The scheme provides for a subsidy of 60% of the solar unit cost for systems up to 2kW capacity and 40 percent of additional system cost for systems between 2 to 3kW capacity. The subsidy has been capped at 3kW capacity. At current benchmark prices, this will mean Rs 30,000 subsidy for 1kW system, Rs 60,000 for 2kW systems and Rs 78,000 for 3kW systems or higher.

Financial Outlay: ₹75,021 crore, with ₹65,700 crore allocated for Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to residential consumers.

Muft Bijli Yojana is the world's largest domestic rooftop solar initiative, transforming India's energy landscape with a bold vision to supply solar power to one crore households by March 2027.

Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh lead in rooftop solar installations under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.

Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM)

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an extension of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) till 2028, with an outlay of Rs 67,000 crore in the Union Budget 2025-26.

About

The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM), launched in 2019, aimed to provide Functional Household Tap Connections (FHTC), ensuring 55 litres per capita per day of safe drinking water to all rural households by 2024. However, due to implementation challenges, the deadline has now been extended to 2028.

The focus now shifts towards quality infrastructure, sustainable operation, and community-led management under the principle of “Jan Bhagidari” (people’s participation).

Universal Piped Water Access: Ensuring every rural household receives tap water by 2028.

Nodal Ministry: Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Background: JJM subsumed the National Rural Drinking Water Programme (NRDWP).

Funding Pattern:

90:10 for Himalayan and North-Eastern States.

100% Central Funding for Union Territories.

50:50 for other States.

Achievements Since 2019:

80% of rural households now have piped water access, up from 15% in 2019.

Over 12 crore families have gained access to drinking water.

States with 100% Coverage: Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Telangana, and Mizoram.

UTs with 100% Coverage: Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra & Nagar Haveli & Daman & Diu, and Puducherry.

Government extends PM AASHA scheme till 2025-26.

The Government of India has extended the continuation of the integrated Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) Scheme till 31st March 2026.

This was done to make the tenure of the PM-AASHA co-terminus with the term of the 15th Finance Commission, which ends on 31st March 2026.

Recent Changes Made in the PM-AASHA Scheme.

The central government has allowed 100 % procurement of Tur, Urad and Masur under the Price Support Scheme (PSS) in identified states for the procurement year 2024-25.

India is the world's largest importer of pulses in the world.

About the Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan' (PM-AASHA)

The Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanraksHan Abhiyan' (PM-AASHA) is a market intervention scheme launched by the central government in 2018.

The market intervention scheme seeks to ensure the farmers get remunerative prices.

Component of the PM -AASHA

The PM-AASHA scheme comprises the Price Support Scheme (PSS), Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS) and Private Procurement and Stockist Scheme (PPSS).

Crops covered - pulses(gram, tur, moong, urad, lentil), oilseeds(groundnut, rapeseed-mustard, soyabean, sesamum, sunflower, safflower, nigerseed)) and Copra.

SWAYATT Initiative

Government e Marketplace (GeM) commemorated six years of Startups, Women & Youth Advantage through eTransactions (SWAYATT) initiative at New Delhi.

About SWAYATT Initiative:

It was launched on 19th February, 2019.

It was conceptualised with a clear objective of invigorating participation of women-led enterprises and youth in public procurement.

SWAYATT is the GeM portal's commitment to enhance ease of doing business and establish direct market linkages to annual public procurement for startups, women entrepreneurs, Micro & Small Enterprises (MSEs), Self Help Groups (SHGs) and youth, especially those from backward sections of the society.

It is rooted in GeM's foundational pillar of social inclusion.

Shiksha Sanjeevani Bima Yojana

Rajasthan has launched Shiksha Sanjeevani Bima Yojana to provide accidental insurance to schoolchildren in the state.

This first-of-its-kind scheme will offer personal accident insurance coverage of Rs 1 lakh to 1.3 lakh to

children and their parents enrolled in state government schools.

Wonder Cement, Zurich Kotak General Insurance and State Bank of India are partners of the Shiksha Sanjeevani Bima Yojana scheme.

Feature of the Scheme

The scheme will cover class 1-5 students of the state government school in the Udaipur division.

It will cover around 1.35 lakh children and their parents.

The insurance cover for the students will be Rs 1 lakh while for the parents it will be Rs 1.35 lakhs.

In case the parents of the insured student died due to an accident, the children will be provided scholarships with interest until 18 years of age.

PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme

Prime Minister Narendra Modi released the 19th instalment of the PM Kisan Samman Nidhi scheme from Bhagalpur, Bihar on 24th February 2025.

An amount of around Rs 21,500 crore was directly credited into the accounts of the over 9.7 crore beneficiary farmers across the country.

About PM -Kisan Samman Nidhi (PM-KISAN)

Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi launched the PM-KISAN scheme on 24th February 2019 at Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh.

It aims to provide income support to eligible farmers across the country.

Feature of the scheme

Rs 6,000 per year directly transferred into farmers' bank accounts.

Money is paid in three installments of Rs 2,000 every fourth month.

Regardless of land holding, all farmers are eligible under the scheme except for a few.

Administration of the Scheme

The Union Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare administers the scheme.

Highlights of PM Modi's Visit to Bihar.

Milk Product Plant in Barauni.

Inaugurated a Milk Product Plant in Barauni that is expected to benefit around 3 lakh milk producers in the region.

Formation of the 10,000th FPO in Khagaria

During his visit to Bihar, the 10,000th Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) was registered in the Khagaria district of Bihar, focusing on maize, banana, and paddy.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme

Government approves Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSME Manufacturing Sector.

Government of India has recently approved introduction of Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for MSMEs (MCGS-MSME) for providing 60% guarantee coverage by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC) to Member Lending Institutions.

MLIs are Financial Institutions such as Commercial Banks, NBFCs registered with NCGTC under the Scheme.

Salient Features of MCGS-MSME

Eligible Borrowers: MSMEs with a valid Udyam Registration Number.

Loan Coverage: Up to ₹100 crore per MSME for purchasing Plant and Machinery/ Equipment.

Project Cost can exceed ₹100 crore, but at least 75% of the cost must be for machinery/equipment.

Repayment Terms:

Loans up to ₹50 crore: Repayment period of up to 8 years (including 2 years moratorium on principal).

Loans above ₹50 crore: Longer repayment and moratorium can be considered.

Scheme Duration: 4 years from the issue of operational guidelines or until a cumulative guarantee of ₹7 lakh crore is issued.

Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)

Ministry of Finance notifies the operationalization of the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS).

UPS shall be applicable to Central Government employees who are covered under the National Pension System (NPS) and who choose this option under NPS.

It will be operational from April 1, 2025 and Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority

(PFRDA) may issue regulations for its operationalization.

Salient features of UPS

Assured pension: 50% of average basic pay drawn over last 12 months prior to superannuation for a minimum qualifying service of 25 years.

Pension will be proportionate for lesser service period upto a minimum 10 years of service.

Assured family pension: 60% of the employee's pension immediately before their demise.

Assured minimum pension: ₹10,000/month on superannuation after minimum 10 years of service.

Inflation indexation: Applicable to assured pension, family pension, and minimum pension.

Dearness Relief based on All India Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (AICPI-IW) as in case of service employees.

Lump sum payment at superannuation in addition to gratuity equivalent to 1/10th of monthly emoluments (pay + DA) for every completed six months of service.

Contributions under the UPS:

Unlike the old pension scheme, UPS is contributory in nature, wherein employees will be required to contribute 10 percent of their basic salary and dearness allowance while the employer's contribution (the central government) will be 18.5 percent.

RBI Ombudsman scheme

Reserve Bank's Integrated Ombudsman Scheme saw a staggering 32.81 per cent surge in complaints from banking customers, reaching 9.34 lakh during the year ended March 2024.

About Reserve Bank-Integrated Ombudsman Scheme:

It was launched on November 12, 2021.

It adopts 'One Nation - One Ombudsman' approach by making the RBI's Ombudsman mechanism jurisdiction neutral.

It integrates the erstwhile three Ombudsman schemes of RBI namely: the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006, the Ombudsman Scheme for Non-Banking Financial Companies, 2018 and the Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions, 2019.

Features:

It defines 'deficiency in service' as the ground for filing a complaint, with a specified list of exclusions. A deficiency of service is a shortcoming or an inadequacy in the financial service or some other service related to it that the Regulated Entities (RE) is supposed to provide.

A Centralised Receipt and Processing Centre has been set up at RBI, Chandigarh, for receipt and initial processing of physical and email complaints in any language.

The regulated entity will not have any right to appeal in cases where an award is issued by the ombudsman against it for not furnishing satisfactory and timely information.

Banks covered: It covers all commercial banks, Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), RRBs, Payment System Participants, most Primary (Urban) Cooperative Banks with a deposit size of ₹50 crore and Credit Information Companies

All Non-Banking Financial Companies (except Housing Finance Companies), authorized to accept deposits or have customer interface, with an assets size of ₹100 crore and above.

Complaints under the RB-IOs

It aims to resolve complaints within 30 days of receiving the complaint, provided all necessary documents and information are submitted.

It does not charge any fee for filing complaints, making it accessible to all customers.

Chandigarh, NCT of Delhi, Rajasthan, Gujarat, and Uttarakhand were the top contributors to complaints per lakh accounts.

Handling of complaints: Redressal/adjudication of complaints is presently handled by 24 Offices of the RBI Ombudsman (ORBIOs) and the Centralised Receipt and Processing Centre (CRPC).

Maximum compensation limit:

The maximum amount of compensation the Ombudsman can award for a loss suffered is ₹20 lakh.

Compensation for mental distress:

In addition to the loss suffered, the Ombudsman can provide up to ₹1 lakh for mental agony or harassment.

Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY)

22nd January 2025 marked the 10th year of the launch of Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme and Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana.

About SSY:

It is a savings scheme launched back in 2015 as part of the Government initiative, Beti Bachao, Beti

Padhao campaign.

This scheme enables guardians to open a savings account for their girl child with an authorized commercial bank or India-Post branch.

Eligibility:

The applicant must be a citizen of India.

The account can be opened by a parent or legal guardian of the girl's child.

The girl child must be below the age of 10 years.

Only one account is allowed for a girl child.

A family can open only 2 SSY scheme accounts.

NRIs are not eligible to open these accounts.

Key Features:

Minimum & Maximum Deposit:

Investment of minimum Rs. 250 and maximum Rs. 1.5 lakh in a financial year. Subsequent deposits in multiples of Rs. 100.

No limit on the number of deposits either in a month or in a Financial Year.

Tenure: The maturity period of SSY is 21 years from the account opening. However, contributions have to be made for the first 15 years only. Thereafter, the SSY account will continue to earn interest until maturity.

The SSY account will be mandatorily operated by the girl child after she attains the age of 18 years.

Interest on SSA as announced by Govt. of India every quarter will be applicable and compounded annually.

Partial withdrawal:

Withdrawal shall be allowed after the account holder attains the age of eighteen years or has passed the tenth standard, whichever is earlier.

For higher education 50% of the balance at the end of the previous financial year can be withdrawn. For marriage of adult account holder, 100% withdrawals.

Premature Closure: Allowed in the event of death of the depositor or in cases of extreme compassionate grounds such as medical support in life threatening diseases to be authorized by an order by the Central Government.

Tax Benefits: On investing in this scheme, tax exemption is also available under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act. The amount invested, interest earned and maturity amount is tax free.

About Beti Bachao, Beti Padhao (BBBP)

Genesis: Launched on 22nd January 2015 in Haryana, in response to the dismal CSR of 918 girls per 1,000 boys (2011 Census) caused by societal norms favoring male children.

Objectives: Improve the Child Sex Ratio (CSR).

Promote gender equality and women empowerment.

Prevent gender-biased, sex-selective elimination.

Ensure survival and protection of the girl child.

Encourage the education and participation of girls.

Implementation: Executed by states with 100% Central Assistance.

No provision for Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

Ministries Involved: Women and Child Development.

CSR at birth rose from 918 (2014-15) to 933 (2022-23).

Diamond Imprest Authorisation (DIA) Scheme

Department of Commerce introduces Diamond Imprest Authorization Scheme to boost global competitiveness of diamond sector.

About Diamond Imprest Authorisation (DIA) Scheme:

It has been introduced by the Department of Commerce, Government of India to allow duty-free import of natural cut and polished diamonds, of less than $\frac{1}{4}$ Carat (25 Cents), for export purposes.

The Scheme will be implemented with effect from 01.04.2025.

Key Features of the Scheme:

This scheme mandates export obligation with value addition of 10%.

All diamond exporters holding Two Star Export House status and above and having US \$15 million exports per year are eligible for availing the benefit under this scheme.

Startup India Scheme

16th January 2025 marked the 9 years of completion of Startup India Scheme since it was launched on 16th January 2016.

Flagship Schemes under Startup India.

Union Minister for Commerce and Industry recently emphasized that much of the success of the Startup India mission can be attributed to key funding mechanisms, particularly the Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS).

About Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) Scheme:

It was approved and established in 2016 with a corpus of Rs 10,000 crore, with contribution spread over the 14th and 15th Finance Commission cycle based on progress of implementation.

Objective: To provide much-needed boost to the Indian startup ecosystem and enable access to domestic capital.

The scheme does not directly invest in startups; instead, it provides capital to SEBI-registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), known as daughter funds, who in turn invest money in growing Indian startups through equity and equity-linked instruments.

Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has been given the mandate of operating this fund through the selection of suitable daughter funds and overseeing the disbursement of committed capital.

AIFs supported under FFS are required to invest at least 2 times the amount committed under FFS in startups.

The DPIIT-recognized startups increased from 500 (2016) to 1.59 lakh (2025).

Startup Ecosystem: India is now the 3rd largest startup ecosystem globally, after the US and China, with over 100 unicorns (startups valued over USD 1 billion).

Internet Governance Internship and Capacity Building Scheme

The National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI) has launched the Internet Governance Internship and Capacity Building Scheme, aiming to build expertise and awareness in internet governance among Indian citizens.

About Internet Governance Internship and Capacity Building Scheme:

This program aims to build awareness and develop expertise in internet governance (IG) among Indian citizens.

Features:

Two tracks: Six-month and three-month internships.

Mentorship by subject matter experts from organizations like Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers (ICANN) and Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (IEEE).

Stipend of ₹20,000 per month for interns.

Focus on outreach programs to promote internet governance knowledge.

Opportunities to collaborate with I-Star organizations and contribute to digital governance

Mission Mausam

Prime Minister of India (PM) participated in the 150th Foundation Day celebrations of the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD) on 15th January 2025 at New Delhi.

He also launched the Mission Mausam initiative and released the IMD Vision-2047 document.

The Mission Mausam will strengthen India's research and development capability in weather and climate-related science.

The Union Ministry of Earth Science will implement the Mission Mausam scheme.

Three institutes under the Ministry—the India Meteorological Department (IMD), New Delhi, the Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology, Pune, and the National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting, Noida—will be the prime institutions to implement Mission Mausam.

The duration of the Mission Mausam is two years, and the government of India has approved an outlay of Rs 2000 crore.

What is the IMD Vision-2047 Document?

It is a strategic document that sets ambitious targets for enhancing weather forecasting accuracy and disaster management in India by 2047.

It outlines milestones for the next two years, ten years (2035), and twenty-two years (2047).

Key Objectives:

100% Detection of Severe Weather : Aiming for complete detection of severe weather events at the village and household levels by 2047, using enhanced observational systems like satellites and radars.

India Meteorological Department (IMD).

IMD is the principal agency responsible for meteorological observations, weather forecasting and seismology in India established in 1875.

It operates under the Ministry of Earth Sciences, Government of India.

It provides weather forecasts and warnings for sectors like agriculture, aviation, and shipping, and offers

critical data for national development

Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) scheme.

Unnat Jyoti by Affordable LEDs for All (UJALA) scheme, launched in 2015, has completed a decade with the distribution of 36.87 crore LED bulbs, resulting in ₹19,153 crore in annual electricity savings, according to official data released by the Ministry of Power.

About UJALA Scheme:

In 2015, the Indian government introduced the UJALA scheme, which is also known as the LED-based Domestic Efficient Lighting Programme (DELP), to promote energy efficiency in all households.

The UJALA scheme is the world's largest zero-subsidy LED lamp distribution scheme.

It is implemented by Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL) under the Ministry of Power.

Through the UJALA scheme, the government aims to save 85 lakh kWh of electricity and 15,000 tonnes of CO₂ by replacing 77 crore traditional bulbs & CFLs and 3.5 crore streetlights with LEDs.

Eligible Households:

Every domestic household having a metered connection from their respective Electricity Distribution Company is eligible to get the LED bulbs under the UJALA Scheme.

The consumer can purchase the LED on EMI payment (monthly/bimonthly instalments in the electricity bill) or on upfront payment by paying the full amount.

Production Linked Incentive Scheme 1.1

Union Minister of Steel and Heavy Industries launched the second round of PLI scheme for Specialty Steel, termed as PLI Scheme 1.1.

About Production Linked Incentive Scheme 1.1:

It will be implemented during the production period of FY 2025-26 to FY 2029-30.

It covers five (5) product categories in line with the existing PLI Scheme, namely Coated / Plated Steel Products, High Strength / Wear resistant Steel, Specialty Rails, Alloy Steel Products & Steel wires and Electrical Steel.

These products have a wide range of application, from white goods to transformers to Automobiles and other niche sectors.

Reduced Thresholds:

Investment threshold for CRGO (Cold-rolled grain-oriented steel) reduced to ₹3,000 crore.

Production threshold reduced to 50,000 tonnes.

Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy launched the four welfare schemes of his government- Rythu Bharosa, Indiramma Atmiya Bharosa, Indiramma Indlu, and new ration cards on the occasion of the Republic Day on 26 January 2025.

About the launched Schemes

Rythu Bharosa- eligible farmers will be provided financial assistance of Rs. 12,000 per acre of arable land. The amount will be credited to the farmer's bank account.

Indiramma Aathmeeya Bharosa- financial support of Rs. 12,000 annually will be provided to landless agricultural labour families.

Indiramma Indlu- a housing scheme for, homeless Dalits, Tribals, and backward classes. They will receive financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh to construct homes. The government has set a target to construct 4,50,000 houses in 2024-2025 with a budget outlay of Rs 22,500 crore.

Telangana government has set a target to install an additional 1000 MW of solar power in the state through women self-help group (SHG) under its Indira Mahila Shakti Scheme.

Government of India has launched the country's first organic fisheries cluster in Soreng District of Sikkim.

The fisheries cluster set up under the central government's Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) was inaugurated by Union Minister for Panchayati Raj; and Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Rajiv Ranjan Singh in Guwahati, Assam .

The first organic fisheries cluster under the PMMSY will be funded by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).

Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)

The Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana was launched as a centrally sponsored scheme by the central government in 2020.

It replaced the Blue Revolution Integrated Development and Management Fisheries Scheme or Blue Revolution Scheme which was launched 2015-16.

Duration of the scheme: Five years (2020-21 to 2024-25) with an investment of Rs 20,050 crore.

Implementing Body - Union Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry & Dairying .

Government extends Agriculture Crop insurance scheme till 2025-26.

In a boost to the agricultural sector in the country, the government of India has approved several policy decisions including the extension of the major crop insurance scheme- Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.

The government has also approved the creation of FIAT to fund research and development projects in the agricultural sector like YES-TECH, and WINDS.

Extension of the Crop Insurance Scheme

The central government has extended the central sector crop insurance scheme -Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme by one year till 2025-26.

The total allocation for both the schemes from 2021-22 to 2025-26 is now Rs.69,515.71 Crore.

Both schemes are a crop insurance scheme in which the insured farmers are compensated in case of crop failure under certain terms and conditions.

The only difference is that in the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, the farmer is compensated for the crop loss due to unforeseen conditions.

Creation of Fund for Innovation and Technology (FIAT)

The Union Cabinet also approved the establishment of the Fund for Innovation and Technology (FIAT).

The total corpus of the FIAT is Rs.824.77 crore.

The fund will be used to promote research and development and provide funding for YES-TECH, WINDS, etc.

Yield Estimation System using Technology (YES-TECH)

The Yield Estimation System using Technology (YES-TECH) uses remote sensing technology to assess the yield of the standing crops. The government uses the General Crop Estimation Survey (GCES) to estimate the yield of standing crops.

The weightage of the YES-TECH in the GCES will be a minimum of 30 percent.

At present, the YES-TECH project is being implemented in 9 states -Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu & Karnataka. Madhya Pradesh is the only state in India that has adopted 100 % technology-based estimation.

About Weather Information and Network Data Systems (WINDS)

Under the Weather Information and Network Data Systems (WINDS), Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) will be set up at the block level and Automatic Rain Gauges (ARGs) at the panchayat level to collect data.

WINDS is being implemented in Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Puducherry, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.

For the first year, the funding pattern of the WINDS will be - the central government will bear 90 % of the cost while the state will bear 10% cost.

National Small Savings Schemes

Union Ministry of Finance has made no change in the interest rates on the various schemes under the National Small Saving Scheme, for the last quarters of the 2024-25 fiscal year.

The interest rate will remain unchanged from 1st January to 31st March 2025.

The Union Ministry of Finance has reviewed the interest rates on the small saving schemes every quarter since 2016.

What are the National Small Savings Schemes?

The National Small Savings Scheme is managed by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India offered to the general public through the post office and also through banks in the case of the Public Provident Fund. The government offers interest rates on the deposits made by the public in these schemes.

The investment in these schemes is 100 % safe as it is guaranteed by the government of India.

Use of the Deposits

The money received by the government is pooled by the government in the National Small Savings Fund which is used by the central government to meet its fiscal deficit

Categories of Schemes

The National Small Savings Schemes are grouped into three categories - Post office deposits, savings certificates, and social security schemes.

Post Office Deposits & Interest Rates

Under the Post Office deposits, there are saving accounts and time deposits (recurring and fixed)

Saving Accounts:

The minimum account opening requirement is Rs 500 and no maximum limit.

The interest rate is 4 % per year.

It is the only savings account in India that is not regulated by the Reserve Bank of India.

Recurring Deposit:

The minimum account opening is Rs 100 and Rs 10 per month.

There is no maximum deposit limit.

The interest rate is 6.7% per annum.

The maturity (duration) period is 5 years.

National Citizen Savings Scheme:

It is for persons above 60 years.

The minimum account opening requirement is Rs 1000 and the maximum is Rs 30 lakhs.

the interest rate is 8.2 % per year and it is paid every quarter.

The duration of the scheme is 5 years.

Sukanya Samridhi Yojana:

For girl children below 10 years of age.

Accounts can be opened in a maximum of two girls' names.

Rate of Interest 8.2 % per year.

Minimum account opening Rs 250 and maximum 1.50 lakhs in a financial year.

Deposit for a maximum period of 15 years from the opening of the account.

The account can be closed after 21 years from the date of opening of the account or at the time of marriage of the girl after she attains 18 years of age.

Saving Certificates

National Saving Certificates (NSC):

The minimum account opening amount is Rs 1000 and no maximum limit.

Interest rate -7.7% per year.

The duration of the scheme is 5 years.

The principal and interest amount is paid after 5 years.

Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP):

The minimum account opening is Rs 1000 and no maximum limit.

The interest rate is 7.5% and the deposit amount doubles in 115 months.

The principal and interest amount is paid after 115 months.

Mahila Samman Saving Certificates :

Minimum account opening Rs 1000 and maximum Rs 2 lakh. It is for women only.

Interest rate 7.5% per year.

The duration of the scheme is 2 years.

The principal and interest amount is paid after 2 years.

Social Security Schemes

Public Provident Fund:

Only one account per person can be opened in the post office or banks.

The account can be opened in the name of minors.

Minimum account opening Rs 500 and maximum Rs 1.5 lakh in a financial year.

Interest rates are 7.1% per year.

Duration -15 years.

AB PM-JAY

Odisha has become the 34th state to implement the Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY), marking a milestone in its healthcare journey.

AB PM-JAY will be implemented in convergence with existing Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana in Odisha.

It will provide a cover of Rs. 5 lakh per family per annum with an additional Rs. 5 lakh for women members.

PM-JAY is one of the components of Ayushman Bharat, other component is Health and Wellness Centres (renamed in 2023 as Ayushman Arogya Mandir).

Ayushman Bharat PM-JAY

About: World's largest health insurance/assurance scheme.

Ministry: Centrally Sponsored Scheme launched in 2018 under Ministry of Health & Family Welfare (MoH&FW).

Purpose: Achieve vision of Universal Health Coverage.

Target: 12 crore families (approximately 55 crore beneficiaries).

Implementing Agency: National Health Authority, an autonomous body under MoH&FW.

Funding pattern: Fully financed by government.

60:40 for states (90:10 for North Eastern States and three Himalayan States (Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and J&K)) and UTs with legislature.

Central share is 100% for UTs without legislature.

Benefit: Provides cashless hospital cover of Rs. 5 lakhs/ family/ year for secondary and tertiary care across public and private empanelled hospitals.

Covers up to 3 days of pre-hospitalization and 15 days post-hospitalization expenses such as diagnostics and medicine.

In 2024, Union Cabinet approved an expansion of it to all senior citizens aged 70 and above.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES 2024

DECEMBER 2024

PM internship scheme

Union Corporate Affairs Ministry said in a release that the pilot scheme of the Prime Minister's Internship Scheme received approximately 6.21 lakh applications against 1.27 lakh opportunities.

About Prime Minister's Internship Scheme

The scheme was announced in the Budget 2024-25.

Initiative of: Ministry of Corporate Affairs

Aim: To provide internship opportunities to one crore youth in top 500 companies in five years.

A Pilot Project of the Scheme targeted at providing 1.25 lakh internship opportunities has been launched for the Financial Year 2024-25.

Under this scheme, interns will be provided monthly financial assistance of Rs 5,000 for 12 months and a one-time grant of Rs 6,000.

Who is eligible for the scheme?

Candidates aged between 21 and 24 years and who are not engaged in full-time employment.

Internships are available to those who have passed class 10 or higher.

Individuals from families with government jobs are excluded.

It is not open to post-graduates.

A candidate who graduated from premier institutes such as IIT, IIM, or IISER, and those who have CA, or CMA qualification would not be eligible to apply for this internship.

Anyone from a household that includes a person who earned an income of Rs.8 lakh or more in 2023-24, will not be eligible.

PM- Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM) Scheme.

The Delhi High Court has recently ordered signing of an MoU between Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare and the Delhi Government for implementing PM- Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM) scheme in the national capital.

About PM- Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM):

It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS) with some Central Sector (CS) Components which has an outlay of Rs. 64,180 Crores for the scheme period (2021-22 to 2025-26).

It is the largest pan-India scheme for strengthening healthcare infrastructure across the country.

The measures under the scheme focus on developing capacities of health systems and institutions across the continuum of care at all levels viz. primary, secondary and tertiary level and on preparing health systems in responding effectively to the current and future pandemics/disasters.

SVAMITVA Scheme

Prime Minister Narendra Modi distributed over 50 lakh property cards to property owners across 46,000 villages in 200 districts covering 10 states and 2 Union Territories.

The SVAMITVA Scheme (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) was launched with the aim of boosting the economic development of rural India by providing a "Record of Rights" to households owning property in inhabited villages.

This is achieved using advanced drone technology for accurate land surveying.

ABOUT SVAMITVA SCHEME

The SVAMITVA Scheme was launched by the Government of India in 2020 to enhance the economic progress of rural households.

The core vision is to provide official land records to families in rural areas, thus making their

properties financially valuable and reducing land disputes.

The scheme uses drone-based surveying technology for high accuracy and efficiency.

Nodal Ministry:

The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) is the Nodal Ministry responsible for implementing the SVAMITVA Scheme.

Drone Survey: Surveys have been completed in over 3.1 lakh villages, covering 92% of the targeted villages. So far, around 2.2 crore property cards have been issued for nearly 1.5 lakh villages.

Full Saturation in Some States: The scheme has reached full saturation in Tripura, Goa, Uttarakhand, and Haryana.

Surveys have also been completed in states like Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, and Chhattisgarh, as well as several Union Territories.

Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension Scheme.

The Minister of State for Home Affairs informed the Rajya Sabha about the Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension Scheme.

About Swatantrata Sainik Samman Pension Scheme:

It was launched on 15th August 1972 by the Ministry of Home Affairs.

It provides the grant of pension to living freedom fighters and their families; if they are no more alive, and to the families or martyrs.

Eligibility:

A person who had suffered a minimum imprisonment of six months in the mainland jails before Independence.

A person who remained underground for more than six months.

A person interned in his home or externed from his district provided the period of internment/externment was six months or more.

Benefits:

Free life time railway pass to travel by any train.

Free medical facilities under CGHS and free medical treatment in hospitals run by PSUs are provided to the Freedom fighters and eligible dependents.

Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR based pledge Financing.

Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and New & Renewable Energy launched the Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR based Pledge Financing (CGS-NPF).

About Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR based pledge Financing:

It aims to provide credit facilities to small farmers to prevent them from distress selling.

It provides a corpus of Rs 1,000 crore for post-harvest finance availed by farmers against electronic negotiable warehouse receipts (e-NWRs) after depositing commodities in Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA) accredited warehouses.

Coverage: Loans up to 75 lakhs for agricultural purposes and Loans up to Rs. 200 Lakhs for non-agricultural purposes.

Eligible Borrowers: Small and Marginal Farmer (SMF)/Women/SC/ST/PwD Farmers, other farmers, MSMEs, Traders, FPOs and Farmer cooperatives.

Risks covered: Credit and warehouseman risk

Guarantee coverage: 85% for loans up to Rs. 3L and 80% for loans between 3 to 75 lakhs for small and marginal farmers/women/SC/ST/PwD and 75% for other borrowers.

Jalvahak Scheme

Union Government launched the 'Jalvahak' scheme to incentivise cargo movement via inland waterways.

About Jalvahak Scheme:

It aims to unlock the trade potential of inland waterways while reducing logistics costs and decongesting road and rail networks.

Features

Under the scheme, cargo owners transporting goods over distances exceeding 300 km via waterways will receive up to 35 per cent reimbursement on operating costs.

The scheme will remain valid for three years and is designed to optimise supply chains for major shipping companies, freight forwarders, and trade bodies.

It is a major step towards promoting sustainable and cost-effective transportation across National Waterways 1 (Ganga), 2 (Brahmaputra), and 16 (Barak river).

The Fixed Day Scheduled Sailing Service will ply vessels between the Kolkata - Patna - Varanasi - Patna - Kolkata stretch of NW 1 and between Kolkata and Pandu in Guwahati on NW 2 via Indo Bangladesh

Protocol Route (IBPR).

Implemented by: It is jointly implemented by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) and Inland & Coastal Shipping Ltd (ICSL).

SAMARTH Udyog Bharat 4.0 Initiative

Minister of State for Heavy Industries and Steel provided information about the SAMARTH Udyog Bharat 4.0 initiative in the Rajya Sabha.

About SAMARTH Udyog Bharat 4.0 Initiative:

It is an initiative of the Ministry of Heavy Industry & Public Enterprises, Government of India under its scheme on Enhancement of Competitiveness in the Indian Capital Goods Sector.

SAMARTH Udyog encompasses manufacturers, vendors and customers as the main stakeholders.

The experiential and demonstration centres for Industry 4.0 have been proposed to spread awareness about I4.0 amongst the Indian manufacturing industries.

Under this 4 Smart Advanced Manufacturing and Rapid Transformation Hub (SAMARTH) Centres have been set up namely:

Centre for Industry 4.0 (C4i4) Lab, Pune;

IITD-AIA Foundation for Smart Manufacturing, IIT Delhi;

I-4.0 India @ IISc, Bengaluru; and

Smart Manufacturing Demo & Development Cell, CMTI, Bengaluru.

Yuva Sahakar Scheme

About Yuva Sahakar Scheme:

Yuva Sahakar – Cooperative Enterprise Support and Innovation Scheme” aims to encourage newly formed cooperative societies with new and/or innovative ideas.

The scheme encourages young entrepreneur Cooperative Societies which are in operation for a minimum of 3 months.

The loan provided under the scheme is a long-term loan (up to 5 years) and as an incentive, NCDC provides 2% interest subvention on its applicable rate of interest on term loan for the project activities.

Further, the loan component under the scheme can also be dovetailed with subsidy, as applicable and available from other Government of India schemes. NCDC funding is project based.

It is being implemented by National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) across the country.

Features

NCDC has produced a dedicated fund with liberal traits entitling youth to avail the scheme.

It is linked with Rs.1000 crores of the Cooperative Start-up and Innovation Fund that has been authorised by the NCDC.

It provides more incentives to the cooperatives working in the North-Eastern region and the aspirational districts.

Exclusive benefits are provided for women, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates.

Yuva Sahakar Scheme is a part of Sahakar 22, a Mission for Doubling Farmers' Income by 2022.

Bima Sakhi Yojana

Prime Minister launched the Bima Sakhi Yojana in Panipat, Haryana, on December 9, 2024, reinforcing his vision for women empowerment and financial inclusion.

About Bima Sakhi Yojana:

It is an initiative of the State-owned Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).

It is designed to empower women aged 18-70 years who have passed out of Class 10.

They will receive specialised training and a stipend for the first three years to promote financial literacy and insurance awareness.

After training, they can serve as LIC agents and the graduate Bima Sakhis would have the opportunity to qualify for being considered for Development Officer roles in LIC.

Women LIC agents will get a stipend of Rs. 7,000 per month for the first year, Rs. 6,000 per month in the second year, and Rs. 5,000 per month in the third year.

Bima Sakhis will also get commission of Rs 48,000 (excluding bonus) for the first year.

The plan is to appoint two lakh Bima Sakhis over a period of three years.

Relatives of existing agents and employees are not eligible for the scheme. Retired employees are also ineligible.

Urban Infrastructure Development Fund.

Minister of State in the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs informed in Lok Sabha that the government has set up the Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF) through use of priority sector lending

shortfall for creating urban infrastructure in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities.

About Urban Infrastructure Development Fund:

It was established through the use of priority sector lending shortfall.

It will be used by public agencies to create urban infrastructure in tier-2 and tier-3 cities.

It aims to supplement the efforts of the State Governments / UTs for urban infrastructure development works implemented through Public/ State Agencies, Municipal Corporations and Urban Local Bodies, by providing a stable and predictable source of financing for providing basic services like Sewerage and Solid Waste Management, Water Supply and Sanitation, construction and improvement of drains/ storm water drains, etc.

It is managed by the National Housing Bank.

The initial corpus for this Fund is ₹10,000 crore.

It is established on the lines of the Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF).

States will be encouraged to leverage resources from the grants of the 15th Finance Commission, as well as existing schemes, to adopt appropriate user charges while accessing the UIDF.

It currently covers 459 tier-2 cities and 580 tier-3 cities.

UIDF Loans:

The interest rate on UIDF loans has been kept at Bank Rate minus 1.5 per cent.

The loan (Principal) will be repayable in five equal annual instalments within seven years from the date of draw, including a moratorium period of two years.

Interest will be payable on a quarterly basis.

Punjab has recently achieved milestone by providing 100% piped water supply to all rural households, falls under the central government's 'Har Ghar Jal' scheme.

The Department of Posts (DoP) has introduced reforms in the Indian postal system with the Post Office Act, 2023, effective from June 18, 2024, to modernise services and enhance accessibility for citizens.

The accompanying Post Office Rules, 2024, and Post Office Regulations, 2024, implemented from December 16, 2024, support these changes.

The Act aims to simplify postal processes and promote efficient governance. It adheres to the principles of "Dak Sewa Jan Sewa," focusing on citizen-centric services.

The vision aligns with "Atmanirbhar Bharat," advocating for self-reliance and minimal government intervention.

The regulations streamline mail and parcel services to meet contemporary demands. Simplified product categories make services more user-friendly.

For instance, book packets are now classified under "Book Post," and the money order limit has increased from ₹5,000 to ₹10,000.

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES 2024

NOVEMBER 2024

Atal Innovation Mission (AIM)

Union Cabinet recently approved the continuation of its flagship Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), under NITI Aayog, with an allocation of ₹2,750 crore until March 31, 2028.

About Atal Innovation Mission (AIM):

AIM is a flagship initiative set up by the NITI Aayog in 2016 with an objective to create and encourage an environment of innovation and entrepreneurship across schools, educational organisations, research institutes, and industries, including MSMEs.

AIM has two functions:

Promote entrepreneurship by encouraging innovators to become entrepreneurs through financial support as well as mentorship.

Promote innovation by creating a platform where ideas are generated through like-minded individuals.

AIM has created four programs to support these functions:

Atal Tinkering Labs

Atal Incubation Centres

Atal New India Challenges and Atal Grand Challenges

Mentor India.

One Nation One Subscription Scheme

Union cabinet has approved the One Nation One Subscription scheme.

About One Nation One Subscription Scheme:

It is a new Central Sector Scheme for providing country-wide access to scholarly research articles and journal publication.

The scheme will be administered through a simple, user friendly and fully digital process.

This will be a “One Nation One Subscription” facility for the government higher education institutions and R&D laboratories of the Central G

This will supplement the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) initiative to promote research and development and foster a culture of research and innovation throughout government universities, colleges, research institutions, and R&D laboratories.

The benefits of One Nation One Subscription scheme will be provided to all Higher Educational Institutions under the management of the Central or State Government and Research & Development Institutions of the Central Government, through a national subscription coordinated by a central agency, namely the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET), an autonomous inter-university centre of the University Grants Commission (UGC).

The Department of Higher Education will have a unified portal “One Nation One Subscription” through which the institutions will be able to access the journals.

Funding: A total of about Rs.6,000 crore has been allocated for One Nation One Subscription for 3 calendar years, 2025, 2026 and 2027 as a new Central Sector Scheme.

PAN 2.0 Project

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by the Prime Minister has given its approval for the PAN 2.0 Project.

About PAN 2.0 Project:

It is an e-Governance project for re-engineering the business processes of taxpayer registration services through technology driven transformation of PAN/TAN services for enhanced digital experience of the taxpayers.

This will be an upgrade of the current PAN/TAN 1.0 eco-system consolidating the core and non-core PAN/TAN activities as well as PAN validation service.

It is a project of the Income Tax Department.

The PAN 2.0 Project enables technology driven transformation of Taxpayer registration services and has significant benefits including:

Ease of access and speedy service delivery with improved quality;

Single Source of Truth and data consistency

Eco-friendly processes and cost optimization; and

Security and optimization of infrastructure for greater agility.

The PAN 2.0 Project resonates with the vision of the Government enshrined in Digital India by enabling the use of PAN as Common Identifier for all digital systems of specified government agencies.

MATES Scheme

Australia has come up with a new scheme called MATES that allows talented young people from India to work in the country for some time.

About MATES Scheme:

Mobility Arrangement for Talented Early-professionals Scheme (MATES) gives Indian university graduates and early career professionals a chance to work in Australia for two years.

Background:

Australia and India entered into a Migration and Mobility Partnership Arrangement (MMPA).

Eligibility

It is open to Indian nationals who are aged 30 or younger at the time of application;

MATES participants will be able to live and work in Australia for up to 2 years.

PM-Vidyalaxmi Scheme

Union Cabinet approved PM Vidyalaxmi, a Central Sector Scheme aimed at providing financial support to meritorious students pursuing higher education.

The scheme offers collateral-free and guarantor-free loans to cover tuition fees and related expenses for students admitted to select quality institutions ranked by the **National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF)**.

About PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme:

Objective: To provide financial assistance to meritorious students, eliminating financial constraints in accessing quality higher education.

Eligibility: Available to students admitted to top 860 HEIs in India, as per NIRF rankings, covering over

22 lakh students annually.

Loan features: Offers collateral-free, guarantor-free education loans with a user-friendly, digital application process.

Credit guarantee: Government provides a 75% credit guarantee on loans up to ₹7.5 lakhs, supporting banks in loan expansion.

Interest subvention: For families with an annual income up to ₹8 lakhs, a 3% interest subvention is provided on loans up to ₹10 lakhs. Full interest subvention is available to students with family incomes up to ₹4.5 lakhs under the PM-USP scheme.

Outlay and Reach: An outlay of ₹ 3,600 Crore has been made during 2024-25 to 2030-31, aiming to benefit 22 lakh students.

Payment of interest subvention will be made through E-vouchers and Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) wallets.

PM Vishwakarma Yojana

More than two million applications have been successfully registered under the PM Vishwakarma scheme which was launched in 2023.

About PM Vishwakarma Yojana:

It is a central sector scheme launched by the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises.

It offers services like market linkage support, skill training, and incentives for digital transactions to artisans and craftspeople engaged in specified trades.

Time period: Five years (FY 2023-24 to FY 2027-28).

Aim:

To strengthen and nurture the Guru-Shishya parampara, or family-based practice of traditional skills by artisans and craftspeople working with their hands and tools.

Nodal Ministry – Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

Type – Central Sector Scheme

Coverage – 18 trades including carpenters, blacksmiths, potters, masons, etc.

Benefits –

Collateral-free credit support up to ₹1 lakh (first tranche) and ₹2 lakhs (second tranche) at a concessional interest rate of 5%.

Free registration using the biometric-based portal.

Recognition through PM Vishwakarma certificate and ID card.

Eligibility & coverage:

It is available for rural and urban artisans and craftsmen across India.

It covers 18 traditional crafts such as Boat Maker; Armourer; Blacksmith; Hammer and Tool Kit Maker; etc.

Five lakh families will be covered in the first year and 30 lakh families over five years.

Namo Drone Didi Scheme

The Government has approved the Central Sector Scheme 'Namo Drone Didi' for providing Drones to the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) under DAY-NRLM, with an outlay of Rs. 1261 Crores.

About Namu Drone Didi Scheme:

The scheme aims to provide drones to 14500 selected Women SHGs during the period from 2024-25 to 2025-2026 for providing rental services to farmers for agriculture purposes (application of liquid fertilizers and pesticides for the present).

Components of the operational guidelines are

The Scheme will be governed at the Central level by the Empowered Committee of the Secretaries of the Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Department of Rural Development, Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Ministry of Women and Child Development.

The Implementation and Monitoring Committee headed by the Additional Secretary, Department of Rural Development and having representation from all other stakeholders will be responsible for effective planning, implementation and monitoring of the scheme.

Financial Assistance : Central Financial Assistance @ 80% of the cost of drone and accessories/ancillary charges up to a maximum of ₹ 8.0 lakhs will be provided to the women SHGs for the purchase of drones as a package.

The Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) of SHGs/SHGs may raise the balance amount (total cost of procurement minus subsidy) as a loan under the National Agriculture Infra Financing Facility (AIF).

Interest subvention @ 3% on the AIF loan will be provided to the CLFs/SHGs.

Significance – It is expected to generate an additional income of at least Rs. 1 lakh per year for each SHG,

contributing to economic empowerment and sustainable livelihood generation

Nodal Ministry – Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare.

Umbrella scheme – Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana-National Rural Livelihood Mission (DAY – NRLM).

Budget – Rs. 1261 Crores from 2023-24 to 2025-26.

Target – To provide 15,000 drones during the period 2024-25 to 2025-26 and during the financial year 2024-25, it has been targeted to distribute drones to 3090 SHGs in the 1st phase.



WEB PORTAL & APPS 2025

APRIL 2025

Marina India Infrastructure secures first digital NOC for jetty development in Goa.

Marina India Infrastructure Private Limited has become the first private entity to receive a No Objection Certificate (NoC) for constructing a jetty on a national waterway.

This development took place during the launch of a dedicated digital portal by the Union minister of ports, shipping and waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, aimed at inviting private investment in infrastructure development on National Waterways.

Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MOSPI) has launched a revamped Microdata Portal and the website of the National Statistical System Training Academy (NSSTA).

The revamped portal aims to improve data accessibility, enhance user experience, and integrate advanced technologies into the official statistical system.

NITI Aayog has developed a portal, in collaboration with NCAER, called the "NITI NCAER States Economic Forum," which will be launched by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman on April 1, 2025.

This portal provides comprehensive data on state finances, including social, economic, and fiscal parameters, spanning 30 years (1990-91 to 2022-23).

The portal aims to enhance transparency and facilitate data-driven policymaking

WEB PORTAL & APPS 2025

MARCH 2025

ACE app

IDFC FIRST Bank has launched the ACE feature on its mobile banking app to simplify mutual fund investments.

The feature provides advanced insights, tools, and a digital experience for investors

DigiLocker

SEBI Partners with DigiLocker to Reduce Unclaimed Assets and Strengthen Investor Protection.

About DigiLocker:

It is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) under the Digital India programme in 2015

It is a government approved application and is ideally maintained with strict security protocols framed by officials.

It operates as an app to store users' digital records. The app can be used when applying for a passport, reviewing marksheets, or proving one's identity during travel.

PRAVAAH Portal and Sarthi.

The Reserve Bank of India was selected for UK's Digital Transformation Award 2025 for its tech

innovations Sarthi and Pravaah systems.

It is presented by Central Banking, London, UK.

PRAVAAH Portal (Platform for Regulatory Application, Validation and Authorisation)

PRAVAAH portal is a secure and centralized web-based portal for any individual or entity to seek authorisation, license or regulatory approval on any reference made by it to the Reserve Bank.

About Sarthi System

It was launched in January 2023 by RBI.

It aims to improve document storage, record management, and data analysis.

Significance

It automates routine processes; reducing manual work.

It provides dashboards and reports; improving decision-making.

It reduces reliance on physical documents; making RBI more environmentally friendly.

Rapid Immunization Skill Enhancement" (RISE) app

Uttar Pradesh government has indeed launched the "Rapid Immunization Skill Enhancement" (RISE) app to enhance its immunization program.

The app is designed for nurses, ANMs (Auxiliary Nurse Midwives), and other health workers involved in vaccination programs.

Centralized database portal for corporate bonds

Markets regulator Sebi recently launched a centralized database portal for corporate bonds, Bond Central.

About Bond Central:

It is a centralized database portal for corporate bonds in India.

It was launched by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in a bid to create a single, authentic source of information on such securities.

It has been developed by the Online Bond Platform Providers Association (OBPP Association) in collaboration with Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs) comprising stock exchanges and depositories.

'Prayas' portal

The government is soon likely to publish integrated real-time employment data on the 'Prayas' portal, to present a timely picture of the job situation in the country.

mDigiNext mobile app

Bank of Baroda (BoB) has launched 'mDigiNext mobile app' to exclusively cater to the cash management needs of its corporate customers

Quark app

Alibaba unveils AI-powered Quark app with advanced chatbot & planning tools.

Chinese tech giant Alibaba has rolled out an upgraded version of its AI assistant mobile app, Quark, powered by its latest Qwen reasoning model.

WEB PORTAL & APPS 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2025

MITRA Platform

Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) introduced a new digital platform called MITRA.

About MITRA Platform:

Mutual Fund Investment Tracing and Retrieval Assistant (MITRA) will assist investors in tracking and reclaiming inactive or unclaimed mutual fund folios.

Features:

The platform addresses a growing concern wherein investors, over time, lose track of their mutual fund investments lack of updated contact information, or unawareness of investments made in their name.

It will allow investors to identify the overlooked investments or any investments made by any other person for which he/she may be rightful legal claimant and also encourage them to do KYC as per the current norms thus reducing the number of non-KYC compliant folios.

It is developed by the Registrar and Transfer Agent (RTAs) to provide investors with a searchable database of inactive and unclaimed mutual fund folios at an industry-level which will empower the investors.

SwaRail Application

Ministry of Railways has introduced the SuperApp 'SwaRail', a one-stop solution for seamless railway services.

About SwaRail:

It integrates various railway services, eliminating the need for multiple applications and reducing space consumption on user devices.

A key focus of the App is enhancing user experience with a seamless and clean user interface (UI).

The App caters to a wide range of user needs, including:

Reserved and Unreserved ticket bookings

Parcel and Freight Enquiries

Train and PNR status enquiries

Food Orders on Trains

Rail Madad for Complaint Management, etc.

It has been developed by the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS).

Bima Vahak portal

Bima Vahak's portal is ready for soft launch in April 2025, says IRDAI.

Bima Vahak is a women-centric insurance sales force that will use the portal to onboard new clients and service existing clients.

The portal will be part of the Bima Trinity project, which aims to expand insurance access to underserved areas.

What is Bima Vahak?

Bima Vahak is a localized insurance sales force that will help onboard new clients and service existing clients.

It is part of the Bima Trinity project, which also includes Bima Vistaar and Bima Sugam.

The Bima Trinity project aims to expand insurance access to underserved areas.

What is Bima Vistaar?

Bima Vistaar is a composite insurance product that covers life, personal accident, property, and health insurance.

What is Bima Sugam?

IRDAI has informed that the Bima Sugam portal will be an insurance market infrastructure.

Insurers, distribution networks and the policy holders can virtually meet across the digital platform.

IRDAI vision for 2047 is to ensure that every citizen is insured by then. This goal is called "Insurance for All by 2047".

SEWA portal

SEWA (service availability web page):-

If you are unable to access internet banking or mobile banking services, a visit to the national portal for monitoring availability of Banks digital services-- SEWA.

The portal allows customers to check the availability of six digital services like Internet Banking (INB), RTGS, NEFT, IMPS, UPI and Mobile Banking of various banks 24X7.

The status of the digital banking service availability is classified under five heads – service available, service unavailable, scheduled downtime, status unavailable and service fluctuation.

Currently, nine banks – Punjab National Bank, HDFC Bank, Axis Bank, Bank of Baroda, Airtel Payments Bank, Canara Bank, ICICI Bank, Kotak Mahindra Bank and the State Bank of India – are part of this centralised platform.

National Career Service (NCS) Portal

Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoLE) signed an MoU with APNA to bring 10 lakh job opportunities annually to the NCS Portal.

Objective : To enhance job accessibility, integrate APNA's job listings with NCS, and improve recruitment efficiency.

NCS Portal Stats : Over 40 lakh registered employers, 4.40 crore vacancies mobilized, and 10 lakh active vacancies at any time.

RBIDATA app

Reserve Bank of India launched RBIDATA, a Mobile App, that offers macroeconomic and financial statistics relating to the Indian economy in a userfriendly and visually engaging format.

Key features of the RBIDATA app

The new mobile application will give users access to 11,000 different economic data sets, which will give them a comprehensive overview of the health of the Indian economy.

According to the official statement, the users can view the time series data in the form of graphs or charts and download the data for their own analysis.

The application will also have a "Popular Reports" section featuring frequently viewed reports.

The mobile application will also give the user the option of "Banking Outlet" to use to find the nearest

banking facilities within 20 km of their location.

The users can also access data about SAARC countries using the “SAARC Finance” option link in the application.

The mobile application includes details like data sources, units of measurement, frequency, and recent updates, along with additional notes, which are there to help the users understand the graphs and charts better

Unified app

NSDL and CDSL launch unified investor platform to provide consolidated data to investors.

NSDL (National Securities Depository Limited) and CDSL (Central Depository Services Limited), in collaboration with SEBI, have launched a Unified Investor Platform aimed at revolutionising how investors manage their portfolios.

The platform combines MyEasi by CDSL and SPEED-e by NSDL, providing investors with a consolidated view of their financial data, including shareholdings, investments, and financial statements.

Aadhaar Good Governance Portal

The central government launched Aadhaar Good Governance portal to streamline approval process for Aadhaar authentication requests.

About Aadhaar Good Governance Portal:

It is aimed at streamlining the approval process for Aadhaar authentication requests.

It was launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

The platform follows the recent amendments to the Aadhaar Authentication for Good Governance (Social Welfare, Innovation, Knowledge) Rules, 2025, under the Aadhaar Act of 2016.

The new rules are designed to support good governance and improve the delivery of various welfare services and benefits.

WEB PORTAL & APPS 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan app

Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan app was launched by Defence Minister coinciding with Army Day celebrations.

About Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan:

It is developed by the Ministry of Defence in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism.

This app opens the doors to India's most iconic battlefields, offering citizens a chance to explore the country's wartime history like never before.

The move is aimed at promoting connectivity, tourism, and socio-economic development in border regions. The Army is collaborating with local civil authorities to facilitate these efforts while maintaining high operational preparedness.

It features details on various battlefields and border areas, offering virtual tours, historical narratives, and interactive content.

Jumpp, an AI-driven super app

Finvasia and YES Bank launch Jumpp, super app for seamless finance.

The fintech company Finvasia has unveiled Jumpp, a financial super app powered by AI. Created in partnership with YES Bank, Jumpp aims to streamline personal finance by integrating banking, saving, payments, investing, and borrowing into a cohesive platform.

Dunzo app

Reliance-backed hyperlocal delivery app Dunzo has gone offline following the departure of cofounder and CEO Kabeer Biswas after he joined Flipkart.

Pyng app

Swiggy Launches “Pyng” App to Seize Professional Services Marketplace.

Swiggy has launched a new standalone app called “Pyng” to enter the professional services marketplace enlisting lawyers, astrologers, therapists, etc.

"iSPOT" (Integrated SEBI Portal for Technical Glitches).

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has introduced a web-based portal named iSPOT (Integrated SEBI Portal for Technical glitches) to streamline the reporting and management of technical glitches by stock exchanges, clearing corporations, and depositories.

e-SAKSHI Portal

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) organized a two-day training workshop for the revised fund flow procedure under the MPLAD Scheme using the e-SAKSHI Portal.

What is the e-SAKSHI Portal?

eSAKSHI portal is an end-to-end solution for efficient and transparent implementation of the MPLAD scheme.

About MPLAD:

Type: Central Sector Scheme

Ministry: Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

Allocation: Rs. 5 crore per MP for developmental works to create durable community assets based on local needs.

Funds: Non-lapsable, carried forward to the next year.

Allocation Targets: At least 15% for Scheduled Caste areas and 7.5% for Scheduled Tribe areas

e-Shram Portal

The Bhashini-enabled e-Shram Portal is now available in all 22 Scheduled Languages, enhancing accessibility for unorganized workers.

About e-Shram Portal:

It is a flagship initiative, launched by the Ministry of Labour and Employment to support and empower the unorganized workforce.

This portal is designed to create a comprehensive National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW).

The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology's (MEITY's) Bhashini project has been leveraged to upgrade the eShram portal with 22 languages. The previous version was available only in English, Hindi, Kannada and Marathi.

The Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoL&E) recently claimed that, with over 300 million workers registered, the e-Shram portal is the largest database of unorganised workers in the world.

BHARATPOL Portal

Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation will launch BHARATPOL portal in New Delhi on 07th January, 2025 in Bharat Mandapam.

About BHARATPOL Portal:

It will streamline the processing of all requests for international assistance through INTERPOL, including the issuance of Red Notices and other colour-coded INTERPOL notices.

The BHARATPOL portal will become a transformative tool for field-level police officers, enhancing their efficiency in dealing with crimes and security challenges. By facilitating easier and faster access to international assistance, it will strengthen India's efforts in combating transnational crimes.

It will significantly facilitate Indian Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) enabling real-time information sharing for faster access to international police assistance.

It is developed by Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

BAANKNET Portal

The Government of India launched the revamped 'BAANKNET' portal to streamline the e-auction process for properties held by public sector banks (PSBs).

About Baanknet Portal:

It is an e-auction portal that consolidates information on all properties that are put up for e-auction by public sector banks (PSBs).

The portal is a one-stop destination for buyers and investors offering a wide range of properties.

The listings on the new platform include residential properties such as flats, independent houses, and open plots, as well as commercial properties, industrial land and buildings, shops, vehicles, plant and machinery, and agricultural and non-agricultural land.

BHASHINI Platform

Tripura becomes first North East State to sign MoU with Bhashini for Multi-lingual Governance.

About BHASHINI Platform:

BHASHINI, or the BHASHa INterface for India, is India's Artificial Intelligence (AI) - led language translation platform, breaking down language barriers and enabling conversations between speakers of different Indian languages.

It aims to enhance internet accessibility and digital services in Indian languages, incorporating voice-based functions and promoting content creation in diverse languages.

Launched in July 2022 under the National Language Translation Mission (NLTM), it aims to provide technology translation services in 22 scheduled Indian languages.

It aims to make Artificial Intelligence and Natural Language Processing (NLP) resources available in the

public domain to be used by Indian MSMEs, startups and individual innovators. It is implemented by the Digital India BHASHINI Division, a division under the Digital India Corporation, a Section 8 Company of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology.

'When-listed' Platform

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is looking to launch a 'when-listed' platform.

About 'When-listed':

It has been launched for trading of shares of companies that have finished their Initial Public Offering (IPO) and are yet to be listed on stock exchanges.

It is aimed at reducing the activity in the grey market, which is unregulated and has a significant influence on listings.

Present timeline of listing shares in India:

Once the IPO is closed, shares have to be listed on trading platforms in trading plus three working days (T+3), with T being the closing day of the offer. The allotment of shares is done on T+1 day.

In the period between the allotment of shares and listing day, investors trade in the grey market.

Entity Locker

The National eGovernance Division (NeGD), under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) has developed Entity Locker.

About Entity Locker:

It is a secure, cloud-based solution that simplifies the storage, sharing, and verification of documents for a wide range of entities, including large organisations, corporations, micro, small, and medium Enterprises (MSMEs), trusts, startups and societies.

It is designed to transform the management and verification of business/organisation documents.

The platform is a critical component of India's Digital Public Infrastructure, aligning with the vision of the Union Budget 2024-25 for enhanced digital governance and ease of doing business.

Indian Sustainable Natural Rubber (iSNR) Platform

Rubber Board has rolled two new initiatives called iSNR (Indian Sustainable Natural Rubber) and INR Konnect.

About Indian Sustainable Natural Rubber (iSNR) Platform:

It streamlines the compliance process, making it more efficient for stakeholders involved in the rubber supply chain targeting EU markets.

It is designed to facilitate compliance with the European Union Deforestation Regulation (EUDR) for Indian rubber ecosystem

It issues a traceability certificate which will verify the origin of rubber products and confirm its compliance with the EUDR

New Sanchar Saathi Mobile App

Union Minister of Communications launched a suite of citizen-focused initiatives namely the Sanchar Saathi Mobile App and the National Broadband Mission (NBM) 2.0.

About Sanchar Saathi Mobile App

The Sanchar Saathi Mobile App is a user-friendly platform designed to fortify telecom security and empower citizens.

It is launched by the Department of Telecom under the Ministry of Communications.

It provides users with critical tools to secure their telecom resources and combat telecom frauds.

Key Features

Chakshu – Reporting Suspected Fraud Communications (SFC): Users can report suspected calls and SMS using app and directly from mobile phone logs.

Know Mobile Connections in Your Name: Citizens can identify and manage all mobile connections issued in their name, ensuring no unauthorized usage.

Blocking Your Lost/ Stolen Mobile Handset: Lost or stolen mobile devices can be swiftly blocked, traced and recovered.

Know Mobile Handset Genuineness: The app offers an easy way to verify the authenticity of mobile handsets, ensuring users purchase genuine devices.

Bharat Cleantech Manufacturing Platform.

Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, launched the Bharat Cleantech Manufacturing Platform at the Bharat Climate Forum 2025 in New Delhi.

About Bharat Cleantech Manufacturing Platform:

What it is : A national platform designed to enhance India's cleantech value chains and enable

collaboration in the renewable energy sector.

Ministry : Ministry of Commerce & Industry.

Aim: Strengthen India's manufacturing capacity in solar, wind, hydrogen, and battery storage technologies. Position India as a global sustainability and cleantech leader. Support the achievement of 500 GW Renewable-energy targets by 2030.

Open Data Kit (ODK) Platform

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) is using Open Data Kit (ODK) platform a new digital tool to improve transparency and accountability in public spending.

About Open Data Kit (ODK) Platform:

It is a digital platform which allows the CAG to collect and manage data securely.

It is used for designing, collecting, and managing data to enhance transparency in public spending and accountability in government schemes.

WEB PORTAL & APPS 2024-25

DECEMBER 2024

Jago Grahak Jago App', 'Jagriti App' and 'Jagriti Dashboard'.

On National Consumer Day, December 24, 2024, the government launched three initiatives: the Jago Grahak Jago App, the Jagriti App, and the Jagriti Dashboard.

These initiatives aim to empower consumers and protect them against deceptive online practices known as "dark patterns."

Jago Grahak Jago App: This app alerts users about potentially unsafe URLs while they are browsing online. It helps consumers stay informed and cautious about fraudulent websites.

Jagriti App: Through this app, consumers can directly report suspicious online practices, known as dark patterns. This enables users to take immediate action against deceptive tactics.

Jagriti Dashboard: This dashboard provides a comprehensive view of consumer complaints and their resolutions. It offers transparency and helps monitor the effectiveness of consumer protection measures.

These tools are designed to enhance consumer protection in the digital age, ensuring fair practices and empowering consumers to take control of their online experiences

Kisan Kavach

Scientists affiliated to the Department of Biotechnology (DBT) have developed an Indigenous 'anti-pesticide' suit called Kisan Kavach.

About Kisan Kavach:

It is first-of-its-kind anti-pesticide bodysuit designed to protect farmers from the harmful effects of pesticide exposure.

The suit is intended to protect farm labourers from imbibing the pesticides they spray. Several of the common pesticides are potential neurotoxins and detrimental to health.

It is developed by the Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council (BRIC-inStem), Bangalore, in collaboration with Sepio Health Pvt. Ltd.

IndiaAI Future Skills Platform

Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology has announced that 8.6 lakh candidates have enrolled in the IndiaAI Future Skills platform.

About IndiaAI Future Skills Platform:

It is one of the seven foundational pillars of the IndiaAI Mission.

It aims to enhance India's AI workforce readiness by mitigating barriers to entry in AI programs and advancing the AI talent pipeline.

It will increase AI courses in undergraduate, postgraduate, and Ph.D. programs.

It further aims to foster inclusive access to AI education by establishing Data and AI Labs in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities across India to impart foundational level courses.

Amrit Gyaan Kosh Portal

Union Minister of State for Personnel, Public Grievances and Pensions launched Amrit Gyan Kosh Portal under Mission Karmayogi.

About Amrit Gyaan Kosh Portal:

It has been jointly developed by the Capacity Building Commission and Karmayogi Bharat.

It is a platform to promote self-reliance in governance training and strengthen governance training.

It is developed on the iGOT platform, serves as a comprehensive repository of best practices in governance and policy implementation.

It aligns with 15 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), covering critical themes such as health, education, agriculture, and digital governance.

PM e-VIDYA

Union Minister for Education launched the PMeVIDYA DTH 24x7 Channel No. 31 for Indian Sign Language (ISL) in New Delhi.

About PM e-VIDYA:

It was launched as part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat Abhiyaan by the Ministry of Education on 17th May 2020.

It is aimed at bridging the digital divide and ensuring inclusive, quality education for all learners across the nation.

It provides multi-mode access to education through digital, online, and on-air platforms to minimise learning losses.

It supports the vision of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, ensuring equitable and quality education across the country.

Components:

DIKSHA (Digital Infrastructure for School Education): It is a national digital platform providing high-quality e-content, including QR-coded Energized Textbooks for all grades (one nation, one digital platform).

PM e-Vidya DTH TV Channels: It had initially 12 DTH channels, now expanded to 200 channels, providing supplementary education in multiple Indian languages for classes 1-12 across States/UTs.

SWAYAM (Study Webs of Active-Learning for Young Aspiring Minds): It is a national MOOC platform offering higher education courses with credit transfer provisions. It also offers school courses (9th–12th) via NIOS and NCERT. Currently, over 10,000 courses are available, with 4.1 lakh students enrolled for NCERT courses.

Radio, Community Radio & CBSE Podcast - Shiksha Vani: These platforms are used to broadcast educational content to a wider audience, especially in areas with limited internet access.

PM e-Vidya, an ICT-based education initiative, was recognized by UNESCO in 2022 for its impact during COVID-19

National Legal Metrology (eMaap) Portal

Department of Consumer Affairs is developing eMaap to integrate State Legal Metrology Departments and their portals into a unified National System.

Presently, State Governments are using their own portals for registration of packaged commodities, issue of licenses and verification/stamping of weighing & measuring instruments.

About eMaap

Aim: Streamline processes for issuing licenses, conducting verifications and managing enforcement and compliance.

Benefits:

Foster ease of doing business and Transparency in trade practices by minimizing compliance burdens, reducing paperwork under Legal Metrology Act, 2009

WEB PORTAL & APPS 2024-25

NOVEMBER 2024

E-Daakhil Portal

The Department of Consumer Affairs recently announced the successful nationwide implementation of the E-Daakhil portal, a truly pan-India initiative.

About E-Daakhil Portal:

It was introduced as an inexpensive, speedy and hassle-free mechanism for filing consumer complaints.

It was first launched in 2020 by the National Consumer Dispute Redressal Commission.

Features

It is an innovative online platform designed to streamline the consumer grievance redressal process, providing an efficient and convenient way for consumers to approach the relevant consumer forum, dispensing the need to travel and be physically present to file their grievances.

From filing complaints to tracking their status, E-Daakhil ensures a paperless and transparent process with respect to filing of cases

E-Daakhil



Launched in 10 more States (AP, Bihar, Chandigarh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Jharkhand, MP, Odisha, UP & Punjab), to facilitate e-filing of Consumer Disputes in Redressal Commissions at District, State & National level.

Global Matchmaking Platform

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) & Climate Club launched 'Global Matchmaking Platform' (GMP) for industrial decarbonization at COP29 held in Baku, Azerbaijan. UNIDO is a specialized agency of UNs with a mandate to promote, dynamize & accelerate industrial development.

Climate Club is an intergovernmental forum for exchange on accelerating climate action & industry decarbonisation

About GMP

Aim: To boost international climate cooperation & partnerships to enable developing & emerging economies to leap-frog into climate-friendly industrial development.

It connects country-specific needs with global technical & financial assistance to reduce emissions in energy & emissions-intensive industrial sectors.

WAVES OTT Platform

Prasar Bharati, India's public broadcaster, launched its over-the-top (OTT) platform "Waves" during the opening ceremony of the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2024.

About WAVES OTT Platform:

Waves is a digital platform developed by Prasar Bharati.

It aims to cater to India's growing demand for streaming services, as stated by the broadcaster in its official release.

Tagline :Waves – Family Entertainment Ki Nayi Lehar.”

Languages and Content : Offers content in 12+ languages, including Hindi, English, Tamil, Konkani, and Assamese. Features infotainment, gaming, education, and shopping.

Live Channels : Streams 65 live TV channels, including “Mann Ki Baat” and Ayodhya’s Prabhu Shriram Lalla Aarti.

Bhu-Neer Portal

The Hon’ble Minister of Jal Shakti launched the “Bhu-Neer” portal during the ceremonial conclusion of India Water Week 2024.

About Bhu-Neer Portal:

It is an advanced portal developed by Central Ground Water Authority (CGWA), under the Ministry of Jal Shakti, in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre (NIC).

It is for improved groundwater regulation across the country.

'Know Your Medicine' App

Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports has launched a nationwide appeal to strengthen the fight against doping in sports, urging athletes, coaches, and the entire sporting community to embrace the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) India's ‘Know Your Medicine (KYM)’ app.

About 'Know Your Medicine' App:

It is part of NADA India's broader mission to raise anti-doping awareness and education, equipping athletes with essential information to stay clean.

The app allows users to easily verify whether a specific medicine or its ingredients contain any substances listed as prohibited by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).

SVASTIK Initiative

CSIR-National Institute of Science Communication and Policy Research (NIScPR) and Gurugram University jointly inaugurated the International Conference on Communication and Dissemination of Traditional Knowledge (CDTK-2024).

About SVASTIK Initiative:

The Scientifically Validated Traditional Knowledge (SVASTIK) is a national initiative which is coordinated by CSIR-NIScPR.

SVASTIK aims to preserve and perpetuate the practice of the appropriate tradition, instill the scientific temperament of verifying tradition scientifically, and boost public faith in our traditional knowledge and practices.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY 2025

APRIL 2025

POEM-4 re-entered the Earth's atmosphere and made impact in the Indian Ocean, as monitored by ISRO's IS4OM (System for Safe and Sustainable Space Operations Management).

What is POEM-4?

POEM-4, or PSLV Orbital Experiment Module-4, is a space research platform developed by ISRO that utilizes the spent fourth stage (PS4) of the PSLV rocket as an orbiting experimental module in space.

It is part of the SpaDeX (Space Docking Experiment) mission and represents the fourth deployment of the POEM series, following POEM-3.

POEM-4 has a three times larger payload capacity than its predecessor, POEM-3, marking a major advancement in reusing upper rocket stages for scientific research.

Total of 24 payloads were hosted on POEM-4: 14 payloads from ISRO and 10 payloads from non-government entities (NGEs) including start-ups and academic institutions.

Launch and Mission Details

POEM-4 was launched on December 30, 2024, aboard PSLV-C60, which also carried twin SPADEX satellites to a 475 km altitude.

After satellite deployment, the PS4 upper stage was reconfigured as POEM-4 and continued in a nearby orbit, serving as an experimental platform.

POEM-4 was then de-orbited by restarting its engine and brought to a circular orbit at 350 km altitude with a 2° inclination.

The stage was passivated (leftover fuel vented) to prevent accidental break-up and ensure safe operations in orbit.

CAPTCHA is a crucial security tool to verify human users and protect websites from bots, but faces challenges.

About CAPTCHA:

CAPTCHA stands for the Completely Automated Public Turing test to tell Computers and Humans Apart. The term “Turing test” is central to CAPTCHAs.

Chandrayaan-3’s Surface Thermophysical Experiment (ChaSTE) became the first instrument to measure in situ temperatures near the moon’s south pole.

About ChaSTE

It successfully penetrated lunar soil and deployed a thermal probe, achieving what two previous missions—ESA’s Philae (2014) and NASA’s InSight HP3 (2018)—could not.

This experiment provided crucial data on lunar surface temperatures, strengthening evidence of water ice deposits.

SpaceX successfully launched a private astronaut crew on a historic polar-orbiting mission aboard a Falcon 9 rocket from NASA’s Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

About Polar Orbit

A Polar Orbit (PO) is a type of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) that ranges between 200 km to 1,000 km in altitude. Unlike equatorial orbits, satellites in a polar orbit travel from one pole to the other rather than from west to east.

A deviation of up to 10 degrees from the exact North-South trajectory is still classified as a polar orbit.

ISRO’s CARTOSAT-3 images reveal earthquake damage in Myanmar.

Why in the News?

ISRO’s Earth observation satellite, CARTOSAT-3, captured high-resolution images of the destruction caused by the 7-magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar on March 28, 2025.

The post-disaster imagery (March 29) was compared with pre-event data (March 18) to assess the damage in Mandalay and Sagaing.

About CARTOSAT-3

CARTOSAT-3 is a third-generation agile advanced Earth observation satellite developed by ISRO.

It replaces the IRS (Indian Remote Sensing) series and has high-resolution imaging capabilities.

Launched aboard the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C47).

SpaceX has achieved another historic milestone with the successful launch of its Fram2 mission, marking the first-ever human spaceflight to orbit Earth from pole to pole.

Key Highlights of the Fram2 Mission

Launch Date & Time: March 31, 2025, at 9:46 PM (ET).

Launch Site: Launch Complex 39A, Kennedy Space Center, Florida.

Vehicle: SpaceX Crew Dragon Resilience, atop a Falcon 9 rocket.

Orbit: 90-degree polar orbit at 267 miles (430 km) altitude.

Duration: 3 to 5 days, with each orbit lasting 46 minutes.

Meta, led by CEO Mark Zuckerberg, has intensified its efforts in the competitive artificial intelligence landscape by launching its next-generation Llama-4 (Large Language Model) suite

Bangladesh became the 54th country to sign the Artemis Accords, a significant agreement promoting the peaceful, sustainable, and transparent exploration of space.

India’s first-ever Agentic AI Hackathon, organized by Techvantage.ai in collaboration with CrewAI, marks a significant milestone in the country’s AI ecosystem

Vibe coding recently became an overnight buzzword in Silicon Valley after being coined by OpenAI co-founder Andrej Karpathy.

About Vibe Coding:

Vibe coding basically refers to using generative AI not just to assist with coding but to generate the entire code for an app.

At its core, vibe coding is about communicating with AI in natural language to build apps.

Users ask, or prompt, Large Language Model (LLM)-based models such as ChatGPT, to produce the code for an app or service, and the AI system does all the work.

The term was coined by Andrej Karpathy, a skilled software engineer who was head of AI at Tesla and a founding engineer at OpenAI – the maker of ChatGPT

The European Space Agency (ESA) is preparing to launch its newest space satellite, called Biomass.

About Biomass Satellite Mission:

It is a European Space Agency (ESA) mission to provide more accurate measurements of forest biomass to enhance our understanding of the carbon cycle.

It will provide detailed 3D maps of the world's most dense and remote tropical forests.

The mission will lift off aboard the Vega C rocket from Europe's spaceport in French Guiana.

It will be placed in a sun-synchronous orbit (SSO) — a type of orbit in which satellites are in sync with the Sun — at an altitude of around 666 km.

It is the first space satellite to carry a long-wavelength radar, called P-band.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY 2025**MARCH 2025****ISRO achieves breakthrough in semicryogenic engine development with successful hot test of Engine Power Head Test Article.**

ISRO has achieved a breakthrough in developing a semi-cryogenic engine (liquid oxygen/kerosene engine) with a high thrust of 2,000 kN (kilonewtons).

The first successful hot test of the Engine Power Head Test Article (PHTA) was conducted at the ISRO Propulsion Complex, Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu.

This engine will be used in the semi-cryogenic booster stage of the Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3), enhancing India's space launch capabilities.

The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DoT) has launched an incubation programme for the Startups "Samarth" to boost innovation and indigenous research in the field of telecommunications and Information Technology (IT) sectors.

The chosen startups will get a grant of up to Rs 5 lakh, and gain access to well-furnished office space for a period of 6 months at the C-DOT Campus in the country.

The Samarth Incubation Programme focuses on:

Providing comprehensive support for startups engaged in creating next-generation technologies in the fields of cybersecurity, Telecom Software Applications, 5G/6G Technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT) Applications & Quantum Technologies.

Development of sustainable and scalable business models for the startups.

The C-DOT will implement the Samarth Incubation Programme through the selected Software Technology Parks of India (STPI).

Saturn gained 128 new moons, with a total of 274 moons.

The International Astronomical Union (IAU) has officially recognised 128 new moons for the gas giant planet Saturn, taking the number of moons of the planet to 274.

The number of Saturn's moons increased after the IAU recognised the discoveries from a team of astronomers led by Edward Ashton at the Academia Sinica in Taiwan.

Saturn now officially has the largest number of moons of the eight planets in our solar system.

Jupiter, with 95 moons, has the second-highest number of moons in the solar system.

The 128 new moons were discovered by stacking images from the Canada-France-Hawaii telescope.

Andrew G. Barto and Richard S. Sutton of the United States of America have been selected for the prestigious 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award.

The winner of the prestigious A.M. Turing award, which is considered as a Nobel Prize in Computing, was announced by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) in New York, United States of America.

Both the winners will share the \$1 million prize money sponsored by Google.

About the A.M. Turing Award

The A.M. Turing award was instituted in 1966 by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), New York, United States of America.

It is given every year to individuals whose work has outstanding significance for computer science.

Alan Mathison Turing is also known as the father of Computer Science.

The government of India has launched the BioSarthi initiative to support Indian Biotech startups to expand their domestic and global reach and business.

The BioSarthi initiative was unveiled by the Union Minister for State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh in a function organised in New Delhi on 21 March 2025.

The function was organised to celebrate the 13th Foundation Day of the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).

The BioSarthi is a six-month cohort that will facilitate structured mentor-mentee engagements.

Dryad Networks has unveiled Silvaguard, an AI-powered autonomous drone system capable of detecting and suppressing wildfires, offering a vital solution amid rising wildfire threats.

About Silvaguard Drone:

It is an AI-based drone designed to enhance the early detection, location, and monitoring of wildfires.

It was introduced by Dryad Networks, an environmental IoT startup based in Berlin.

The drone will deliver infrared images, among other things, and works in combination with a fire detection system that the company developed earlier and that's already being used in several countries.

ESA confirmed that the spacecraft was "passivated" (drained of energy) and placed into a safe "retirement orbit" around the Sun.

About the Gaia Mission

Originally named Global Astrometric Interferometer for Astrophysics (GAIA), later simplified to Gaia.

Launched in 2013 by the European Space Agency (ESA), it aimed to create the most precise 3D map of the Milky Way through astrometry (measuring positions and movements of celestial bodies).

Position: Placed at Lagrange Point 2 (L2), 5 million km from Earth (behind Earth when viewed from the Sun), ensuring an unobstructed cosmic view.

The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has raised concerns over the economic viability of GSAT-18 due to the underutilisation of six transponders until 2027.

The committee has recommended that the Department of Space should exercise greater financial prudence in planning satellite projects involving public funds.

The report highlighted a revenue loss of ₹117 crore due to the idle transponders.

About GSAT-18

GSAT-18 is a communication satellite launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on October 5, 2016.

Launch Vehicle: Heavy-duty Ariane-5 VA-231 rocket from Kourou, French Guiana.

Weight: 3,404 kg at liftoff.

Mission Life: 15 years (until 2032).

Orbit: Injected into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO).

Satellite Control: Managed by ISRO's Master Control Facility (MCF) in Hassan, Karnataka.

NASA's Parker Solar Probe approached the Sun more closely, reaching 6 million km from its surface.

The probe, launched in 2018, has set the record for being the closest spacecraft to the Sun and will continue making 24 close approaches to study solar activity.

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully completed the undocking of two satellites, part of the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission, marking a significant milestone in India's space exploration journey.

About SpaDeX Mission:

SpaDeX mission is a cost-effective technology demonstrator mission for the demonstration of in-space docking using two small spacecraft launched by PSLV.

The primary objective of the SpaDeX mission is to develop and demonstrate the technology needed for rendezvous, docking, and undocking of two small spacecraft (SDX01, which is the Chaser, and SDX02, the Target, nominally) in a low-Earth circular orbit.

The SpaDeX mission consists of two small spacecraft (about 220 kg each) launched by PSLV-C60.

Recent Developments:

The SPADEX satellites were successfully docked recently. ISRO has now accomplished the pivotal operation of undocking of SPADEX satellites in the very first attempt on 13th March, 2025.

The undocking of the satellites took place in 460 km circular orbit with 45-degree inclination.

The satellites are now orbiting independently and their health is normal.

This accomplishment made India the fourth country after USA, Russia and China in the world to achieve the feat.

New findings based on data from India's Chandrayaan-3 mission suggest that water ice on the Moon may be present beyond its polar regions.

About Chandrayaan-3:

Chandrayaan-3 was the Indian Space Research Organisation's (ISRO) second attempt, after Chandrayaan-2, to achieve a successful landing and rover operation on the Moon's surface.

It was launched using ISRO's LVM3 rocket, designed to place modules into the Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO) at a lower cost.

LVM3 is a three-stage rocket with two solid strap-on boosters and a core liquid stage.

The LVM3 M4 launcher positioned the integrated modules in an elliptical parking orbit of approximately

170 x 36,500 km.

Chandrayaan-3 Recent Findings:

New data from Chandrayaan-3 indicates possible water-ice deposits beyond the Moon's polar regions.

A study by Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad, using data from Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment (ChaSTE) instrument, supports this finding.

ChaSTE measured a 60°C temperature difference between the lunar surface and 10 cm below it, revealing that the Moon's surface layer is highly non-conductive, providing insights into its composition and thermal properties.

SpaceX's Starship spacecraft exploded has minutes after lifting off from Texas, dooming an attempt to deploy mock satellites in the second consecutive failure this year for Elon Musk's Mars rocket program.

About SpaceX Starship:

Starship is a two-stage fully reusable super heavy-lift launch vehicle under development by American aerospace company SpaceX.

Starship is the collective name for a two-component system consisting of the Starship spacecraft (which carries the crew and cargo) and the Super Heavy rocket.

Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched AI Kosha, a non-personal datasets platform, along with the GPU access portal under the IndiaAI Mission.

About AI Kosha:

AI Kosha is an initiative by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) designed to serve as a unified repository for datasets, tools, and AI models.

It aims to enhance access to datasets and models from various sources to boost AI innovation, support AI solution development with shared toolkits, and showcase use cases to inspire new applications.

What is the IndiaAI Mission?

The IndiaAI Mission is a comprehensive initiative launched by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) to build a robust AI ecosystem in India.

The IndiaAI Mission, with an allocation of Rs. 10,300 crore (US\$ 1.18 billion) over five years, is building a high-performance computing infrastructure with 18,693 Graphics Processing Units (GPUs) and launching an open GPU marketplace to empower startups, students, and researchers.

ISRO recently successfully conducted the hot test on a semi-cryogenic engine (SE2000), coming closer to finalising the crucial cryogenic stage.

About Semi-Cryogenic Engine:

A semi-cryogenic engine (SCE) is a liquid rocket engine that uses liquid oxygen (LOX) as an oxidizer and refined kerosene as fuel.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is developing a semi-cryogenic engine with a thrust of 2000 kN to power the booster stages of future heavy-lift launch vehicles. This engine utilizes a combination of liquid oxygen (LOX) and refined kerosene (RP-1) as propellants.

Microsoft has introduced a new voice-activated AI assistant called Dragon Copilot.

About Dragon Copilot:

It is the new healthcare AI tool which is being offered as part of Microsoft Cloud for Healthcare.

It is designed to help doctors and healthcare professionals transcribe clinical notes and draft paperwork as well as quickly search for information from medical sources.

Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost lunar lander has successfully touched down on the Moon's Mare Crisium region after a nerve-wracking powered descent.

About Blue Ghost Mission:

Blue Ghost lander, developed by Firefly Aerospace, is carrying 10 NASA payloads as part of the Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) program, which aims to stimulate lunar commerce through private-sector competition.

The Blue Ghost mission aims to enhance our understanding of the lunar environment.

The lander will operate for approximately 14 Earth days.

The Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT) instrument onboard Aditya-L1 observed an X6.3-class solar flare recently, one of the most intense categories of solar eruptions.

About Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT):

It is one of the remote sensing payloads on board the Aditya-L1, the first dedicated solar mission of the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), which was launched on September 02, 2023.

It was developed by Pune's Inter-University Center for Astronomy and Astrophysics (IUCAA) in close collaboration with various ISRO Centres.

SUIT is designed to provide near-simultaneous full-disk and region-of-interest images of the Sun at various heights, slicing through the photosphere and chromosphere.

Amazon unveiled a prototype of its first-ever in-house quantum computing chip called Ocelot.

About Ocelot Chip:

It is a new quantum computing chip with a nine-qubit chip that has been internally fabricated by Amazon.

It has been developed by the team at the Amazon Web Services (AWS) Center for Quantum Computing at the California Institute of Technology.

ISRO's Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre and Semiconductor Laboratory (SCL), Chandigarh have jointly developed 32-bit Microprocessors -- Vikram 3201 and Kalpana 3201-- for space applications.

Vikram 3201 is the first fully Indian-made 32-bit microprocessor qualified for use in the harsh environmental conditions of launch vehicles. The processor was fabricated at the 180nm (nanometer) CMOS (Complementary Metal-Oxide-Semiconductor) semiconductor fab of SCL.

Kalpana 3201 is a 32-bit SPARC V8 (Scalable Processor ARChitecture, version 8) RISC (Reduced Instruction Set Computer) microprocessor and is based on the IEEE 1754 Instruction Set Architecture.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2025

Evo 2 AI System.

AI chipmakers Nvidia have unveiled powerful AI system for genetic research created new AI called Evo 2.

About Evo 2 AI System:

It is a powerful new foundation model that understands the genetic code for all domains of life.

It is the largest publicly available AI model for genomic data.

It was built on the NVIDIA DGX Cloud platform in a collaboration led by nonprofit biomedical research organization Arc Institute and Stanford University.

The model was built using 2,000 Nvidia H100 processors on Amazon's cloud infrastructure

ISRO recently faced a setback in its mission to position the NVS-02 satellite in the desired orbit due to thruster failure, but is working on alternative strategies to utilise the satellite in its current elliptical orbit for the NavIC navigation system.

About NavIC:

It is India's regional navigation satellite system designed to provide accurate Position, Velocity and Timing (PVT) service to users in India as well as the region extending about 1500 km beyond the Indian landmass.

It is a satellite-based navigation system developed by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).

The first NavIC satellite was launched in 2013.

NavIC is designed with a constellation of 7 satellites and a network of ground stations operating 24 x 7.

Three satellites of the constellation are placed in geostationary orbit, at 32.5°E, 83°E and 129.5°E respectively.

Four satellites are placed in inclined geosynchronous orbit with equatorial crossing of 55°E and 111.75°E respectively, with inclination of 29° (two satellites in each plane).

NavIC SPS signals are interoperable with the other global navigation satellite system (GNSS) signals namely GPS, Glonass, Galileo and BeiDou.

Union Finance Minister announced the launch of a National Geospatial Mission in the Budget 2025-26.

About the National Geospatial Mission

The mission has been allocated a budget of ₹100 crore and aims to modernize land records and enhance urban planning across the country.

This initiative will leverage the existing PM Gati Shakti framework to develop foundational geospatial infrastructure and data, facilitating improved design and execution of infrastructure projects.

It will be aimed at modernising land records and enhancing urban planning across

ISRO introduced the world's largest 10-tonne Vertical Planetary Mixer for solid propellants.

The Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has made advancement in its quest for self-reliance within the space sector.

On February 13, 2025, ISRO announced the successful development of a 10-tonne Vertical Planetary Mixer, the largest of its kind for solid propellants globally.

This innovative equipment was designed and manufactured in collaboration with the Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI) in Bengaluru.

The vertical mixer has a weight of 150 tonnes. It measures 5.4 metres in length and has dimensions of 3.3

metres in breadth and 8.7 metres in height.

IIT Madras & ISRO jointly developed and successfully booted an Atmanirbhar aerospace quality SHAKTI-based Semiconductor Chip.

The SHAKTI class of systems are based on RISC-V, an open-source Instruction Set Architecture (ISA), for designing custom processors.

‘SHAKTI’ is backed by Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, Government of India, under its ‘Digital India RISC-V’ initiative (DIRV).

It aims to promote indigenous development of microprocessor based products that offer best-in-class security and visibility for users adopting RISC-V technology.

The ‘IRIS’ (Indigenous RISC-V Controller for Space Applications) Chip was developed from ‘SHAKTI’ processor baseline.

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) scientists have estimated the age of the Shiv Shakti point to be 3.7 billion years old.

About the Shiv Shakti point

The Shiv Shakti point is the name given to the Chandrayaan-3 landing site on the Moon's south pole, where India successfully achieved a soft landing on August 23, 2023.

The landing site is now known as Shiv Shakti Point. This Point is enclosed by multiple large craters:

Manzinus Crater (96 km diameter, ~3.9 billion years old) to the north

Boguslawsky Crater (95 km diameter, ~4 billion years old) to the southeast

Schomberger Crater (86 km diameter, ~3.7 billion years old) to the south.

The landing site, now known as Shiv Shakti Point, has been under detailed study by ISRO's Physical Research Laboratory (PRL) scientists using data from the Pragyan rover and Vikram lander.

Landing point of Chandrayaan-1 is known as Jawahar Point while that of Chandrayaan-2 is called Tiranga Point.

NASA is set to launch its latest mission, Pandora, in 2025 to study the atmospheres of distant exoplanets.

With the James Webb Space Telescope (JWST) oversubscribed, Pandora will play a crucial role in uncovering the secrets of distant planets by focusing on clouds, hazes, and water—key indicators of habitability.

ISRO has recently created 'FEAST' software.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) recently launched the latest version of its Finite Element Analysis of Structures (FEAST) software at IIT Hyderabad.

This software will be used to perform finite element analysis of various types of structures including rockets, aircraft, satellites, buildings etc.

It will predict how a component or structure reacts to real-world forces such as structural loads, thermal conditions, and other physical effects.

FEAST will be available to three broad categories of users.

These categories are – Academic (for students and educational institutions), Premium (for small and medium scale industries) and Professional (for general large scale applications).

The Chinese start-up DeepSeek, has created a buzz with the launch of its cutting-edge AI models ‘DeepSeek-R1’ & ‘DeepSeek-V3’, claiming they nearly match the capabilities of top AI models in the U.S., while being far more affordable.

DeepSeek is a Hangzhou-based Chinese startup that has recently launched artificial intelligence (AI) chatbot built on a low-cost Large Language Model (LLM) infrastructure.

The AI is optimised for tasks like maths and coding, making it a strong competitor in the AI space.

China's Chang'e-7 mission launched in 2025, project aims to investigate the Moon's south pole for potential water resources.

NASA's SPHEREx space telescope will be launched in February 2025, will map the universe in infrared.

NASA's SPHEREx (Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization, and Ices Explorer) is an all-sky infrared survey mission, scheduled for launch in February 2025, mapping the sky in 102 infrared colors.

The mission is managed by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL), built by BAE Systems, and has a budget of \$488 million, significantly lower than the \$10 billion JWST

Chinese government has approved a deep-sea research facility also known as a deep-sea space station- in the resource-rich South China Sea.

The deep sea space station will also include the drilling ship Mengxiang, which aims to be the first to reach

the Earth's mantle.

China will be the world's third country after the United States of America and the Soviet Union to build and operate a deep sea space station.

The Chinese deep sea space station will be a research facility that will be 2000 meters below the surface of the South China Sea.

It is expected to become operational by 2030

Indian-origin astronaut Sunita Williams has set a woman's new record for the longest spacewalking duration, surpassing Peggy Whitson's previous record.

Williams has accumulated 62 hours and 6 minutes of spacewalking time over nine.

Record-Breaking Spacewalk: Williams surpassed Whitson's record of 60 hours and 21 minutes, now ranking fourth on NASA's all-time spacewalking list.

Shubhanshu Shukla, an Indian Air Force (IAF) officer and ISRO astronaut, was recently named the pilot for Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4).

About Axiom-4 Mission (Ax-4)

Ax-4 is the fourth private astronaut mission to the International Space Station (ISS).

It is organized by Axiom Space in collaboration with NASA.

The Ax-4 crew will launch aboard a SpaceX Dragon spacecraft to the ISS from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.

Once docked, the private astronauts plan to spend up to 14 days aboard the ISS.

The crew assigned to Ax-4 includes Commander Peggy Whitson, Mission Pilot Shubhanshu Shukla of India, Mission Specialist Sławosz Uznański of ESA/Poland, and Mission Specialist Tibor Kapu of Hungary

Centre has approved Chandrayaan -5 Mission(also known as LUPEX-): ISRO.

ISRO's chairman V Narayan said that unlike the Chandrayaan-3 mission which carried the 25- kg rover 'Prayagyaan' , the Chandrayaan -5 mission would carry a 250 kg rover to study the moon's surface.

The Chandrayaan -4 mission, expected to be launched in 2027.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is tentatively scheduled to launch its new megaphone-shaped space telescope aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket from Vandenberg Space Force Base in California.

About SPHEREx Telescope:

The Spectro-Photometer for the History of the Universe, Epoch of Reionization and Ices Explorer (SPHEREx) telescope is a megaphone-shaped telescope.

Tenure: 2 year

Aims of SPHEREx:

It will map the universe while detecting two kinds of cosmic light, optical and infrared.

It will measure something called cosmic inflation.

NASA is gearing up for a new and first-of-its-kind solar mission called PUNCH mission that will closely observe the solar atmosphere.

About PUNCH Mission:

The Polarimetry to Unify the Corona and Heliosphere (PUNCH) mission will be launched by SpaceX .

Components of PUNCH Mission:

It will be a constellation of four, suitcase-sized satellites each weighing about 64 kg sent to the Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

Indian Space Research Organisation has announced the successful development of a 10-tonne 'vertical planetary mixer', the largest of its kind for solid propellants globally.

About Vertical Propellant Mixer:

It is the largest solid propellant mixing equipment globally.

It is developed and designed by Satish Dhawan Space Centre in collaboration with Central Manufacturing Technology Institute, a Bengaluru-based research and development organisation under the Ministry of Heavy Industries.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

Pixxel launches India's 1st private satellite constellation with SpaceX.

Google-backed Indian space start-up company Pixxel has become the first Indian private company to

launch its commercial satellite constellation named Firefly on board a Space X rocket. The SpaceX rocket also carried the world's first commercial satellite for surveillance of space objects orbiting the earth, made by an Indian space company, Digantara. Both the Pixxel and Digantara satellites were launched by Elon Musk's company SpaceX. The satellites were launched aboard the Transporter-12 rideshare mission of SpaceX onboard the Falcon 9 rocket from the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, the United States of America. Bengaluru-based space startup company Digantara launched the world's first commercial satellite for surveillance of space objects orbiting the Earth. The satellite named Space Camera for Object Tracking (SCOT) aims to enhance space safety and optimize space traffic management. SCOT satellite will be placed in the sun-synchronous orbit which will track objects in Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

1st astronomical observatory of Eastern India inaugurated in Bengal.

The first astronomical observatory of Eastern India and the sixth in the country under the Department of Science and Technology, Union Ministry of Science and Technology has been inaugurated atop the Panchet Hill in the Garpanchkot area of Purulia district in West Bengal. It is the sixth such observatory in India after Ladakh, Nainital (Uttarakhand), Mount Abu (Rajasthan), Girbani Hills in Pune, and Kavalur in Tamil Nadu. The observatory set up in Garpanchkot Hills has been named after famous scientist Satyendra Nath Bose. The observatory has been established by the Satyendra Nath Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences.

CSIR develops Paracetamol drugs indigenously.

Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh announced that the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has developed the technology to produce Paracetamol indigenously. This was announced by Dr Jitendra Singh at the 40th Foundation Day of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) in New Delhi on 5 January 2025. The technology has been transferred to the Karnataka-based Satya Deeptha Pharmaceuticals Ltd to manufacture the affordable paracetamol domestically.

ISRO'S SpaDex Mission Successful.

SpaDeX and 24 PS4-Orbital Experiment Module (POEM-4) payloads were launched by ISRO via PSLV-C60 from the Satish Dhawan Space Center SHAR, Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh in December 2024. India has become the fourth country in the world after Russia, the United States America, and China- to master the art of rendezvous, space docking, and undocking.

Objectives of the ISRO's SpaDex Mission?

SpaDex mission is a technology demonstrator project of ISRO. It carries two small spacecraft SDX01(the Chaser) and SDX02(theTarget), each weighing 220 kg.. The two spacecraft will be deployed into a 470 km Low Earth Circular Orbit (LEO at 55° inclination. The chaser satellite will attempt to dock with the target satellite in a precision-controlled maneuver by the ISRO's ISTRAC (ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network), Bengaluru.

Significance of the Mission

The mastery of space docking is crucial for the building and operation of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station and a manned mission to the moon. The 1st module of the Antariksh Station is expected to be launched in 2028 and the target year of becoming fully operational with all modules is by 2035

ISRO achieved its 100th rocket launch with the first launch of 2025, as the GSLV-F15 successfully placed the NVS-02 navigation satellite into orbit from Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

The GSLV-F15 is the 17th flight of India's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) and 11th flight with Indigenous Cryo stage. It is the 8th operational flight of GSLV with an indigenous Cryogenic stage.

About NVS-02

NVS-02 is one of the five replacement satellites for the Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System, also referred to as NavIC (Navigation with Indian Constellation). It is the second satellite in the NVS series, part of the NavIC system. NVS-01, launched in May 2023, was the first second-gen NavIC satellite and carried India's first indigenous atomic clock. NavIC is a seven-satellite regional positioning system that can provide location data on the Indian

mainland and up to 1,500 kilometres around.

NavIC SPS signals are interoperable with the other global navigation satellite system (GNSS) signals i.e., GPS (of USA), GLONASS (Russia), Galileo (European Union) & BeiDou (China).

The Indian government is set to issue a notice to procure more graphics processing units (GPUs) under the IndiaAI Mission.

The government has shortlisted 10 companies that will provide nearly 19,000 graphics processing units (GPUs)- high end chips needed to develop machine learning tools - for setting up artificial intelligence (AI) data centres.

The Union Budget 2025-26 has sanctioned Rs 2,000 crore for the IndiaAI Mission for 2025-26, which is nearly a fifth of the scheme's total outlay of Rs 10,370 crore.

ISRO successfully carried out the demonstration of restarting its Vikas liquid engine on January 17, 2025 at its engine test facility at ISRO Propulsion Complex, Mahendragiri.

Vikas engine is the workhorse engine that powers the liquid stages of ISRO's launch vehicles.

The test involved firing the engine for 60 seconds, shutting it off for 120 seconds, and then restarting it for an additional seven seconds.

The Vikas engine operates using a combination of Unsymmetrical Dimethylhydrazine (UDMH) as fuel and Nitrogen Tetroxide (N₂O₄) as an oxidiser. It achieves a maximum thrust of 725 kN.

The propellant loading varies – 40 tonnes for PSLV and GSLV Mark I and II, and 55 tonnes for LVM3.

Prime Minister recently lauded the Indian space startup Digantara at the success of Mission SCOT.

About SCOT Mission:

SCOT (Space Camera for Object Tracking) is Digantara's (an Indian space startup) inaugural mission dedicated to space surveillance.

It is one of the world's first commercial Space Situational Awareness (SSA) satellites.

It was launched aboard SpaceX's Transporter-12 mission.

SCOT is built to track Resident Space Objects (RSOs).

Developed by: It is an inaugural mission by Digantara, an Indian space startup supported by Aditya Birla Ventures and SIDBI.

Orbit : Operates in a sun-synchronous orbit, ensuring efficient tracking of objects in Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

Enhanced Capabilities : Monitors objects as small as 5 cm with high revisit rates and tracking accuracy.

Union Cabinet approved the establishment of the Third Launch Pad (TLP) at Satish Dhawan Space Centre of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.

About Third Launch Pad:

The Third Launch Pad project envisages the establishment of the launch infrastructure at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh for the Next Generation Launch Vehicles of ISRO.

It is also supported as a standby launch pad for the Second Launch Pad at Sriharikota. This will also enhance the launch capacity for future Indian human spaceflight missions.

Third Launch Pad (TLP) is targeted to be established within a duration of 48 months or 4 years.

Funding: The total fund requirement is Rs. 3984.86 Crore and includes the establishment of the Launch Pad and the associated facilities.

Significance: The Project will boost the Indian Space ecosystem by enabling higher launch frequencies and the national capacity to undertake human spaceflight & space exploration missions.

The TLP aligns with India's expanded vision for space exploration, including plans for the Bharatiya Antariksh Station by 2035 and an Indian Crewed Lunar Landing by 2040.

Presently, Indian Space

Transportation Systems are completely reliant on two launch pads viz. First Launch Pad (FLP) & Second Launch Pad (SLP).

FLP was realized 30 years ago for PSLV and continues to provide launch support for PSLV & SSLV.

SLP was established primarily for GSLV & LVM3 and also functions as standby for PSLV. SLP has been operational for almost 20 years and has enhanced the launch capacity towards enabling some commercial missions of PSLV/LVM3 along with the national missions including the Chandrayaan-3 mission.

The TLP will support the Next Generation Launch Vehicles (NGLV) and act as a backup for the existing Second Launch Pad.

ISRO achieved a significant milestone by successfully germinating lobia (black-eyed pea) seeds in microgravity aboard its Compact Research Module for Orbital Plant Studies (CROPS).

The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) has agreed with the Indian Institute of Technology

(IIT) Mandi, in collaboration with IIT Jammu, to develop a “Wideband Spectrum-Sensor ASIC Chip” aimed at improving spectrum utilization.

The project is part of the Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF) scheme, supporting the Atmanirbhar Bharat and Make-in-India initiatives.

LignoSat is the world's first satellite made from wood.

The world's first wooden satellite LignoSat built by Japanese researchers was launched into space in an early test of using timber in lunar and Mars exploration.

About LignoSat:

LignoSat”, a fusion of “ligno” (the Latin word for wood) and “satellite”.

It is developed through collaborative research and development by a team comprising members from Kyoto University and Sumitomo Forestry Co.

Objective: Their objective is to leverage the eco-friendliness and cost-effectiveness of wood in space exploration.

It is constructed from magnolia wood, chosen for its durability and adaptability.

It will first be sent to the International Space Station (ISS) aboard a SpaceX rocket from the Kennedy Space Center.

Japan and the US are planning to launch the world’s first wooden satellite, the LignoSat probe, into space.

LignoSat Launch Timeline

Launch Schedule: Planned for this summer, either on a US rocket or a SpaceX Dragon mission.

Orbit: Approximately 400 km altitude.

The NISAR satellite, a joint mission between NASA and the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), is set to launch soon, marking a new era in Earth observation.

By utilizing advanced Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) technology, NISAR will provide high-resolution images of the Earth's surface, tracking subtle changes like ground movements, glacier shifts, and deforestation, all with extreme precision.

This game-changing mission will allow scientists to monitor nearly all of Earth’s solid surfaces twice every 12 days.

The mission is expected to launch in March 2025 from India's Satish Dhawan Space Centre.

The New Glenn rocket developed by Jeff Bezos-owned Blue Origin is a revolutionary heavy-lift launch vehicle designed to compete with industry leaders like SpaceX.

Named after John Glenn, the NASA astronaut who became the first American to orbit Earth in 1962

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY 2024-25

DECEMBER 2024

ISRO successfully launch ESA Probe 3 Spacecraft using PSLV C-59 Rocket.

Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the European Space Agency (ESA) Probe 3 Spacecraft from the First Launch Pad, Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC-SHAR), Sriharikota Andhra Pradesh, on 5 December 2024.

The ESA Probe 3 was launched onboard ISRO’s Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) C-59.

It was NewSpace India Limited's (NSIL) second successful mission in a fortnight after the launch of the GSAT-20/ GSAT-N2 satellite aboard SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket.

ISRO undertook the mission for NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), which entered into a contract with the ESA to launch the Europa Probe 3 spacecraft using the PSLV rocket.

The satellites will study the Sun’s corona, the Sun’s outermost atmosphere.

Pune-based startup Atreya Innovations has developed an AI-based pulse diagnostic tool for Ayurveda practitioners, which monitors 22 health parameters and generates reports in 10 Indian languages.

Nadi Tarangini is India's first Ayurvedic medical device that has received approval from the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO).

The device has been developed by Pune-based Atreya Innovations and has been made available at a price of Rs 55,000.

India is set to achieve groundbreaking milestones in space exploration with plans to establish its own space station, Bharat Antariksha Station, by 2035 and to land an Indian astronaut on the Moon by 2040.

Indian Aditya L1 mission and the European Space Agency’s (ESA) Proba-3 mission will begin simultaneous solar observations from 2025.

This collaboration is a major step forward in solar studies, using new techniques to gain insights into the

outer atmosphere of the sun and the phenomena occurring in it.

Aditya L1 is India's first dedicated sun mission, which was initiated in September 2023.

The spacecraft has been positioned at the Lagrange Point 1 (L1), about 1.5 million kilometres from Earth, since January 2024

ISRO has begun assembling the Human Rated Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (HLVM-3) for the first uncrewed flight of Gaganyaan.

About Human Rated Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (HLVM-3)

It is a human-rated version of ISRO's LVM3, developed for India's Gaganyaan mission to transport humans into space.

Aim: To ensure safe human spaceflight by integrating advanced reliability and safety features.

Features:

Payload capacity– It is a three stage vehicle with a payload capacity of about 10 tonnes to Low Earth Orbit (LEO).

Height and weight– It is 53 meters tall and weighs 640 tonnes.

Google unveiled its next generation quantum computing chip called Willow.

Scientists from the University of Bristol and the UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) have developed the world's first Carbon-14 diamond battery.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY 2024-25

NOVEMBER 2024

Eight startups have been selected under India's National Quantum Mission and the National Mission on Interdisciplinary Cyber-Physical Systems to advance research in quantum computing, communication, sensing, and materials, aligning with the goal of technological self-reliance by 2047.

The eight selected startups.

QNu Labs (Bengaluru): Developing quantum-safe networks for secure communications.

QPai India Pvt. Ltd. (Bengaluru): Building a superconducting quantum computer.

Dimira Technologies Pvt. Ltd. (IIT Mumbai): Innovating cryogenic cables for quantum systems.

Prenishq Pvt. Ltd. (IIT Delhi): Creating precision diode-laser systems for quantum sensing and computing.

QuPrayog Pvt. Ltd. (Pune): Working on optical atomic clocks for quantum metrology.

Quanastra Pvt. Ltd. (Delhi): Developing advanced cryogenics and superconducting detectors.

Pristine Diamonds Pvt. Ltd. (Ahmedabad): Designing diamond-based quantum sensing materials.

Quan2D Technologies Pvt. Ltd. (Bengaluru): Advancing single-photon detectors for quantum communication.

About National Quantum Mission

Implementing Body: The Department of Science & Technology (DST) under the Ministry of Science & Technology will implement the National Quantum Mission.

Funding and duration: Total cost of Rs.6003.65 crore from 2023-24 to 2030-31.

Objective: The mission aims to seed, nurture, and scale up scientific and industrial R&D, creating a vibrant and innovative ecosystem in Quantum Technology (QT).

ISRO gets government approval for Venus mission "Shukrayaan".

Shukrayaan Mission (Venus Orbiting Satellite)

Launch Details : Set to launch in March 2028.

Estimated cost of the mission is Rs 1,236 crore

LVM-3 launch vehicle has been identified to place the spacecraft in an Elliptical Parking Orbit (EPO).

Mission Shukrayaan or Venus Orbiter Mission (VOM) by the Department of Space, will explore the atmosphere and surface of Venus, and its interaction with sun.

ISRO will launch European Space Agency's (ESA) Proba-3 mission, marking a significant step in international space collaboration.

About Proba-3 Mission:

It is the European Space Agency's (ESA) first mission dedicated to precision formation flying.

It is the innovative mission which will demonstrate precision formation flying between two satellites to create an artificial eclipse, revealing new views of the Sun's faint corona.

Mission will deploy two satellites, launched aboard ISRO's PSLV-XL, into a high elliptical orbit that will reach 60,000 km from Earth.

American billionaire Elon Musk's company, Space X, successfully launched the New Space India Limited (NSIL) GSAT-20, also known as the GSAT-N2 satellite, on 19 November 2024.

The GSAT-20 satellite was built by ISRO on demand from NSIL, but it is owned and operated by NSIL. The Falcon 9 rocket was launched from Cape Canaveral Space Port, Florida, United States of America, on November 19, 2024.

About GSAT -20/GSAT-N2 Satellite

It is India's advanced communication satellite.

It was developed by New Space India Limited (NSIL), the commercial arm of ISRO under the Department of Space.

The GSAT-20 satellite, also known as GSAT-N2, weighs 4,700 kg.

It is a high throughput (HTS) communication satellite with a capacity of 48 Gbps.

The satellite has 32 Spot beams. It will cover even the remotest part of mainland India and the Andaman, Nicobar, and Lakshadweep islands.

The satellite will provide cellular and internet connectivity in the remotest part of the country.

The lifespan of the satellite is 14 years.

NASA and Microsoft have teamed up to create Earth Copilot, an AI-powered chatbot that simplifies access to NASA's complex geospatial data.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has launched India's first analog space mission in Leh, Ladakh.

Collaborative effort: Led by ISRO's Human Spaceflight Centre with partners including AAKA Space Studio, the University of Ladakh, and IIT Bombay.

This mission aims to simulate interplanetary habitat conditions, helping scientists explore the feasibility of establishing a sustainable base station beyond Earth.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted a flight trial of India's first long-range hypersonic missile from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.

It is capable of carrying various payloads over distances exceeding 1,500 kilometers

World's first wooden satellite, developed in Japan.

The world's first wooden satellite LignoSat built by Japanese researchers was launched into space in an early test of using timber in lunar and Mars exploration.

About LignoSat:

LignoSat", a fusion of "ligno" (the Latin word for wood) and "satellite".

It is developed through collaborative research and development by a team comprising members from Kyoto University and Sumitomo Forestry Co.

It is constructed from magnolia wood, chosen for its durability and adaptability.

It will first be sent to the International Space Station (ISS) aboard a SpaceX rocket from the Kennedy Space Center.

ISRO and NASA are planning to launch a new satellite called NISAR in early 2025 that will help keep track of Earth's surface on land and ice-covered areas.

About NISAR Satellite:

It is a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) observatory jointly developed by NASA and ISRO.

It will be launched by using ISRO's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark-II rocket.

It consists of both L-band and S-band Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) instruments, which makes it a dual-frequency imaging radar satellite.

NISAR will be the first satellite mission to use two different radar frequencies (L-band and S-band) to measure changes in our planet's surface

DEFENCE NEWS 2025

APRIL 2025

India and the US will kick off the fourth edition of their major tri-service exercise called 'Tiger Triumph' in the Bay of Bengal.

The Indian Army's Air Defence warriors from the White Tiger Division have proven their operational readiness and technical expertise during a recent live missile-firing exercise which involved the firing of the 9K33 Osa-AK missile system.

About 9K33 Osa-AK Missile System:

It is a Russian-built highly mobile, low-altitude, short-range tactical surface-to-air defence missile system.

Originally developed in the 1960s and fielded by the Soviet Union in 1972, the Osa-AK has remained a crucial asset for many armies around the world, including the Indian Army. In the West, the Osa is known by the NATO reporting name "SA-8 Gecko".

The Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Tarini has reached Cape Town, South Africa, marking the fourth and final international stop in its global circumnavigation expedition, Navika Sagar Parikrama II.

About INSV Tarini

INSV Tarini is an indigenously built, 56-foot sailing vessel commissioned into the Indian Navy in February 2017.

Built by: Aquarius Shipyard Ltd., Goa, under the Make in India initiative.

Advanced features: It is equipped with a Raymarine navigation suite, satellite communication systems, and emergency steering mechanisms, allowing it to operate under extreme conditions.

Symbolic naming: The vessel is named after the Tara-Tarini hill shrine in Odisha, which was historically revered by sailors for safe voyages. In Sanskrit, 'Tarini' means both boat and saviour.

About Navika Sagar Parikrama II

The expedition was flagged off from Goa on October 2, 2024, by Chief of the Naval Staff, Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi.

Total Distance: The mission aims to cover 23,400 nautical miles (approximately 43,300 km) in eight months, sailing across three oceans and three major capes.

Route Covered:

Fremantle, Australia

Lyttelton, New Zealand

Port Stanley, Falkland Islands (UK)

Cape Town, South Africa (final stop before returning to India)

The mission is scheduled to conclude in May 2025, when INSV Tarini returns to Goa.

The Indian Navy's frigate INS Tarkash, which has been deployed in the Western Indian Ocean for maritime security operations, has intercepted and seized over 2500 kg of narcotics recently.

About INS Tarkash:

It is a state-of-the-art stealth frigate of the Indian Navy. It is part of the navy's Western Fleet.

It belongs to the Talwar class of guided missile frigates. These are modified Krivak III-class frigates built by Russia.

INS Tarkash was built at the Yantar shipyard in Kaliningrad.

India and Russia have commenced a six-day naval exercise, 'Indra', off the coast of Chennai, involving sophisticated maritime drills and live weapon firings.

About Exercise INDRA:

It is an India - Russia bilateral naval exercise

INDRA 2025:

It is the 14th edition of the exercise.

The exercise is being conducted in two phases: Harbour phase at Chennai and Sea phase in the Bay of Bengal

The indigenously developed Hansa-3 trainer aircraft has been cleared for use to train aircrew for obtaining pilot licences, and the aircraft will now be manufactured in India by the private industry.

About Hansa-3 Trainer Aircraft:

It is India's first indigenous flying trainer aircraft.

It was designed and developed by CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories, Bangalore, under the aegis of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR).

It is designed to meet the Indian flying club's needs and it is an ideal aircraft for Commercial Pilot Licensing (CPL) due to its low cost and low fuel consumption.

India is preparing to operationalise INS Varsha, a dedicated naval base for nuclear-powered submarines, on the eastern coast near Rambilli in Andhra Pradesh by 2026.

About INS Varsha:

It is a strategically designed submarine base to house India's nuclear-powered submarines.

The high-security facility, part of the long-planned Project Varsha, is designed to support India's growing fleet of nuclear submarines and enhance the survivability of its sea-based deterrent.

The new base will be located near the coastal village of Rambilli, approximately 50 kilometers from Eastern Naval Command headquarters in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

India recently offered the indigenous Akash air defence missile system to the UAE.

About Akash Air Defence Missile System:

It is a Short Range Surface to Air Missile System to protect vulnerable areas and points from air attacks. It was indigenously designed and developed by India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and is produced by Hyderabad-based Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL).

Features:

It is 5.8 m long, has a diameter of 350 mm and a wingspan of 1,105mm.

Range of Operation : 4.5 km to 25 km.

The Cabinet Committee on Security (CCS), chaired by the Prime Minister, approved a ₹63,000-crore deal for procuring 26 Rafale-M fighter jets from France for the Indian Navy.

Background

Initially, under the MMRCA tender (2007), India planned to acquire 126 jets with technology transfer, which was shelved in 2015.

A direct deal in 2016 led to 36 Rafale jets for the IAF, delivered between 2019-2022.

Details of the Deal

The deal includes 22 single-seater Rafale-M jets for carrier operations and 4 twin-seater trainer variants, which are non-carrier compatible.

The jets are meant to operate from INS Vikramaditya and INS Vikrant, India's two operational aircraft carriers.

About the Rafale Fighter Jet

Dassault Rafale is a 5 generation, twin-engine, delta-wing, multirole fighter aircraft manufactured by Dassault Aviation.

Capable of speeds up to Mach 1.8 and a combat radius exceeding 1000 km.

Designed for air superiority, ground support, reconnaissance and anti-ship missions.

India unveiled the BM-04 missile at a defense exhibition in Hyderabad last month. This next-generation short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) reflects India's focus on enhancing its conventional counterforce capabilities.

About BM-04 Missile

The BM-04 is India's latest short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). Unveiled at the Vigyan Vaibhav 2025 defense exhibition in Hyderabad, it represents a significant advancement in India's missile technology.

Features:

Size: The BM-04 is 10.2 meters long, 1.2 meters in diameter and weighs 11,500 kg.

Range: The missile has a two-stage solid-fuel propulsion system; it can engage targets located at a maximum distance of up to 1,500 km, with a 500 kg conventional warhead, and has a 30-meter circular error probability (CEP).

Deployment: It can be deployed using a six-wheel indigenous transport erector launcher (TEL).

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the Release Trials of Long-Range Glide Bomb (LRGB) 'Gaurav' recently.

About Long-Range Glide Bomb (LRGB) 'Gaurav':

"Gaurav" is a 1,000-kg class glide bomb designed and developed indigenously by the DRDO.

Unlike conventional bombs that fall vertically after release, glide bombs are equipped with fins or wings that allow them to glide forward through the air toward their target.

Importantly, a glide bomb does not have an engine. Instead, it relies on the momentum from being dropped from a high-flying aircraft and uses aerodynamic surfaces to cover long distances.

Developed by DRDO's Research Centre Imarat (RCI) in Hyderabad, the Gaurav project involved active collaboration with Indian private sector partners such as Adani Defence Systems & Technologies, Bharat Forge, and several Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

DEFENCE NEWS 2025

MARCH 2025

The Indian Armed Forces recently conducted a multi-domain exercise, Prachand Prahar, in Arunachal Pradesh.

About Exercise Prachand Prahar:

It is a tri-service integrated multi-domain warfare exercise conducted in the high-altitude terrain

of Arunachal Pradesh.

It was conducted 'deep' in the high-altitude terrain of Arunachal Pradesh in the eastern sector of the 3,488-km long Line of Actual Control (LAC).

After a devastating earthquake ravaged Myanmar recently, India initiated its relief and rescue efforts in the country under the banner 'Operation Brahma'.

About Operation Brahma:

It is India's humanitarian mission launched in response to the devastating 7.7-magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar on March 28, 2025.

Two Indian naval ships, INS Satpura and INS Savitri, were dispatched carrying 40 tonnes of humanitarian aid to the port of Yangon.

Plans for the Future Circular Collider (FCC), a proposed \$30 billion project by CERN, have led to significant divisions within the scientific community.

Russian President Vladimir Putin recently launched the Perm, a Project 885M Yasen-class nuclear-powered submarine, from Murmansk.

About Perm Submarine:

It is a fourth-generation nuclear-powered attack submarine belonging to the Yasen-M class (Project 885M).

Defence Ministry signs ₹2,500 crore contracts for NAMIS and Light Vehicles.

About Nag Anti-Tank Missile System (NAMIS)

Developed By:

Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), DRDO

Production by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL).

Range: 500 meters to 4 km.

GE Aerospace announces delivery of jet engines for Tejas LCA-Mk1A.

GE Aerospace has begun delivering F404-IN20 jet engines to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Tejas LCA Mk1A fighter jets after a delay.

The first engine was shipped from GE's facility on March 26, 2025, and is expected to arrive in India in April.

HAL aims to deliver 12 Tejas Mk1A jets in 2025, with production ramping up to 24 jets per year.

The Indian Air Force (IAF) currently operates 31 fighter squadrons, far below the sanctioned 42.5 squadrons, highlighting the urgency of these deliveries.

Tejas LCA Mk1A is an upgraded variant of India's indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, developed by HAL.

India successfully flight tested the vertically launched short range surface to air missile (VL-SRSAM) from a defence test facility off the Odisha coast recently.

About Vertically-Launched Short-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (VLSRSAM):

It is an indigenously developed Short-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (SRSAM).

It is developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

It is a quick reaction missile capable of neutralising various aerial threats at close ranges, including sea-skimming targets.

Initially designed for the Indian Navy for a strike range of 40 km, it can now attack targets up to 80 km.

The Indian Navy is set to participate in a large-scale multilateral maritime engagement exercise with African nations, titled 'Africa-India Key Maritime Engagement' (AIKEYME).

What is IOS Sagar?

Indian Ocean Ship (IOS) Sagar is a maritime security cooperation initiative in the Southwest Indian Ocean Region (IOR).

Duration: April 5 to May 8, 2025.

Vessel: INS Sunayna, an offshore patrol vessel.

Participants: India + 9 African nations: Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and South Africa.

'Tavasya', the last of the four Krivak-class stealth frigates, was launched at Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) on March 22, 2025.

It is the second ship under construction at GSL under a technology transfer agreement with Russia.

The launch marks a milestone in India's naval self-reliance and defence production capabilities.

The second frigate of Project 1135.6, 'Tavasya,' built by Goa Shipyard Limited, was launched on March 22, 2025.

About Tavasya:

What it is: A Krivak-class stealth frigate designed for multi-dimensional naval combat.

Project under: Built under Project 1135.6 Additional Follow-on Ships.

Built by: Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL), with technology transfer from Russia.

Aim: To strengthen India's maritime security and promote self-reliance in shipbuilding

Key Features:

Length: 8 meters; **Width:** 15.2 meters; **Displacement:** 3600 tons.

Speed: Up to 28 knots.

Ships Built Under Project 1135.6:

Two frigates built in Russia: INS Tushil (commissioned Dec 2024), Tamal (commissioning June 2025).

Two frigates being built in India: Tripur (launched July 2024), Tavasya (launched March 2025).

The 14th ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting-Plus (ADMM-Plus) Experts' Working Group on Counter-Terrorism (EWG on CT) was recently held in New Delhi.

Exercise Varuna 2025, the 23rd edition of the India-France bilateral naval exercise, took place in the Arabian Sea from March 19–22, 2025.

The Indian Navy recently participated in the Sea Dragon 2025 exercise.

About Exercise Sea Dragon:

It is a multinational anti-submarine warfare (ASW) drill conducted annually to strengthen maritime security and cooperation among allied nations in the Indo-Pacific region.

Hosted by the United States Navy's 7th Fleet at Andersen Air Force Base, Guam.

The India-Bangladesh naval exercise 'Bongosagar 2025' and a 'Coordinated Patrol (CORPAT)' took place in the Bay of Bengal recently

About Exercise Bongosagar:

It is a bilateral naval exercise between India and Bangladesh

Commenced in the year 2019, Bongosagar 2025 is the fifth edition of the exercise.

The Union Ministry of Defence (MoD) recently signed a ₹2,906 crore contract with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Ghaziabad for the procurement of Low-level Transportable Radar, LLTR (Ashwini).

About Ashwini Radar:

LLTR (Ashwini) is active electronically scanned phased array radar based on state-of-the-art solid-state technology.

It is capable of tracking aerial targets from high-speed fighter aircraft to slow-moving targets such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and helicopters.

The fully indigenous Ashwini radars have been jointly developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and BEL.

Indian Naval Ship (INS) Imphal arrived at Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius, recently for its maiden port call ahead of the country's 57th National Day celebrations on March 12.

About INS Imphal:

Commissioned in December 2023, INS Imphal is the third of the four Project 15B Visakhapatnam-class stealth-guided missile destroyers.

The other destroyers in the Visakhapatnam class are INS Visakhapatnam, INS Mormugao, and INS Surat. INS Imphal is a potent platform capable of undertaking a variety of tasks and missions, spanning the full spectrum of maritime warfare.

The Navy's Warship Design Bureau designed the ship in-house, and Mazagon Dock Ltd. (MDL) was responsible for its construction.

The 12th edition of the India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise Khanjar-XII is set to take place in Kyrgyzstan.

About KHANJAR:

It is an annual exercise conducted alternatively in India-Kyrgyzstan. It was first initiated in December 2011, in Nahan, India.

It is the 12th edition of the annual India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise.

The first rear fuselage for Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Mk1A, produced by private Indian industry, Alpha Tocol Engineering Services Private Limited, was handed over to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

About Tejas LCA Mk1A

The Tejas LCA Mk1A is an advanced variant of India's indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, developed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

The Ministry of Defence on Friday signed a contract with Rosoboronexport (RoE), Russian Federation,

worth \$248 million for procurement of 1000 Horsepower Engines for T-72 Tanks in fully formed, completely knocked down and semi knocked down conditions.

About T-72 Tank:

T-72 is a mainstay of tank fleet of the Indian Army which is at present fitted with 780 HP Engine. Equipping the existing fleet of T-72 Tanks with 1000 HP Engine. Designed by Uralvagonzavod in the Soviet Union, T-72 tanks are locally manufactured and upgraded in India at the Heavy Vehicles Factory, Avadi.

Indian scientists have developed a modern-day 'Brahmastra' with an astonishing speed of 12,144 km per hour.

About Brahmastra Missile:

This weapon, named the Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRAShM), is a hypersonic glide missile. It was developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). It outperforms similar missiles like China's DF-17 in terms of range and technology.

Features:

With a range of 1,500 km, this missile can obliterate an enemy ship or warship within 7 to 8 minutes of being launched.

India's latest and most advanced air-to-air missile, the Astra MK-III, has now been officially renamed Gandiva, after the legendary bow of Arjuna from the Mahabharata.

About Astra MK-III Missile:

It is a beyond-visual-range (BVR) air-to-air missile designed to be mounted on fighter aircraft. Still under development by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), this missile is expected to redefine the landscape of aerial warfare, especially in BVR combat. The missile will be deployed on the Sukhoi Su-30MKI jets and the Light Combat Aircraft Tejas. It will have a range of 340 kilometers when the target is at an altitude of 20 kilometers, and 190 kilometers when the target is at a lower altitude of 8 kilometers.

Sweden has taken a key step in strengthening its air force's long-range strike capabilities by selecting the Taurus KEPD-350 air-launched cruise missile for integration with its Gripen fighter jets.

About Taurus KEPD-350:

It is a modular, air-launched, long-range, precision-guided cruise missile. It is designed and produced by Taurus Systems GmbH, a joint venture between Germany's MBDA Deutschland GmbH and Sweden's Saab Bofors Dynamics.

The U.S. Air Force is exploring the use of the Harpoon anti-ship missile on its F-16s, signaling a potential shift in its approach to naval warfare.

About Harpoon Missile:

The Harpoon (RGM-84/UGM-84/AGM-84) is a subsonic anti-ship cruise missile developed by Boeing for the U.S. Navy. It was first introduced in 1977. It is currently in service with the armed forces of more than 30 countries, including India.

A US Marine Corps (USMC) F-35B Lightning II recently flew its first-ever test missions with the Meteor air-to-air missile.

About Meteor Missile:

It is an advanced radar-guided, beyond-visual-range air-to-air missile (BVRAAM). METEOR has been developed by a group of European partners led by MBDA to meet the needs of six European nations: the UK, Germany, Italy, France, Spain and Sweden.

Exercise Desert Hunt 2025 was conducted at Air Force Station Jodhpur from 24 to 28 February 2025.

About Exercise Desert Hunt 2025

It is an integrated Tri-Service Special Forces exercise conducted by the Indian Air Force.

Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) and Indian Navy carried out successful flight-trials of first-of-its-kind Naval Anti-Ship missile (NASM-SR) from Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur, Odisha.

About Naval Anti-Ship missile (NASM-SR):

It has a Man-in-Loop feature – which allows in-flight retargeting accurately. It was launched in Bearing-only Lock-on after launch mode, selecting a target among several in close vicinity. It uses an Indigenous Imaging Infra-Red Seeker for terminal guidance.

Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Tarini entered Port Stanley on 18 Feb 25 thus completing the third and most challenging phase of Navika Sagar Parikrama II.

About Navika Sagar Parikrama II.:

It underscores the Indian Navy's commitment to gender empowerment and maritime excellence.

It is crewed by two women officers-Lieutenant Commander Dilna K and Lieutenant Commander Roopa A.

It aims to promote ocean sailing, self-reliance, and India's rich maritime heritage.

The historic expedition was flagged off from Goa by the chief of the Naval Staff on October 2, 2024.

Navika Sagar Parikrama II covering more than 21,600 nautical miles (approx 40,000 km) will unfold in five legs with stop overs at four ports for replenishment and maintenance, as required.

The broad contour of voyage will be as follows: -

Goa to Fremantle, Australia

Fremantle to Lyttleton, New Zealand

Lyttleton to Port Stanley, Falkland

Port Stanley to Cape Town, S. Africa

Cape Town to Goa

About INSV Tarini:

It is a 56-foot sailing vessel built by M/s Aquarius Shipyard Ltd.

The vessel has clocked more than 66,000 nautical miles (1,22,223 km) and participated in first edition of Navika Sagar Parikrama in 2017.

India and the US recently announced plans to pursue new procurements and co-production arrangements for Javelin anti-tank guided missiles, to meet the defense requirements of India.

About Javelin Anti-Tank Guided Missile:

It is a man-portable, fire-and-forget, anti-tank guided missile.

It has been developed jointly by American defence majors, Raytheon and Lockheed Martin.

It was designed to defeat heavily armored vehicles such as main battle tanks and lighter-skinned military vehicles.

It has an effective range of 2.5 km.

Exercise Dharma Guardian, between India and Japan is scheduled at Mount Fuji, Japan from February 25 to March 9, the Indian Army.

Ukraine has reportedly acquired a new weapon system to defend against the barrage of missiles unleashed by Russia: the Gravehawk hybrid surface-to-air missile system.

About Gravehawk System:

It is a short-range surface-to-air missile system developed by the United Kingdom.

It is designed to address short-range threats, particularly those posed by fast-moving airborne objects.

The missiles can reach speeds of up to Mach 2.5 and engage targets at a range of approximately 12 miles.

India's first manned submersible, Matsya 6000, is expected to carry three people to a depth of 6,000 metres in the ocean by 2026, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences said recently.

About Matsya 6000:

It is India's deep-sea submersible designed for ocean exploration, particularly for deep-sea mining and biodiversity studies.

Developed by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) under the Samudrayaan Mission, it is capable of diving to a depth of 6,000 meters in the ocean.

It houses a 2.1-metre internal diameter Titanium alloy personnel sphere to safely carry humans to a 6000 m depth. The Titanium alloy personnel sphere is being integrated in collaboration with ISRO.

Samudrayaan Mission:

It is India's first manned mission to explore the deep ocean.

It is aimed to develop a self-propelled manned submersible to carry three human beings to a water depth of 6,000 meters in the ocean with a suite of scientific sensors and tools for deep ocean exploration.

It is designed to study the deep ocean resources and conduct biodiversity assessments as well.

The mission will not disturb the ecosystem as the submersible is used solely for exploration purposes.

The project is part of the larger Deep Ocean Mission, which supports the Central Government's Blue

Economy policy.

Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES)

US President recently issued a blunt warning to BRICS nations, threatening a 100% tariff on all imports into the United States if they proceed with launching a common currency.

About BRICS Grouping:

BRICS is an acronym for Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa, a bloc of countries that formed a partnership following the creation of the term in 2001 by Goldman Sachs economist Jim O'Neill (but it didn't include South Africa at the time).

South Africa joined in 2010, making it "BRICS".

New Members:

Saudi Arabia, Iran, Ethiopia, the United Arab Emirates, and Egypt joined BRICS in 2024.

Indonesia joined the bloc as a full member on January 6, 2025.

The expanded group has a combined population of about 3.5 billion, or 45% of the world's inhabitants.

Combined, members' economies are worth more than \$28.5tn - about 28% of the global economy.

With Iran, Saudi Arabia, and UAE as members, BRICS countries produce about 44% of the world's crude oil.

The next-generation BrahMos missile, known as BrahMos NG, is approaching its first flight test, slated for 2026, with production set to commence in 2027-28.

About BrahMos NG:

It is an advanced supersonic cruise missile developed jointly by India-Russia.

Features:

It is a sleeker missile with the same capabilities as its predecessor.

It is lighter, smaller and compact, due to its reduced size, the next-generation missile system will be able to fit on a wider array of platforms. These include the Russian-origin Sukhoi-30MKI fighter aircraft and India's indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, both of which will now be capable of deploying the BrahMos NG.

It weighs 6 tonnes and is 6 metres long while the older version weighed 3 tonnes and was 9 metres long.

Range and Speed: The missile has a range of 290 km and a speed of up to 5 Mach.

India is looking to revive the proposal to procure six more P-8I long-range maritime patrol aircraft from the U.S.

About P-8I Aircraft:

Boeing P-8I Neptune is a long-range, multi-mission maritime patrol aircraft, manufactured by Boeing (a U.S. aerospace company) for the Indian Navy.

It has replaced the ageing fleet of the Indian Navy's Tupolev Tu-142 aircraft.

The P-8I Neptune is a variant of the P-8A Poseidon used by the United States Navy.

It has a maximum range of over 2,222 kilometres with a time on station of four hours.

A deep-sea fishing expedition by the Fishery Survey of India (FSI) recently revealed several highly productive, potentially untouched fishing grounds in the Arabian Sea.

About Fishery Survey of India (FSI):

The FSI, under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying, is the nodal fishery institute in India.

Primary Responsibility: Survey and assessment of fishery resources in the Indian exclusive economic zone (EEZ) and adjoining areas for their optimum utilization and sustainable development.

Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) recently renamed its flagship HJT-36 jet training aircraft as 'Yashas', following significant upgrades.

About Yashas:

It is the flagship jet training aircraft of the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

The aircraft, previously known as Hindustan Jet Trainer (HJT)-36, has undergone extensive modifications aimed at improving its departure characteristics and spin resistance across the aircraft envelope, leading to its rechristening as 'Yashas.'

Russia has reportedly offered the R-37M missile, one of the world's best air-to-air missiles, to India.

About R-37M Missile:

The R-37M missile, known by its NATO reporting name AA-13 Axehead, is a long-range air-to-air missile developed by Russia.

It is designed to eliminate enemy fighter jets and drones beyond visual range (BVR).

It has a weight of approximately 510 kilograms and a length of over 4 meters, with a warhead weighing 60 kilograms.

India and Egypt will hold Exercise Cyclone 2025 from February 10 to 23 in Rajasthan.

Motto of Exercise Cyclone 2025: "Together we train, together we excel".

India recently reached an agreement with Russia to acquire the Klub-S missile system, aimed at enhancing the operational capabilities of the Indian Navy's submarine fleet

About Klub-S Missile System:

Developed by Russian defense company NPO Novator, the Klub, also known as Kalibr, is a cruise missile inducted into Moscow's defense forces in 1994.

The Klub-S missiles have a warhead payload of 400 kilograms and are capable of targeting surface ships, submarines, and ground targets up to 300 kilometers away.

The 2025 edition of Indian Navy's capstone Theatre Level Operational Exercise (TROPEX), is currently underway in the Indian Ocean Region.

About TROPEX-25:

It is an operational level exercise is conducted biennially with participation by all operational Indian Naval units along with substantial participation of Indian Army, Indian Air Force and Coast Guard assets.

The Union Defence Ministry recently signed contracts worth ₹10,147 crore for a variety of ammunition for the Army's Pinaka Multiple Rocket Launch Systems (MRLS).

About Pinaka Multiple Rocket Launch Systems (MRLS):

It is a battle-proven, all-weather, indirect area fire Artillery Weapon System.

It was developed by DRDO's Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE).

It now has a range of over 75 kilometers.

Initially unguided, now the Pinaka-Guided version uses INS/GPS navigation for precision strikes.

The 13th edition of joint military exercise 'Ekuverin' between the Indian Army and the Maldives National Defence Force has commenced.

About Exercise Ekuverin:

It is a bilateral annual military exercise, conducted alternatively in India and Maldives since 2009.

Ekuverin means 'Friends' in Dhivehi language.

Iran recently unveiled two missiles, named Etemad and Ghadr-380.

About Etemad Missile:

It is a new ballistic missile built by the Iranian Defence Ministry.

Dubbed Etemad, or "trust" in Persian, it has a maximum range of 1,700 kilometres.

With a length of 16 meters and a diameter of 1.25 meters, the missile is equipped with a precision-guided warhead.

About Ghadr-380:

It is an anti-warship cruise missile developed by Iran.

It has a range of over 1,000 kilometers.

It has anti-jamming capability.

Finance Minister recently announced a ₹20,000 crore 'Nuclear Energy Mission' to develop indigenous Small Modular Reactors (SMR).

About Small Modular Reactors (SMRs):

SMRs are defined as small nuclear reactors with a maximum output of 300 Megawatt electric (MWe) and which can produce 7.2 million kWh per day.

By comparison, large-size nuclear power plants have an output of over 1,000 MWe and can produce 24 million kWh per day

Russia recently deployed autonomous launchers of intercontinental ballistic missiles (ICBM) RS-24 Yars on combat patrol routes which are equipped with nuclear weapons.

About RS-24 Yars:

The Yars RS-24 (NATO designation SS-29) is a Russian intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM) system.

US President signed an Executive Order to build an Iron Dome-style missile defence system to shield the United States against the "threat of attack by ballistic, hypersonic, and cruise missiles, and other advanced aerial attacks."

About Iron Dome:

It is Israel's air missile defense system that can defend against short-range rockets, intercepting them in the air above the state.

It is a short-range mobile air defense system developed for Israel by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems and

Israel Aerospace Industries, with additional support from Raytheon.

Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) has launched a new fund called Technology Adoption Fund.

About Technology Adoption Fund:

It consists of a corpus of Rs 500 crore to support the growth of India's space startups.

This fund aims to accelerate the development of indigenous space technology, reducing reliance on imported solutions.

Key features of Technology Adoption Fund:

The fund will offer financial support of up to 60 per cent of the project cost for startups and MSMEs, and 40 per cent for larger industries, with a maximum funding cap of Rs 25 Crores per project.

DEFENCE NEWS 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) recently showcased a model of the indigenous Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS) on its tableau during the 76th Republic Day parade.

About Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS):

It is a large calibre Gun system with the capability to program and fire future Long Range Guided Munitions (LRGM) to achieve precision and deep strike.

This gun has been developed indigenously by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and the production partners of these ATAGS are two private sector companies—Bharat Forge and Tata Advanced Systems.

It is a 155mm, 52-calibre howitzer.

It boasts an impressive range of 48 km, placing it among the longest-range towed artillery systems globally.

Minister of Defence flagged-off 'SANJAY - The Battlefield Surveillance System (BSS)' from South Block, New Delhi.

About SANJAY Surveillance System:

It is a battlefield automated surveillance system which integrates the inputs from all ground and aerial battlefield sensors, processing them to confirm their veracity, preventing duplication and fusing them to produce a Common Surveillance Picture of the battlefield over secured Army Data Network & Satellite Communication Network.

Developed by: It has been indigenously & jointly developed by the Indian Army and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).

The U.S. military has relocated its Typhon missile launchers within the Philippines to enhance their mobility and survivability, amid rising tensions with China and Russia.

About Typhon Missile System:

Typhon, also called the Mid-Range Capability (MRC), is a highly versatile and powerful missile system designed for surface-to-surface operations.

It is a mobile, ground-launched missile system developed to provide the U.S. Army with enhanced long-range strike capabilities.

Manufactured by U.S. firm Lockheed Martin, the Typhon Weapon System leverages a modular design that allows it to fire various missile types.

The SM-6 (Range: 500 km) is a surface-to-air missile with the added capability to strike surface targets.

The Tomahawk (Range: 2,500 km) is a cruise missile.

Kerala Government launched KaWaCHaM, one of the world's fastest weather alert systems.

About KaWaCHaM:

'KaWaCHaM' stands for Kerala Warnings Crisis and Hazards Management System, and the word kavacham in Malayalam translates to 'shield', symbolising protection.

It has been developed with funding from the National Disaster Management Authority and the World Bank as part of the National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project.

Indigenously developed Pralay missile will be showcased during Republic Day Parade for the first time, Defence Secretary stated recently.

About Pralay Missile:

It is an indigenously developed short-range, quasi-ballistic surface-to-surface missile.

It has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) based on the

Prithvi Defence Vehicle from the Indian Ballistic Missile Programme.
It has been developed for deployment along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and Line of Control (LoC).
It is powered by a solid-propellant rocket motor.
The missile has a range of 150-500 km and can be launched from a mobile launcher.
It has a payload capacity of 500-1,000 kg.

Taiwan recently announced that its newly purchased, cutting-edge, battle-proven National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile Systems (NASAMS) will be deployed in North Taiwan to protect the capital, Taipei.

About NASAMS (National Advanced Surface-to-Air Missile System):

It is a medium-range, ground-based air defense system.

It was designed and developed jointly by Raytheon (United States) and Kongsberg Defence & Aerospace (Norway).

The Trajan 155 mm towed artillery gun system, developed jointly by India and France, has bagged an export order from Armenia.

About Trajan Gun:

It is a 155 mm towed artillery gun system, jointly developed by India (Larsen & Toubro) and France (KNDS).

Several of this 52-calibre towed gun system are indigenously developed like the auxiliary power unit, control panel, and rolling gear assembly.

It is designed to meet the demands of modern combat, with a range of over 40 kilometers depending on the type of ammunition used.

The indigenously designed and built guided missile destroyer INS Mumbai is participating in the Exercise LA PEROUSE.

About Exercise LA PEROUSE:

It is a multilateral maritime exercise that takes place in the Indian Ocean Region.

It is conducted by French Navy and held biennially.

It is the fourth edition of the multinational exercise.

India has successfully tested the Bhargavastra, its first micro-missile system designed to counter swarm drones.

About Bhargavastra:

It is India's first indigenous micro-missile system designed to take on the threat of swarm drones.

It was developed by the Economic Explosives Ltd.

It can quickly deploy on a mobile platform and hit targets over 2.5 km.

It is capable of detecting even small incoming flying machines at over 6 km and can take them down using micro munitions that can be guided towards the threat.

The system can simultaneously fire more than 64 micro missiles.

Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) has signed an agreement with the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) for the development of "Building Blocks for THz Communication Front Ends" for 6G under the Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF).

About Telecom Technology Development Fund:

It has been setup under Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF) of Department of Telecom (DOT), Government of India.

USOF is now called Digital Bharat Nidhi.

Raksha Mantri has congratulated DRDO on successful Field Evaluation Trials of Nag Mk 2 missile.

About Nag Mk 2 Missile:

It is an indigenously-developed third-generation Anti-Tank Fire-and-Forget Guided Missile.

Features:

Third-Generation Fire-and-Forget Technology: Enables precision targeting with minimal operator intervention post-launch

Versatile Performance: Capable of neutralising modern armoured vehicles equipped with explosive reactive armour (ERA)

Platform Compatibility: Successfully integrated with NAMICA, enhancing battlefield mobility and deployment flexibility.

During a joint operation of the Security Service of Ukraine (SBU) and the Ukrainian Navy, an ammunition storage depot in the Rostov region, Russia, was hit using the Neptune missile recently.

About Neptune Missile:

An R-360 Neptune is a Ukrainian-developed subsonic cruise missile initially designed as an anti-ship missile and later modified for land attacks.

The design of this missile is based on a Russian Kh-35 cruise missile which goes by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) name of AS-20 Kayak.

Bharat Heavy Electricals Ltd. (BHEL) recently said it has successfully commissioned the first two units of the 6x170 MW Punatsangchhu-II hydroelectric project (PHEP-II) in Bhutan.

About Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project (PHEP-II):

It is a 1 GW run-of-the-river hydroelectric power-generating facility under construction in the Wangdue Phodrang district of Bhutan.

It is located on the right bank of the Punatsangchhu River.

The project is being developed by the Punatsangchhu II Hydroelectric Project Authority, under an Inter-Government Agreement (IGA) between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of India.

Funding: It is funded by the Government of India (GoI): 30% grant and 70% loan at 10% annual interest, repayable in 30 equated semi-annual installments commencing one year after the mean date of operation.

Mumbai based Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) marked a key milestone in India's defence capabilities with the delivery of the sixth and final Scorpene-class submarine, INS Vaghsheer, to the Indian Navy.

About INS Vaghsheer:

It is the sixth submarine of the first batch of six Kalvari-class submarines for the Indian Navy.

It is named after the sand fish, a deadly deep-sea predator of the Indian Ocean.

It was launched in April 2022 and underwent extensive trials, testing its endurance, stealth features, and combat efficiency.

Other five submarines of Kalvari class are Kalvari, Khanderi, Karanj, Vela and.

Indian Railways continues to showcase its engineering excellence with the newly completed Anji Khad Bridge, the country's first cable-stayed rail bridge.

About Anji Khad Bridge:

It is India's first cable-stayed rail bridge, located in the Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir.

A critical component of the ambitious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) Project, this engineering marvel connects Katra and Reasi.

The project's prime focus is on enhancing connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and the rest of India.

It is constructed over the Anji River, a tributary of the Chenab River.

The Indian Railways collaborated with IIT Roorkee and IIT Delhi for site-specific investigations to ensure the bridge's stability.

Spanning 725.5 metres, the bridge features a 193-metre-tall main pylon, soaring 331 metres above the riverbed.

Amid rising tensions in India-Bangladesh relations, Dhaka is reportedly mulling to purchase the Abdali Short Range Ballistic Missiles (SRBMs) aka the Hatf 2 missiles, from Pakistan.

About Abdali Missile:

Abdali (Hatf 2) is a short-range, road-mobile, solid propellant ballistic missile.

Developed by Pakistan's Space Research Commission (SUPARCO), the Abdali missile system is designed for quick-reaction battlefield scenarios.

It can range 180-200 km while carrying a variable 250-450 kg warhead.

In a significant boost to its maritime defence capabilities, the Indian Navy will commission three major platforms next month: the guided-missile destroyer INS Surat, the stealth frigate INS Nilgiri, and the diesel-electric submarine INS Vagsheer.

About INS Surat:

It is a stealth destroyer, the fourth and last of the Project-15B or Vishakhapatnam Class.

It is designed in-house by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and is being constructed by Mazagaon Dock Limited (MDL).

It has an indigenous content of 72%.

Features:

It is the Indian Navy's first AI-enabled warship to enhance its operational efficiency manifold times.

It will have a displacement of 7,400 tons and a length of 163 meters and can rip through at a top speed of nearly 60 km/h.

The ship has a maximum range of 15,000 km.

It is armed with supersonic surface-to-surface BrahMos missiles and 'Barak-8 medium-range surface-to-air missiles.

About INS Nilgiri:

It is the first of the seven multi-role frigates being constructed under the Project-17A, four at the MDL and three at GRSE in Kolkata, at an overall cost of around Rs 45,000 crore.

These ships have been designed indigenously by the Indian Navy's Directorate of Naval Design, New Delhi.

Constructed at MDL, this 6,670-tonne vessel is equipped with cutting-edge weapons and sensors to address threats from enemy submarines, ships, and aircraft.

About INS Vagsheer:

INS Vagsheer (S26) is the sixth and final submarine of the first batch of six Kalvari-class submarines built for the Indian Navy.

It is named after the sand fish, a deadly deep-sea predator of the Indian Ocean.

It is designed by French naval defence and energy group Naval Group and manufactured by MDL.

It is designed to operate in all theatres of operation, showcasing interoperability with other components of a Naval Task Force

DEFENCE NEWS 2024-25**DECEMBER 2024**

India and Mauritius recently held a joint coordination meeting onboard INS Sarvekshak to commence the Joint Hydrographic Survey aimed at enhancing navigational safety in Mauritian waters.

About INS Sarvekshak:

It is an Indian Navy hydrographic survey ship, based at Southern Naval Command in Kochi.

It is fitted with state-of-the-art survey equipment like Deep Sea Multi-Beam Echo Sounder, Side Scan Sonars and a fully automated digital surveying and processing system.

Turkey has successfully tested the firing of the supersonic missile UAV-122 from the Bayraktar Akinci drone.

About Bayraktar Akinci:

It is a long-endurance unmanned combat aerial vehicle (UCAV) developed by Turkish drone manufacturer Baykar.

The combat drone has a length of 12.2 m, a height of 4.1 m, and a wingspan of 20 m.

It stands out for its payload capacity of up to 1,500 kilograms, flight range of 25 hours, and range of 7,500 km.

The Indian Army contingent, comprising 334 personnel, departed for Nepal recently to participate in the eighteenth edition of the Joint Military Exercise Surya Kiran.

About Exercise Surya Kiran:

It is a joint military exercise between the Indian army and Nepal army.

18th Edition:

It is scheduled to take place in Saljhandi, Nepal.

The Indian Army contingent is being led by a battalion from the 11th Gorkha Rifles, while the Nepal Army will be represented by the Srijung Battalion.

India's Gas Turbine Research Establishment (GTRE), part of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), has announced that the Kaveri engine has been cleared for inflight testing.

About Kaveri Engine:

The Kaveri engine project began in the late 1980s with the goal of powering the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas.

It has been developed by the Gas Turbine Research Establishment under the Defence Research and Development Organisation.

Features:

The current version of the Kaveri engine produces approximately 49-51 kN of thrust.

INS Nirdeshak is set to be commissioned on December 18 at the Naval Dockyard, Visakhapatnam.

About INS Nirdeshak:

INS Nirdeshak is the second ship under the Survey Vessel (Large) Project of the Indian Navy.

It is designed to conduct hydrographic surveys, assist in navigation and support maritime operations.

It is built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.

It reflects India's commitment to Aatmanirbhar Bharat (self-reliant India) with over 80% indigenous content.

Legacy: INS Nirdeshak represents the reincarnation of the erstwhile INS Nirdeshak, which served the Indian Navy for 32 years with distinction until its.

Exercise SLINEX 2024 (Sri Lanka–India Exercise) will be conducted from 17 to 20 Dec 24 at Visakhapatnam under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command.

About Exercise SLINEX:

It is a bilateral naval exercise conducted between India and Sri Lanka.

The 2024 exercise will be held in two phases - the Harbour Phase and the Sea Phase.

Participating Units:

From India: Indian Naval Ship INS Sumitra, a Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel of the Eastern Fleet, along with a Special Forces team.

From Sri Lanka: SLNS Sayura, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, with an embarked Special Forces team.

Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) released highly detailed 3D images of a foetal brain named, Dharini.

About Dharini:

It is now the largest publicly accessible digital dataset of the human foetal brain and is freely available to researchers worldwide.

The exercise Desert Knight was launched over the Arabian Sea to boost military interoperability and enhance defence ties.

About Exercise Desert Knight:

It is a trilateral air combat exercise between India, France and the UAE.

This exercise builds on the trilateral framework established in 2022 by the foreign ministers of India, France, and the UAE.

United States of America has developed a new anti-missile system called Dark Eagle and is nearing operational readiness after a successful test flight.

About Dark Eagle Anti-Missile System:

It is a long-range hypersonic anti-missile system developed by the United States of America, which is capable of intercepting enemy missiles in mid-air.

It is capable of stopping ballistic, cruise, hypersonic missiles and warheads.

It has an operational range estimated at over 2,775 kilometers (1,724 miles), enabling it to strike targets deep within adversary territory.

The Indian Navy is set to commission its latest multi-role stealth guided missile frigate, INS Tushil, at Kaliningrad, Russia.

About INS Tushil:

It is a multi-role stealth guided missile frigate.

It is the latest in a series of upgraded Krivak III-class frigates, part of the Russian-designed Project 1135.6.

The Indian Navy already operates six ships from this class, including three Talwar-class frigates and three Teg-class follow-ons, all built at Russian shipyards in St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad.

INS Tushil, the seventh vessel in this series.

The 4th edition of Exercise HARIMAU SHAKTI commenced at Bentong camp, Pahang district, Malaysia.

About Exercise Harimau Shakti:

It is a joint military exercise conducted between India and Malaysia.

Indian contingent comprising personnel is being represented by a Battalion of MAHAR Regiment.

The 1st edition of Joint Table Top Exercise, CINBAX commenced at Foreign Training Node, Pune.

About Exercise CINBAX:

It is conducted between the Indian Army and the Cambodian Army.

It is aimed to conduct of a joint Counter Terrorism (CT) operations.

It will focus on discussions pertaining to establishment of Joint Training Task Force for Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance besides planning of operations in CT environment.

Russia is set to deploy the RS-28 Sarmat intercontinental ballistic missile, known as 'Satan 2', to replace older missiles.

About RS-28 Sarmat:

It is a liquid-fueled intercontinental ballistic missile developed by Russia.

It is named after the Sarmatian people of the fourth and fifth century BC. It has also been referred to in the West as the "Satan II".

It is a three-stage, liquid-fueled missile with a range of 18,000 km.

The 13th edition of Exercise AGNI WARRIOR (XAW-2024) concluded at Field Firing Ranges, Devlali (Maharashtra).

About Exercise AGNI WARRIOR:

It is a joint military exercise between the Indian Army and Singapore Armed Forces.

It witnessed participation by the Singapore Armed Forces contingent comprising personnel from the Singapore Artillery and the Indian Army contingent personnel from the Regiment of Artillery.

DEFENCE NEWS 2024-25

NOVEMBER 2024

India has tested K4 missile from submarine INS Arighaat off the coast of Visakhapatnam.

About K-4 ballistic Missile:

It is a nuclear-capable ballistic missile with a range of around 3,500 km.

It is a solid-fuelled missile which was tested at least five times in the last few years from submersible platforms.

The successful launch of the K-4 missile adds another layer of strength to India's nuclear triad, which includes land-based missiles, air-launched nuclear weapons and submarine-launched platforms.

It is developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Key facts about the INS Arighaat

It was commissioned in August 2024.

It is India's second nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine (SSBN), following India's first nuclear submarine, INS Arihant.

It was constructed at the Indian Navy's Ship Building Centre (SBC) in Visakhapatnam.

It can carry up to four nuclear-capable K-4 SLBMs (Submarine Launched ballistic Missile) with a range of over 3500 kilometers or twelve conventional warhead K-15 SLBMs with a range of about 750 kilometers.

The 11th edition of Indian Coast Guard's National Maritime Search and Rescue Exercise & Workshop (SAREX-24) will be in Kochi, Kerala on November 28-29, 2024.

About SAREX-24:

It is conducted under the aegis of National Maritime Search and Rescue Board.

The theme of the exercise is 'Enhancing Search and Rescue capabilities through Regional collaboration'.

China increased the range of its supersonic cruise missile DF-100, i.e., Dongfeng-100.

About Dongfeng-100 (DF-100):

Dongfeng-100, also known as Changjian-100 (CJ-100), is a Chinese supersonic cruise missile.

It was publicly introduced during China's 70th National Day parade on October 1, 2019.

The missile is a land-based system with a range reportedly between 3,000 and 4,000 kilometers

Scientists at the Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) have developed a water-pollutant detecting device called 'AroTrack'.

Russia's Defence Ministry said that Ukraine fired six US-made Army Tactical Missile System (ATACMS) at Russia's Bryansk region.

About Army Tactical Missile System:

It is a conventional surface-to-surface artillery weapon system capable of striking targets well beyond the range of existing Army cannons, rockets, and other missiles.

It is manufactured by the US defense company Lockheed Martin.

Range: It has a range of about 190 miles (305 km).

Indian Army successfully conducted the Exercise, 'Sanyukt Vimochan 2024' at Ahmedabad and Porbandar on 18-19 November 2024.

About Exercise Sanyukt Vimochan:

It is a multilateral annual joint Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise.

The exercise, conducted by the Konark Corps of Southern Command of Indian Army, was conducted at Ahmedabad and Porbandar, Gujarat.

India's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully flight-tested a long-range hypersonic missile off the coast of Odisha.

About Long-Range Hypersonic Missile:

The missile can carry various payloads for ranges greater than 1,500 km for the Armed Forces.

It has been indigenously developed by laboratories of the Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Missile Complex, Hyderabad, along with various other DRDO labs and industry partners.

What are Hypersonic missiles?

The term “Hypersonic” refers to a speed at least five times the speed of sound (also called Mach-5).

India and Japan recently signed a Memorandum of Implementation (MoI) for the “co-development” of the UNICORN (Unified Complex Radio Antenna) mast for deployment on Indian Navy ships.

It is India’s first military technology transfer pact with Japan.

The pact came nine years after New Delhi and Tokyo signed an agreement on the “transfer of defence equipment and technology” to deepen the strategic ties between the two nations.

The Indian Army is conducting a high-intensity tri-service exercise, 'Poorvi Prahar', in the forward areas of Arunachal Pradesh.**About Exercise Poorvi Prahar:**

It aims to hone the combat effectiveness of the Army, Navy, and Air Force in executing Integrated Joint Operations in the challenging mountainous terrain of the region, enhancing inter-service coordination and operational readiness

Secretary, Department of Science and Technology launched Operation Dronagiri at the Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), Indian Institute of Technology Delhi, New Delhi.**About Operation Dronagiri:**

It is a pilot project under National Geospatial Policy 2022 to demonstrate the potential applications of geospatial technologies and innovations in improving the quality of life of citizens and ease of doing business.

It is part of the numerous efforts of DST in liberalising geospatial data, developing geospatial infrastructure, geospatial skill and knowledge as well as standards in implementing the policy.

In the first phase it will be implemented in the states of Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Assam, Andhra Pradesh & Maharashtra.

The activities under Operation Dranagiri will be overseen by IIT Tirupati Navavishkar I-Hub Foundation (IITTNIIF).

The Indian Navy is set to conduct the fourth edition of the ‘Pan-India’ Coastal Defence Exercise ‘Sea Vigil-24’ on 20 & 21 Nov 24.**About Exercise Sea Vigil:**

It is the National Level Coastal Defence Exercise conceptualized in 2018 to validate various measures that have been instituted towards enhancing maritime security since ‘26/11’.

The concept of ‘Sea Vigil’ is to activate the Coastal Security apparatus across India and assess the overarching Coastal Defence mechanism.

It is up to the United States to decide what to do with Taiwan's decommissioned HAWK anti-aircraft missiles, the island's Defence Minister said recently.**About HAWK Missile:**

The HAWK (Homing All the Way Killer) MIM-23 is an all-weather low-to medium-altitude ground-to-air missile system.

It was developed and designed by the American Defence Company, Raytheon.

Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted the maiden flight test of its Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM).**About Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile:**

It is designed to be launched from both mobile ground-based systems and frontline ships, using a universal vertical launch module, further enhancing its operational flexibility.

It is also able to execute complex manoeuvres while flying at different speeds and altitudes, showcasing the missile's versatility and precision.

The LRLACM is equipped with state-of-the-art avionics and software that enhances its performance and reliability.

Developed by: It is developed by DRDO's Aeronautical Development Establishment in Bengaluru, the LRLACM is the result of collaboration between various DRDO laboratories and Indian industries.

Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) in Hyderabad and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) in Bengaluru served as the Development-Cum-Production Partners.

The first ever-space exercise ‘Antariksha Abhyas – 2024’ hosted by the Defence Space Agency begins in New Delhi.**About Exercise Antariksha Abhyas:**

It is an exercise to war-game the growing threats from and to Space-Based Assets and Services

It is being conducted by the Defence Space Agency of Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff.

France is considering India's Pinaka Multi-Barrel Rocket Launch (MBRL) system for its requirements and is soon going to carry out a detailed evaluation of the system.

About Pinaka Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher:

It is designed by the Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE), a laboratory of the DRDO.

It was first used during the Kargil War, where it successfully neutralised Pakistan Army positions on the mountain tops.

Range: It has a range of 60 to 75 kilometers.

The system is mounted on a Tatra truck for mobility

Israel's Defence Ministry has begun coordinating joint preparations with the German Federal Ministry of Defence for the initial deployment of Israel's Arrow-3 missile interception system on German soil in 2025.

About Arrow-3 Missile Defence System:

It is an exo-atmospheric anti-ballistic missile defence system for long-range threat engagement.

The Arrow 3 interceptor is part of a series of the Arrow Weapon System (AWS), the world's first national, operational, and stand-alone Anti Tactical Ballistic Missiles (ATBM) defense system.

It was jointly developed by Israel Aerospace Industries and the Missile Defence Agency in the US

It provides a range of 2,400 km and can intercept threats at an altitude of 100.

The 3rd edition of joint military Exercise AUSTRALIND commenced at the Foreign Training Node, Pune in Maharashtra. The exercise will be conducted from 8th to 21st November 2024.

About Exercise AUSTRALIND:

It is a joint military exercise held between India and Australia.

It is an annual event conducted alternatively in India and Australia. The last edition of the same exercise was conducted in Australia in December 2023.

The Indian contingent comprising 140 personnel will be represented mainly by a battalion of the DOGRA Regiment and 14 personnel from the Indian Air Force.

President of India witnessed the Indian Navy's demonstration on INS Vikrant.

About INS Vikrant:

It is India's first indigenously designed and manufactured aircraft carrier.

The ship has been designed in-house by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and constructed by M/s Cochin Shipyard Limited.

It strengthens the country's standing as a 'Blue Water Navy' — a maritime force with global reach and capability to operate over deep seas.

With it, India also joined the elite group of nations – the US, Russia, France, the UK and China – who are capable of designing and constructing aircraft carriers.

Features:

Its full-load displacement is 43,000 tonnes.

Endurance: 8,600 miles (13,890 kilometres)

Aircraft capacity: It can accommodate up to 30 fixed-wing aircraft, including fighter jets, and rotary-wing aircraft, such as anti-submarine warfare helicopters and utility helicopters.

Recently, the third edition of the high-level virtual interaction MAHASAGAR was conducted by the Indian Navy.

About MAHASAGAR Initiative:

Maritime Heads for Active Security and Growth for All in the Region (MAHASAGAR) -- which means vast ocean in Hindi, is the Indian Navy's flagship outreach for high-level virtual interaction among the leaders.

The initiative, started by the Indian Navy, is conducted bi-annually and has garnered wide acceptance among the participating nations ever since its inception in 2023.

The Exercise "VINBAX 2024" is scheduled to be conducted from 04 to 23 November 2024 at Ambala and Chandimandir.

About Exercise VINBAX 2024:

It is a bilateral army exercise conducted between India and Vietnam.

This edition marks a significant increase in the scope with Bi Service level participation for the first time by personnel of Army and Air Force from both the countries.

Israel's 'Iron Beam', designed to use a high-power laser to down projectiles, will be operational within a year, according to reports.

About Iron Beam:

The Iron Beam, also known as Magen or Light Shield, is a new laser-based missile defence system developed by Israel.

It is a 100kW class High Energy Laser Weapon System (HELWS) that is expected to become the first operational system in its class.

Built by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, Iron Beam was first unveiled in 2014.

Its operational range extends up to 7 km (4.3 miles).

Indian Army contingent departed for the 15th edition of India- US joint Special Forces Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR.**About Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR 2024:**

It is a joint military exercise between the Indian army and the US army.

The exercise is scheduled to be conducted at Orchard Combat Training Centre in Idaho, USA.

North Korea recently declared that it successfully test-fired its latest intercontinental ballistic missile, the 'Hwasong-19.

The Indian Army contingent comprising 25 personnel departed for Cijantung, Jakarta, Indonesia to take part in Exercise GARUD SHAKTI 24 which will be conducted from the 1st to 12th of November 2024.

About Exercise GARUD SHAKTI 2024:

It is the 9th edition of the India-Indonesia Joint Special Forces exercise.

The Indian contingent is being represented by troops from the Parachute Regiment (Special Forces).

INDIA'S RANK IN VARIOUS INDEXES 2025**APRIL 2025****Singapore Changi Airport has been named the World's Best Airport 2025 by air transport rating organization Skytrax.**

This is the thirteenth time in the history of the awards that Singapore Changi Airport has received this top accolade.

Top 5 :-

1. Singapore Changi Airport
2. Hamad International Airport, Qatar
3. Tokyo Haneda Airport, Japan
4. Incheon International Airport, South Korea
5. Narita International Airport, Japan

In India:-

Indira Gandhi International Airport Delhi-- Rank 32

Kempegowda International Airport Bengaluru -- 48

Rajiv Gandhi International Airport Hyderabad-- 56.

Ministry of Panchayati Raj released the first Panchayat Advancement Index (PAI) report for 2022-23, with Gujarat and Telangana topping the rankings.**About Panchayat Advancement Index Report (PAI):****What is it?**

A multi-sectoral, composite index that assesses the holistic progress and performance of over 2.5 lakh Gram Panchayats across India.

Designed to evaluate localised achievements on nine Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the grassroots level.

Launched by: Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Government of India.

Objective:

To enable data-driven governance at the panchayat level.

To help stakeholders identify development gaps and promote evidence-based policy interventions in rural India.

Criteria and Indicators Used

Based on 435 unique indicators (331 mandatory + 104 optional).

Drawn from 566 unique data points aligned with the National Indicator Framework (NIF).

Data collected and validated from 2,16,285 panchayats; validation pending for 11,712 GPs from 5 states/UTs.

Nine Key Thematic Areas



Highlights of 2022–23 Panchayat Advancement Index Report:

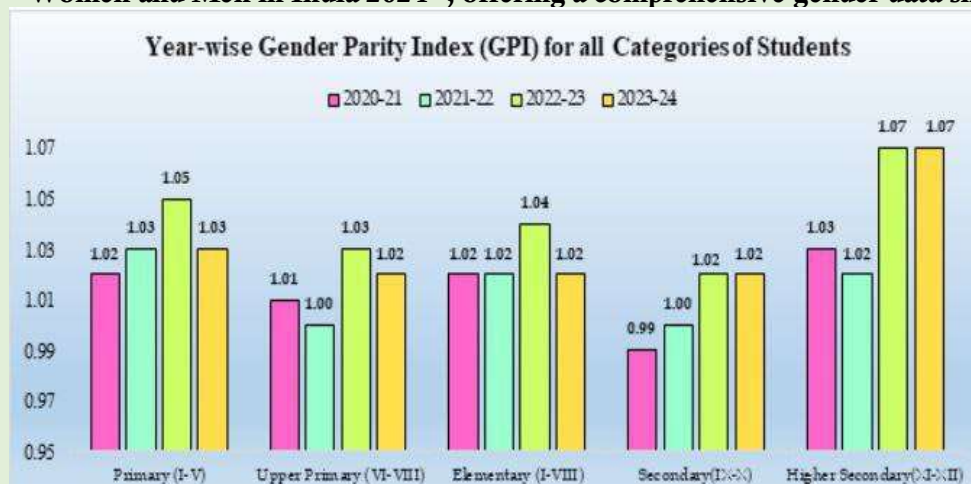
Front Runners (699 Panchayats): Gujarat (346) and Telangana (270) had the highest number of panchayats scoring between 75 and 90, showing strong performance in SDG-aligned rural governance.

Performers (77,298 Panchayats): Panchayats in Gujarat (13,781), Maharashtra (12,242), and Telangana (10,099) fell in the 60–75 range, reflecting above-average progress with scope for further improvement.

Aspirants (1,32,392 Panchayats): A large number of panchayats in Bihar, Chhattisgarh, and Andhra Pradesh scored between 40–60, indicating the need for targeted developmental efforts.

Achiever Category (90+ Score): No panchayat was able to attain the top-tier “Achiever” status, underscoring the need for comprehensive rural transformation across India.

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the 26th edition of “Women and Men in India 2024”, offering a comprehensive gender data snapshot.



Summary of the Women and Men in India 2024 Report:

Education – Gender Parity Trends:

Gender Parity Index (GPI) remained above 1.00 across primary (1.03), upper primary (1.02), and higher secondary (1.02) levels in 2022-23, reflecting higher female enrolment.

Labour Force Participation (15+ years):

Female Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) improved from 49.8% (2017-18) to 60.1% (2023-24) under usual status, showing increased female workforce inclusion.

Banking Access and Financial Inclusion:

Women account for 39.2% of total bank accounts and contribute to 39.7% of aggregate deposits in 2023-24. Rural women hold 42.2% of accounts, indicating growing financial autonomy in non-urban regions.

Stock Market Engagement:

DEMAT accounts surged from 33.26 million in 2021 to 143.02 million in 2024.

Female account holders increased from 6.67 million to 27.71 million, reflecting a 4.2x growth in just three years.

Entrepreneurship – Female-led Enterprises:

Share of female-headed proprietary establishments in manufacturing, trade, and services grew steadily from 2021-22 to 2023-24.

Political Participation – Voting Trends:

Female voter turnout reached 65.8% in 2024, closely matching male turnout at 65.5%.

This reversed earlier gender voting gaps seen in national elections.

Women-led Startups:

Startups with at least one-woman director recognized by DPIIT rose from 1,943 (2017) to 17,405 (2024) – over 800% growth, showcasing improved startup ecosystem inclusivity.

Health and Fertility Trends:

Total Fertility Rate (TFR) declined to 2.0 nationally in 2023, with female life expectancy increasing to 71.3 years, indicating better health outcomes for women.

India has been ranked 10th globally in private AI investments and 36th in readiness for frontier technologies, as per the UNCTAD Technology and Innovation Report 2025.

About Technology and Innovation Report 2025:**What is It?**

The Technology and Innovation Report 2025 is a global analytical report that evaluates how countries are prepared for and investing in frontier technologies, including AI, robotics, IoT, and biotechnology.

Published by: UNCTAD – United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.

Aim of the Report:

To assess national readiness for adopting frontier and emerging technologies.

To provide policy insights for inclusive tech-driven development.

To track private investments, R&D, and innovation capabilities across countries.

About India's Performance in the Report:**Global Ranking in AI Investment (2023):**

India ranks 10th worldwide in private Artificial Intelligence investments.

Received \$1.4 billion in AI funding in 2023.

Only developing countries with significant AI investments: India and China.

Frontier Technologies Readiness Index (2024):

India ranks 36th out of 170 countries, improving from 48th in 2022.

Reflects progress in policy support, human capital, and industrial capacity.

Component-wise Rankings:

ICT Access: Rank 99

Skills Development: Rank 113

R&D Activity: Rank 3 (Global top performer)

Industrial Capacity: Rank 10

Access to Finance: Rank 70

AI Research & Innovation Strength: India listed among countries with strong AI scientific output alongside China, Germany, UK, and the US.

INDIA'S RANK IN VARIOUS INDEXES 2025**MARCH 2025****World Happiness Report 2025**

TOP : Finland

2nd : Denmark

3rd : Iceland

4th : Sweden

5th : Netherlands

INDIA : 118

The annual World Happiness Report is published by the University of Oxford's Wellbeing Research Centre in partnership with Gallup and the United Nations Sustainable Development Solutions Network.

India which was ranked 126 last year has climbed by 8 positions in the latest report.

Finland retained its status as the happiest country in the world while Afghanistan was ranked as the most unhappy country in the world.

Finland has been ranked as the happiest country in the world for the 8th consecutive time.

Afghanistan was ranked at the bottom as the most unhappy country in the world, with Sierra Leone at 146th and Lebanon at 145th rank.

India's neighboring countries.

India has been ranked at 118 in the 2025 report. India has been ranked below Nepal (92), Pakistan (109) while it was ahead of Sri Lanka(133) and Bangladesh (134).

The World Happiness Report uses data on six variables including GDP per capita, social support, healthy

life expectancy, freedom, generosity, and the absence of corruption.

According to the recently released data by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Indian economy is likely to overtake Japan in 2025 and Germany in 2027 to become the world's third largest economy after the United States of America and China.

The positive report of the IMF comes after a World Bank report which suggested that India needs to grow at an average annual growth rate of 7.8 percent to achieve the target of Viksit Bharat or a developed country by 2047.

The real gross domestic product (GDP) of India has doubled from \$2.1 trillion in 2015 to \$4.3 trillion in 2025.

According to the Hurun Global Rich List 2025, the Chinese city of Shanghai has dethroned Mumbai to emerge as the billionaire's capital of Asia.

Roshini Nadar of HCL Technologies has become the first Indian to be included among the top 10 wealthiest women in the world.

India has retained its status as the country having the third-highest number of billionaires in the world after the United States of America and China.

Mukesh Ambani remains the richest man in Asia despite dropping out of the world's top 10 richest people.

The total number of billionaires in the world was 3442, an increase of 163.

The 15th edition of the Hurun Global Rich List 2025 was released by the Shanghai-based Hurun Research Institute on 27 March 2025.

The report ranks the world's billionaires based on their wealth as of 15th January 2025, based on US dollars.

USA ends China's status as the billionaire country in the World

For the first time in the last 10 years, the United States of America (USA) has overtaken China in having the largest number of billionaires in the world.

The USA has 870 billionaires, followed by China with 823.

India has the third-largest number of billionaires in the world, with 284, an increase of 13 as compared to last year.

Mumbai slips to third position

Mumbai, which emerged as Asia's billionaire capital last year by dethroning China's capital city, Beijing, slipped to third position this year.

Shanghai, with 92 billionaires, has emerged as Asia's billionaire capital, followed by Beijing(91) and Mumbai, with 90 billionaires.

Mumbai added 11 billionaires to its list this year.

Billionaire Capital of the World

New York City, USA, has emerged as the billionaires' capital of the world, with 129 billionaires living in the city.

London, United Kingdom, retained its second spot with 97 billionaires,

Shanghai was in third position with 92 billionaires,

Beijing at fourth with 91 billionaires and

Mumbai was in fifth place with 90 billionaires.

New Delhi was ranked 9th in the world with 63 billionaires, Bengaluru at 261st rank with 25 billionaires.

Top 5 richest Indian with their wealth.

1. Mukesh Ambani, Reliance Industries Limited – Rs 8.6 trillion

2. Gautam Adani, Adani Group – Rs 8.4 trillion

3. Roshni Nadar, HCL Technologies – Rs 3.5 trillion

4. Dilip Shanghvi, Sun Pharma – Rs 2.5 trillion

5. Azim Premji, Wipro – Rs 2.2 trillion .

Roshini Nadar 5th richest woman in the world

Chairperson of HCL Technologies, Roshini Nadar, became the first Indian woman to be included in the top 10 richest women's list.

She is also the richest woman and the third richest person in India.

The main reason for her wealth is due to the transfer of her father Shiv Nadar's 47% stake in HCL Technologies to her.

American Alice Walton, owner of Walmart, was the richest woman in the world.

Top 5 richest people in the world

1. Elon Musk (USA), owner of Tesla, SpaceX- \$ 420 billion. The first person to have a wealth of more than \$ 400 billion.

2. Jeff Bezos (USA), owner of Amazon - \$ 266 billion
3. Mark Zuckerberg (USA), owner of Meta (Facebook)- \$242 billion
4. Larry Ellison (USA), owner of Oracle - \$203 billion
5. Warren Buffett (USA), Berkshire Hathaway- \$167 billion.

2024 World Air Quality Report.

India has been ranked as the 5th most polluted country in the world in 2024 by the 7th annual World Air Quality Report released by IQAir .

Byrnihat in Meghalaya, situated along the border with Assam, has been declared the most polluted city in the world.

The World Air Quality Report is released by Switzerland-based air quality technology company, IQAir.

India was the 5th most polluted country in the world after Chad, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

New Delhi is the most polluted capital city in the world, with an average PM2.5 concentration of 91.8 µg/m³.

Byrnihat in Meghalaya is the most polluted city in the world.

Highlights of the 2024 Report

Chad was the most polluted country in the world, with an average annual PM2.5 concentration of 91.8 µg/m³.

Bangladesh was the second most polluted (78.0 µg/m³) followed by Pakistan (73.7 µg/m³), the Democratic Republic of Congo (58.2 µg/m³), and India (50.6 µg/m³).

Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, with an annual average PM2.5 concentration of 1.1 µg/m³, was the cleanest metropolitan area in the world.

Oceania, with 57% of regional cities meeting the WHO PM2.5 annual guideline value of 5 µg/m³ is the world's cleanest region.

India emerges as the 4th largest global wealth hub in the world.

According to the 19th Wealth Report 2025, India has emerged as the fourth largest global wealth hub in the world after the United States of America, China, and Japan.

The number of High Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs) in the country has risen from 80,686 in the last year to 85,698 in 2024, a growth of 6 percent.

The report expects the HNWI population in India to increase to 93,753 by 2028.

The Wealth Report is released by the London, United Kingdom-based real estate consultancy firm Knight Frank.

In 2024, India, with 85,698 HNWIs, was fourth in the world behind the United States of America (905,413), China (471,634), and Japan (122,119).

In 2024, the number of billionaires in the country was 191 an increase of 26 as compared to 2023.

Amul ranked as third most valued brand in the Country.

Amul, India's leading dairy cooperative, has secured the third position in the prestigious YouGov India Value Rankings 2025, making it the only FMCG brand in the top three.

Amul is the only Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) brand in the top three list, alongside e-commerce giants Amazon and Flipkart,

Rank	Name of Brand	Score
1	Amazon	56.5
2	Flipkart	53.0
3	Amul	52.8
4	Tanishq	48.4
5	MakeMyTrip	45.4

LIC Ranked World's 3rd Strongest Insurance Brand.

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has been ranked the third strongest insurance brand globally, with a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 88 out of 100, according to the Brand Finance Insurance 100

(2025) report.

Poland-based PZU topped the rankings with a BSI score of 94.4, followed by China Life Insurance in second place with 93.5.

LIC also holds the 12th position in brand value among global insurers, while SBI Life ranks 76th, making them the only two Indian insurers in the top 100.

IndiGo Becomes the World's Second Fastest-Growing Airline in Seat Capacity.

IndiGo Airlines has achieved a significant milestone by securing the position of the world's second fastest-growing airline in terms of seat capacity, according to the latest report by the Official Airline Guide (OAG).

This growth places IndiGo just behind Qatar Airways.

A recent global survey by the U.S.-based think tank The Future of Free Speech ranked India 24th out of 33 countries in its Free Speech Index.

Norway (87.9) and Denmark (87.0) ranked highest in free speech support.

INDIA'S RANK IN VARIOUS INDEXES 2024-25**FEBRUARY 2025**

Dr Purnima Devi Barman, a wildlife biologist from Assam, has been included in the Time Magazine 2025 "Women of the Year" list.

Dr Purnima Devi Barman and her Conservation effort

A two-time Whitley Gold Awardee (2017 & 2024), Dr Purnima Devi Barman, was recognised for her effort in conserving the endangered bird, Hargila or Greater Adjutant Stork and its wetland habitat.

Dr. Barman mobilised the local people, especially women and children, to protect the Hargila bird and its ecosystem in Assam.

The top 10 richest women in the world in 2025

Rank and Name	Net Worth	Source of Wealth
1. Alice Walton	\$112.5 billion	Walmart
2. Francoise Bettencourt Meyers and Family	\$74.4 billion	L'Oréal
3. Julia Koch and Family	\$74.2 billion	Koch Industries
4. Jacqueline Mars	\$42.3 billion	Mars Inc
5. Rafaela Aponte-Diamant	\$39.0 billion	Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) Group
6. Abigail Johnson	\$36.0 billion	Fidelity Investments

7. Savitri Jindal & family	\$32.3 billion	JSW Group
8. MacKenzie Scott	\$32.3 billion	Amazon
9. Miriam Adelson & family	\$31.5 billion	Las Vegas Sands
10. Marilyn Simons & family	\$31.0 billion	Hedge Funds

India's richest woman in 2025, Savitri Jindal & family, has also made it on the global women's billionaires list of 2025.

Reliance Industries has achieved a major milestone by ranking second in the FutureBrand Index 2024, becoming the first Indian company to surpass Apple.

Reliance Industries secured the 2nd spot in the FutureBrand Index 2024, surpassing global giants like Apple, Nike, and Walt Disney, making it the only Indian brand in the top rankings.

Reliance made a remarkable jump from 13th place in 2023 to 2nd place in 2024, reflecting its strong brand purpose and customer experience, while Samsung topped the rankings.

FBI Global Ranking 2024	2024 vs 2023	Company	FBI Global Ranking 2023	PwC 2024 Position	Sector
1	↑4	SAMSUNG	5	21	Information Technology
2	↑11	 Reliance Industries	13	46	Energy
3	↓2	 Apple	1	2	Information Technology
4	↑8	 Nike	12	98	Consumer Discretionary
5	↑4	ASML	9	25	Information Technology
6	↑8	 Danaher	14	67	Healthcare
7	↑19	 The Walt Disney Company	26	49	Communication Services
8	↑13	 Walmart	21 (2022)	33	Consumer Staples
9	↓5	 IBM	4	10	Information Technology
10	—	 IHC	NEW ENTRY	45	Industrials

Corruption Perception Index 2024

Released By : Transparency International.

TOP : Denmark, score 90

2nd : Finland, score 88

3rd : Singapore, Score 84

4th : New Zealand, Score 83

5th : Luxembourg, Norway, Switzerland with a score of 81

INDIA : 96.

For the seventh year in a row, Denmark topped the index with a score of 90.

South Sudan with a score of 8 was at the bottom and was the most corrupt country.

In 2024, India's overall score was 38, and was ranked 96th.

Among India's neighbours, Pakistan (135) and Sri Lanka (121) grappled with their respective low rankings, while Bangladesh's ranking stood further down at 149. China ranked 76.

India ranked 3rd globally in LEED green building certifications 2024, with 370 projects covering 8.50 million GSM of certified space.

1. China – 25+ million GSM 2. Canada – 10 million GSM

3. India – 8.50 million GSM.

LEED Certification Body : U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC)

Zepto Becomes World's Second Most Downloaded Food & Drink App.

Zepto, an Indian quick commerce startup, became the "world's second most downloaded mobile app in the food and drink" category in 2024, according to data released by Sensor Tower.

United States holds the top spot, with McDonald's being the most downloaded food and drink app.

Zomato ranks 5th, and Swiggy ranks 9th in the same category.

India has become the second-largest arms importer globally between 2020-24, following Ukraine, as per the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) report.

Key Highlights of the SIPRI Report (2020-24)

Global Trends in Arms Imports & Exports

Ukraine emerged as the largest arms importer due to ongoing war with Russia, with a 100-fold rise in imports.

India ranked second in arms imports, despite a 9.3% decline compared to 2015-19.

India's Defense Imports

Russia remained the top supplier but its share dropped to 36% (from 55% in 2015-19 & 72% in 2010-14).

France emerged as a major supplier, with 28% of its total arms exports going to India.

India has contracted major military deals with France, including 36 Rafale jets & six Scorpene-class submarines.

Global Arms Transfer & Export Trends

USA expanded its global arms market share to 43%, reinforcing its dominance.

Russia's arms exports fell by 64%, now comprising only 7.8% of global exports, behind France (9.6%).

Italy climbed to 6th place in arms exports, with a 4.8% share in global arms trade.

INDIA'S RANK IN VARIOUS INDEXES 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

According to the QS World Future Skills Index 2025, India emerged as the second most preferred country under the future category just behind the US.

India ranks 25th with an overall score of 76.6 in the QS World Future Skills Index 2025, positioning the country as a "future skills contender."

The top five countries on the index include the US (97.6), UK (97.1), Germany (94.6), Australia (93.3) and Canada (91.0); are classified as "future skills pioneers."

India ranked 25th across all indicators, achieving the honour as a "future skills contender."

In the "Future of Work" category, India secured the second-highest global score (99.1), just behind the United States.

QS World Future Skills Index 2025					
Transforming Higher Education for the Skills Economy					
INDIA					
Indicator	Skills Fit	Academic Readiness	Future of Work	Economic Transformation	Overall
Score	59.1	89.9	99.1	58.3	76.6
Global position	37th	26th	2nd	40th	25th

The index evaluates nations across four dimensions:

1. Skills Fit: It measures how well workforce skills align with job market demands.

2. Academic Readiness: It examines the capability of educational institutions to prepare graduates for future challenges.

3. Future of Work: It assesses the adoption of skills and technologies needed for emerging industries.

4. Economic Transformation: It evaluates the ability of economies to adapt and thrive in new paradigms.

QS World Future Skills Index 2025 Released By : London-based Quacquarelli Symonds (QS).

Global Firepower Index 2025

TOP : USA

2nd : Russia

3rd : China

INDIA : 4th

5th : South Korea

Henley Passport Index 2025

TOP : Singapore

2nd : Japan

3rd : France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Finland, South Korea

INDIA : 85

Indian passport holders can travel to 57 countries without the requirement of a visa.

Afghanistan's passport is ranked at the bottom at 106th position.

Tata Group was the most valuable Indian brand, and Apple was the most valuable brand in the world.

The most valuable Indian brand with a brand value of \$31.6 billion. Tata Group was also the 60th most valuable brand in the world.

Top global brands in 2025

Apple was the world's most valuable brand.

Microsoft was the second most valuable brand in the world.

Google was the third most valuable brand in the world.

16th Finance Commission launched the inaugural issue of NITI Aayog's report titled "Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2025" in New Delhi.

About Fiscal Health Index:

It provides a comprehensive assessment of the fiscal health of 18 major States of India.

It is based on five key sub-indices: Quality of Expenditure, Revenue Mobilisation, Fiscal Prudence, Debt Index and Debt Sustainability, along with insights into state-specific challenges and areas for improvement.

It aims to throw light on the fiscal status at the sub-national level and guide policy reforms for sustainable and resilient economic growth.

It has been developed using data from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

Key Highlights of the Report:

With a cumulative score of 67.8, Odisha tops the ranking, followed by Chhattisgarh and Goa with scores of 55.2 and 53.6, respectively.

The achiever States display strong fiscal health, excelling in revenue mobilization, expenditure management, and debt sustainability.

Improvements are seen in States like Jharkhand, which has strengthened fiscal prudence and debt sustainability, while Karnataka faces a decline due to weaker performance in expenditure quality and debt management.

These interstate disparities highlight the need for targeted reforms to address specific fiscal challenges and ensure sustainable growth.

Punjab, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal and Kerala were the worst-performing States in the Fiscal Health Index (FHI), each facing significant fiscal challenges, and listed under the "aspirational" category.

It has listed Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Karnataka under the "front-runners" category.

Tamil Nadu, Bihar, Rajasthan, and Haryana were classified as performers.

HOW STATES FARE

Fiscal Health Index Score (out of 100)

TOP 5 ▲

1	Odisha	67.8
2	Chhattisgarh	55.2
3	Goa	53.6
4	Jharkhand	51.6
5	Gujarat	50.5

BOTTOM 5 ▼

18	Punjab	10.7
17	Andhra Pradesh	20.9
16	West Bengal	21.8
15	Kerala	25.4
14	Haryana	27.4

Source: NITI Aayog

INDIA'S RANK IN VARIOUS INDEXES 2024-25

DECEMBER 2024

Union Minister of Commerce & Industry released the “Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2024” report in New Delhi.

About Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2024:

It is the 6th edition of the LEADS report.

It was conceived on the lines of the Logistics Performance Index of World Bank in 2018 by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

It evaluates logistics performance across four key pillars: Logistics Infrastructure, Logistics Services, Operating and Regulatory Environment, and the newly introduced Sustainable Logistics.

Key highlights of LEADS 2024

Coastal Group

Achievers: Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu

Fast Movers: Andhra Pradesh, Goa

Aspirers: Kerala, West Bengal.

Landlocked Group

Achievers: Haryana, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand

Fast Movers: Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan

Aspirers: Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand

North-Eastern Group

Achievers: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh

Fast Movers: Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura

Aspirers: Manipur.

Union Territories

Achievers: Chandigarh, Delhi

Fast Movers: Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Jammu and Kashmir, Lakshadweep, Puducherry

Aspirers: Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ladakh

Network Readiness Index 2024

Published By : Portulans Institute and the Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford.

TOP : United States

2nd : Singapore

3rd : Finland

4th : Sweden
5th : South Korea
INDIA : 49

INDIA'S RANK IN VARIOUS INDEXES 2024-25

NOVEMBER 2024

Dubai is the highest-ranked city in the Middle East and Africa on the '2024 Global City Index' by Brand Finance, leading the region for the second consecutive year.

Globally, Dubai also rose to fifth place, surpassing global powerhouses like Singapore, Los Angeles, Sydney, San Francisco, and Amsterdam.

London topped the list of the top 100 "city brands" for the second consecutive year.

1. London
2. New York
3. Paris
4. Tokyo
5. Dubai
6. Singapore
7. Los Angeles
8. Sydney
9. San Francisco
10. Amsterdam

QS Asia Rankings 2025

Unveiled By : Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)

TOP : Peking University

location Beijing, China (Mainland)

2nd : The University of Hong Kong location Hong Kong, Hong Kong SAR

3rd : National University of Singapore (NUS) location Singapore, Singapore.

IIT Delhi, Bombay, and Madras improved in Asian standings, entering top 50 for the first time in QS Asia. India's Top 10 Universities in QS Asia Rankings 2025.

1. IIT Delhi – Rank 44
2. IIT Bombay – Rank 48
3. IIT Madras – Rank 56
4. IIT Kharagpur – Rank 60
5. Indian Institute of Science (IISc) – Rank 62
6. IIT Kanpur – Rank 67
7. University of Delhi – Rank 81
8. IIT Guwahati – Rank 104
9. IIT Roorkee – Rank 108
10. Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) – Rank 110

SUMMIT & CONFERENCE 2025

APRIL 2025

The 3rd BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Agriculture Ministerial Meeting was held in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 10th April 2025.

The Agricultural Ministers meeting took place days after the 6th BIMSTEC Summit meeting was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 4th April 2025. It was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and leaders of BIMSTEC member countries.

The 9th edition of the three-day Global Technology Summit was inaugurated in New Delhi by the External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar on 10 April 2025.

The Global Technology Summit, to be held from 10-12 April 2025, is India's flagship dialogue on geo-technology.

The Global Technology Summit is co-organised by the Ministry of External Affairs with New Delhi based think tank Carnegie India.

The theme of the 9th Global Technology Summit is "Sambhavna".

This year, around 150 speakers from 40 countries.

PM Modi attends the 6th BIMSTEC Summit in Bangkok, Thailand.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the sixth BIMSTEC Summit meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, on 4th April 2025.

The Summit meeting was attended by the leaders of the seven member countries of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) - India, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bhutan.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on a two-day official visit to Thailand on 3&4th April 2025.

Initiative to strengthen people-to-people ties

India will host the BIMSTEC Athletics Meet in 2025.

India will host 1st BIMSTEC Games in 2027;

India will host the BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival.

Thailand hosted the 6th BIMSTEC meeting.

Thailand was hosting the summit meeting for the second time. It hosted the first summit meeting in 2004.

The theme of the 6th meeting was - BIMSTEC: Prosperous, Resilient and Open.

The meeting was chaired by Paetongtarn Shinawatra, Prime Minister of Thailand.

The meeting was attended by the leaders of the member countries- K.P. Sharma Oli, Prime Minister of Nepal; Senior General Min Aung Hlaing, Chairman of the State Administration Council, which rules Myanmar; Tshering Tobgay, Prime Minister of Bhutan; and Muhammad Yunus, Chief Adviser of the interim government of Bangladesh.

Prime Minister Modi met Muhammad Yunus for the first time.

Bangladesh will hold the post for the next two years, and it will also host the 7th BIMSTEC summit meeting.

About BIMSTEC

Established as BIST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand Economic Cooperation) in 1997.

Later in 1997, it was renamed BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) when Myanmar joined it.

Members - India, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Myanmar.

Secretariat - Dhaka, Bangladesh

The Hyderabad City Security Council (HCSC) is set to host the second edition of the STREE Summit on April 15, 2025.

The 9th edition of the Global Technology Summit (GTS), a flagship event co-hosted by the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, and Carnegie India, will take place in New Delhi from April 10 to 12, 2025

Brazil has proposed the establishment of a Global Climate Action Council under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to boost global climate efforts.

This proposal comes ahead of the 30th Conference of the Parties (COP30), which will take place in Belem, Brazil, in November 2025.

India was appointed by acclamation to the United Nations Intergovernmental Working Group of Experts on International Standards of Accounting and Reporting (ISAR) for the 2025–2027 term.

ISAR, which operates under the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), is responsible for advancing global accounting standards and corporate disclosure practices

SUMMIT & CONFERENCE 2025**MARCH 2025****President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the National Conference on Environment held at the Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi on 29th March 2025.**

The valedictory session of the Conference will be addressed by the chief guest, Vice- President of India, Jagdeep Dhankar.

The National Conference on Environment 2025 has been organised by the National Green Tribunal (NGT).

The session will be on:

Air Quality Monitoring & Management:

Water Quality Management & River Rejuvenation:

Forest and Biodiversity Conservation:

Reflections and Key Takeaways.

The 3rd edition of the SourceX India 2025 was inaugurated in New Delhi on 26 March 2025.

The 3rd edition of the SourceX India is being held at the Yashobhoomi Convention Centre, New Delhi, from 26-28 March 2025.

Over 150 buyers from more than 45 countries are participating in the 3rd edition of the SourceX India. The buyers are from Africa, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the European Union (EU), Oceania, West Asia, and North Africa (WANA), etc.

The SourceX India 2025 has been organised by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) under the aegis of the Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma inaugurated the 7th Act East Business Show in the state capital Shillong on 25th March 2025.

The North East Region of India includes -Assam, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Arunachal Pradesh, Tripura, Manipur, Nagaland and Sikkim.

Mumbai, financial capital of India will host the 2025 Private Sector Collaborative Forum (PSCF) meeting of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) from 25-27th March 2025.

The 2025 PSCF is being organised by the apex global anti money laundering organisation FATF.

It is being hosted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in collaboration with the Department of Revenue, Union Ministry of Finance.

The 2025 PSCF will be officially inaugurated by the FATF President Ms. Elisa de Anda Madrazo on 26th March 2025.

The two-day 14th meeting of the ASEAN Defence Ministers' Meeting (ADMM)—Plus Experts Working Group (EWG) on Counter-Terrorism concluded on 20 March 2025 in New Delhi.

India and Malaysia assumed the co-chairmanship of the Group from Myanmar and Russia for the next three-year cycle (2025-2028) during the 14th meeting of the ADMM- Plus Experts Working Group on Counter-Terrorism in New Delhi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi and New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon jointly inaugurated the 10th edition of the Raisina Dialogue in New Delhi on 17 March 2025.

The 10th edition of the annual Raisina Dialogue is being held in New Delhi from 17-19 March 2025.

Christopher Luxon was on an official visit to India from 16-20 March 2025.

The theme of the 10th Raisina Dialogue is Kālachakra - People, Peace and Planet.

The three-day 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific is being held at the Rajasthan International Center, Jaipur, from 3-5 March 2025.

The theme of the 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in Asia and the Pacific was "Realizing Circular Societies Towards Achieving SDGs and Carbon Neutrality in Asia-Pacific".

The 12th Forum meeting was jointly organised by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, the United Nations Centre for Regional Development (UNCRD), and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies, Japan.

About the Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum

The Regional 3R Forum in Asia was established in 2009 on the initiative of Japan to provide a platform for the countries of the region to promote cooperation in 3Rs – reduce, reuse, and recycle.

The inaugural Forum meeting was held in Tokyo, Japan, in 2009.

India actively participated in the 353rd Governing Body Meeting of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) held in Geneva, Switzerland from March 10 to March 20, 2025.

The Indian delegation was led by Ms. Sumita Dawra, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment.

The Government of India, led by Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Smt. Annpurna Devi, actively participated in the 69th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) held at the UN Headquarters in New York from March 10-21, 2025.

The 4th 'No Money for Terror' (NMFT) Conference, held in Munich, Germany.

SUMMIT & CONFERENCE 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2025

India has recently assumed the Chairmanship of the Bay of Bengal Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) from Bangladesh.

This transition took place during the 13th Governing Council Meeting held in Malé, Maldives.

India's leadership in BOBP-IGO is seen as opportunity to advance the national goal of 'Viksit Bharat 2047'.

The 8th edition of the Indian Ocean Conference (IOC) commenced in Muscat on February 16-17, 2025.

This year's theme is Voyage to New Horizons of Maritime Partnership.

The conference aims to enhance inclusivity and encourage new partnerships within the maritime sector.

The World Government Summit (WGS) 2025 commenced on February 10, 2025, in Dubai, UAE.

This 12th edition of the summit is centred around the theme “Shaping Future Governments”.

The 14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (14AFAF) was inaugurated on February 12, 2025, at Pusa Campus in New Delhi.

This event marks moment for global fisheries and aquaculture.

India has become the world's second-largest fish producer.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi co-chaired the ‘AI Action Summit’ meeting in Paris, France on 11th February 2025, along with the French President Emmanuel Macron.

France and India are co-hosting the third International Summit, which is focused on artificial intelligence (AI), in Paris on February 10 and 11, 2025.

The first international summit on artificial intelligence titled “Global AI Safety Summit” was organized by the United Kingdom government at Bletchley Park, in Buckinghamshire in November 2023.

The Bletchley Park is the birthplace of the digital, programmable computer in the world.

1st BIMSTEC Youth Summit 2025 held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

The first BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Youth Summit was held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from 7-11 February 2025.

India hosted the second meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Cyber Security Cooperation in New Delhi on 21 January 2025.

The 1st BIMSTEC Youth Summit was organised jointly by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs.

The theme of the 1st BIMSTEC Youth Summit was ‘Youth as a bridge for intra-BIMSTEC exchange’.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first edition of the SOUL Leadership Conclave at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on 21 February 2025.

The two-day SOUL Leadership Conclave is being held in New Delhi on February 21 and 22 February 2025.

The visiting Bhutanese Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay delivered the keynote address at the SOUL Leadership Conclave.

Nityanad Rai, Union Minister of State for Home Affairs, led the Indian delegation at the 4th Ministerial Conference on ‘No Money for Terror’.

The 4th No Money for Terror conference was hosted by the German government in Munich, Germany on 13th February 2025

India is for the first time hosting the annual Conference of the International Institute of Administrative Science (IIAS).

The conference titled IIAS-DARPG (Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances) India Conference 2025 is being held in New Delhi from 10-14 February 2025.

The theme of the IIAS-DARPG India Conference 2025 is “Next Generation Administrative Reforms – Empowering Citizens and Reaching the Last Mile”.

International Institute of Administrative Sciences (IIAS)

Headquarters: Brussels, Belgium.

The 12th edition of the World Government Summit opened in Dubai, the United Arab Emirates (UAE) on the 10th of February 2025.

India was represented by the Union Minister for Environment, Forest, and Climate Change, Bhupender Yadav.

The theme of the 12th World Government Summit is Shaping Future Governments.

For the second time, India is hosting the Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum meeting. The 14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum is being held in New Delhi from 12-14 February 2025.

Earlier, India hosted the 8th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum in Kochi, Kerala in 2007.

Around 1,000 delegates from 24 countries, including researchers, policymakers, industry leaders, and stakeholders are attending the 14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum meeting.

India is the world's 3rd largest fish producer, 2nd largest aquaculture nation and the largest producer of shrimp in the world.,

The theme of the 14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum is “Greening the Blue Growth in Asia-Pacific”.

The Indian capital city of New Delhi hosted the 15th International Meeting of World Pharmacopoeias from 5-7 February 2025

The first Raisina Middle East Conference was held in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) capital city, Abu Dhabi, on 28 and 29 January 2025.

External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar was the Chief Guest of the first Raisina Middle East Conference.

Dr S. Jaishankar was on a three-day official visit to the UAE on 27 and 29 January 2025.

The first Conference for Women Peacekeepers of the United Nations was held in New Delhi on 24 & 25 February 2025.

The Conference brought together 35 nations whose women troops are active in the United Nations Peacekeeping operation across the globe.

India is the second largest contributor to the United Nations Peacekeeping operations.

Amongst the UN Military Experts on Mission and Staff Officers in 2024, the largest women contingent -176 were Indian.

The Conference was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs in association with the Union Ministry of Defence and the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) of the Indian Army.

The theme of the first Conference for Women Peacekeepers of the United Nations was “ Women in Peacekeeping: A Global South Perspective” .

The first International Conference on Carbon Markets-Prakriti was held in New Delhi on 24 & 25th February 2025.

The first International Conference on Carbon Markets-Prakriti was organised by the Bureau of Energy Efficiency (BEE).

The BEE is under the Union Ministry of Power.

Carbon Trading in India and BEE

India has also announced its nationally determined contribution goals under the 2015 Paris Agreement. It has set a target to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2070.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi participated in the Jhumoir Binandini 2025, organised at the Sarusajai Stadium in Guwahati, Assam.

The Jhumoir or Jhumar dance is a traditional folk dance of the tea tribes communities of Assam.

The 8th Madhya Pradesh Global Investor Summit concluded at Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh on 25th February 2025.

The Global Investor Summit is a biennial event organised by the Madhya Pradesh government to showcase the investment potential of the state to the domestic and foreign investors.

The 8th Madhya Pradesh Global Investor Summit was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 24 February 2025. Prime Minister Narendra said that Madhya Pradesh, which was once considered a BIMARU state, is now one of the leading states in India in the field of agriculture, automobile and electric vehicles, etc.

What is BIMARU State?

The ‘BIMARU’ term was coined by demographer Ashish Bose in the 1980s, including undivided Bihar, undivided Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh.

SUMMIT & CONFERENCE 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

The 55th World Economic Forum (WEF) Annual Meeting took place in Davos, Switzerland from January 20–24, 2025.

The theme of the meeting was “Collaboration for the Intelligent Age”.

The WEF was founded in 1971 as the European Management Forum and renamed the World Economic Forum in 1987.

The WEF is headquartered in Cologny, Switzerland.

The WEF publishes reports such as the Global Competitiveness Report, Global Gender Gap Report, Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report, and Global Information Technology Report.

The WEF released the Global Cybersecurity Outlook 2025 report, which highlighted the vulnerability of critical infrastructure to cyberattacks.

India is set to host the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Parliaments of Commonwealth Countries (CSPOC) in January 2026.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla announced this at the recent CSPOC Standing Committee Meeting in Guernsey.

The conference will focus on the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and social media into

parliamentary processes, reflecting India's commitment to technological advancement and modern governance.

Bhubaneswar the capital city of Odisha will host the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention from 8-10 January 2025.

The Chief Guest of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention will be Christine Carla Kangaloo, President of Trinidad & Tobago.

The theme of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention is "Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat".

SUMMIT & CONFERENCE 2024-25

DECEMBER 2024

The World Maritime Technology Conference (WMTC) 2024 will be held in Chennai, India from December 4-6, 2024.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Grameen Bharat Mahotsav being organised in New Delhi on 4 January 2025.

The theme of the Grameen Bharat Mahotsav is "Building a Resilient Rural India for a Viksit Bharat 2024".

Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav inaugurated the 31st National Children's Science Congress at the Ravindra Bhawan in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh.

The main theme of the 31st National Children's Science Congress is "Understanding Ecosystems for Health and Well-being".

The Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation, Amit Shah, chaired the 72nd plenary session of the North Eastern Council (NEC) at Agartala, Tripura.

The 11th summit meeting of the Developing Eight (D-8) Organization for Economic Cooperation was held in the New Administrative Capital of Egypt.

The 23rd meeting of the Special Representative of India and China was held in Beijing, China, on 18 December 2024.

The 4th annual National Conference of Chief Secretaries commenced in New Delhi on 13 December 2024.

Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami inaugurated the 10th World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo 2024 at Dehradun on 12 December 2024. The first Ayurveda Conference was organised in Kochi, Kerala, in 2002.

The 10th World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo 2024 theme is Digital Health- an Ayurveda Perspective.

The two-day first India Maritime Heritage Conclave 2024 concluded in New Delhi on 12 December 2024.

The second India and the United Kingdom 2+2 Foreign and Defence Dialogue was held in New Delhi on 3 December 2024.

The 16th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) commenced in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The theme of the 16th COP of the UNCCD is Our Land. Our Future

SUMMIT & CONFERENCE 2024-25

NOVEMBER 2024

The first Asian Buddhist Summit will be held in New Delhi on November 5 and 6, 2024.

President Droupadi Murmu was the chief guest.

The first Asian Buddhist Summit is being organised by the Union Ministry of Culture, Government of India, in collaboration with the International Buddhist Confederation.

'Role of Buddha Dhamma in Strengthening Asia' is the theme of the First Asian Buddhist Summit.

The first Climate and Health Africa Conference (CHAC 2024) was held in Harare, the capital of Zimbabwe, which aims to address the severe health impacts of climate change in Africa.

Over 400 representatives from 54 African countries, including government officials, health experts, and researchers, are attending.

The 2nd India -Saudi Arabia ministerial meeting of the Political, Security, Social and Cultural Committee (PSSC) was held in New Delhi on 13 November 2024.

The Meeting was co-chaired by the Indian External Affairs Minister, Dr S Jaishankar and the visiting Saudi Arabian foreign minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud.

The Saudi Arabian foreign minister, Prince Faisal bin Farhan Al Saud, was on a 2-day visit to India on 12 and 13 of November 2024.

The 25th Meeting of SATRC-25 (South Asian Telecommunication Regulators' Council) was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Communications Jyotiraditya Scindia on 11 November 2024.

The meeting is held annually to discuss and coordinate regulatory and other issues related to the telecommunication and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) sectors common for the regulators of SATRC Members.

The 25th Meeting of the South Asian Telecommunication Regulators' Council has been organised by the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity. It is being hosted by the Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) in New Delhi from 11 to 13 November 2024.

Participants of the SATRC -25

The Telecom sector regulators of 9 countries -Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan, and Sri Lanka are attending the 25th meeting of the South Asian Telecommunication Regulators' Council.

The 8th International Ancient Arts Festival and Symposium was held in New Delhi at the Indira Gandhi National Centers for Arts (IGNCA) from November 8 to 10, 2024.

The 8th International Ancient Arts Festival and Symposium was organised by the Indira Gandhi National Centers for Arts (IGNCA) in collaboration with the Rays of Wisdom Society. It is also being supported by the Union Ministry of Culture.

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, inaugurated the 83rd session of the Indian Roads Congress at Raipur, Chhattisgarh

The Chief of Defence Staff, General Anil Chauhan, inaugurated the 2nd Indian Military Heritage Festival 2024 in New Delhi on 8 November 2024.

The Chief of the Indian Army, General Upendra Dwivedi, the Chief of Naval Staff, Dinesh Tripathi, and the Chief of Air Staff, Amar Preet Singh, were also present at the inauguration of the Festival.

The Indian Military Heritage Festival is organised by the United Service Institution of India (USI).

Project Shaurya Gatha, launched by the United Service Institution of India in collaboration with the Department of Military Affairs, Union Ministry of Defence, was also launched during the 2nd Indian Military and Heritage Festival.

India re elected President of International Solar Alliance for 2024- 26.

India has been re-elected as the President of the International Solar Alliance for another two-year term from 2024 to 2026.

The Office bearers for 2024-26 were elected at the Seventh annual session of the International Solar Alliance Assembly, held in New Delhi from 3-6 November 2024.

India was re-elected unopposed as the President of the International Solar Alliance for a fresh two-year term. France was elected as the Co-President, defeating Grenada.

At the seventh annual session of the International Solar Alliance, Ashish Khanna of India was chosen as the third Director General for a four-year term. He will succeed another Indian, Dr Ajay Mathur.

The first Asian Buddhist Summit will be held in New Delhi on November 5 and 6, 2024. President Droupadi Murmu was the chief guest.

The first Asian Buddhist Summit is being organised by the Union Ministry of Culture, Government of India, in collaboration with the International Buddhist Confederation.

Theme of the First Asian Buddhist Summit

‘Role of Buddha Dhamma in Strengthening Asia’ is the theme of the First Asian Buddhist Summit.

16th BRICS Summit and first BRICS Outreach Dialogue in Kazan, Russia

Russia hosted the 16th BRICS summit meeting and the first BRICS Outreach/BRICS plus summit meeting at Kazan from 22 to 24 October 2024.

Russian President Vladimir Putin hosted the meeting, which was attended by the bloc's leaders, including Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

Brazil will host the next 17th BRICS summit meeting in 2025.

The theme of the 16th BRICS summit meeting was Strengthening Multilateralism for Fair Global Development and Security,”

The BRICS Outreach/BRICS Plus dialogue was held on 24 October 2024 at Kazan, Russia. The BRICS Outreach refers to the countries which are not members of the BRICS but are interested in joining it in the future.

The theme of the BRICS Outreach/BRICS Plus dialogue was "BRICS and Global South: Building a Better World Together.

The UAE has announced the establishment of the Global Energy Efficiency Alliance at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan.

This initiative aims to double annual global energy efficiency rates by 2030, aligning with the UAE's commitment to reducing carbon emissions and promoting sustainable resource use.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi is set to undertake a crucial three-nation tour from November 16-21, which will include attending the G20 Summit in Brazil, visiting Nigeria, and concluding with a state visit to Guyana.

PM Modi will attend the G20 Summit in Rio De Janeiro, hosted by Brazilian President Luiz Inacio Lula Da Silva.

India, as part of the G20 Troika along with Brazil and South Africa, will actively contribute to the discussions on global issues..

The Group of Twenty (G20) member countries are:

Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, Germany, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, United Kingdom (UK), and United States.

The G20 also includes the European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU). Spain is a permanent guest.

The G20 members represent:

About 85% of the global GDP

Over 75% of the global trade

About two-thirds of the world population.

South Africa will host the G20 in 2025, followed by the United States of America in 2026.

The 19th Heads of State and Government Summit of the Group of 20 (G20) will take place in November 2024 in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The 29th UN Climate Summit, COP29, kicked off in Baku, Azerbaijan, on November 11, 2024, with discussions set to focus on vital climate finance mechanisms, particularly the new "New Collective Quantified Goal" (NCQG).

Australia and Pacific nations may host COP31 in 2026.

The 2025 United Nations Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 30) will be held in Brazil from November 10–21, 2025. The conference will take place in Belém, Brazil.

The 2024 UN Climate Change Conference (UNFCCC COP 29) will convene in November 2024 in Baku, Azerbaijan

AWARDS AND HONOURS 2025

APRIL 2025

Dr. Amrish Mithal Conferred with the Prestigious IOF 2025 CSA Medal of Achievement.

Dr. Amrish Mithal, a renowned Indian endocrinologist, has been honored with the 2025 Committee of Scientific Advisors (CSA) Medal of Achievement by the International Osteoporosis Foundation (IOF) for his exceptional contributions to osteoporosis research.

The award was presented to Dr. Mithal at the World Congress on Osteoporosis, Osteoarthritis & Musculoskeletal Diseases (WCO-IOF-ESCEO 2025) held in Rome, Italy.

The Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences is set to introduce a groundbreaking new award—Best Stunt Design—which will debut at the 100th Academy Awards in 2028, recognizing stunt work in films released in 2027.

Uttar Pradesh Police's 'Investigation, Prosecution and Conviction Portal' has received the prestigious SKOCH Award at the national level in the "Police & Safety" category.

The National Maritime Varuna Award, presented by the Directorate General of Shipping (DGS), is India's highest individual recognition in the maritime sector.

President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu's visit to Portugal on April 7, 2025, marks a significant milestone in the diplomatic relationship between India and Portugal, especially as both nations celebrate 50 years of bilateral relations.

Her receipt of the prestigious 'City Key of Honour' .

Sand sculptor Sudarsan Pattnaik has made history by winning the first-ever Fred Darrington Award for Excellence in Art and Culture.

He was recognized for his exceptional sand sculpture of Lord Ganesha, which stands 10 feet tall and carries the message of "World Peace."

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was awarded Sri Lanka's highest civilian honour, the Mithra Vibhushana, for his contributions to strengthening the historic ties between India and Sri Lanka.

YuvaSpark Founder Akarsh Shroff Conferred with National Youth Award for Transforming Early Education in India.

Tibetan spiritual leader The Dalai Lama was honored with the Gold Mercury Award for Peace and Sustainability.

The award was presented by Gold Mercury International, a globally recognized think tank dedicated to promoting peace, governance, and sustainable development.

The Gold Mercury Award is a prestigious international honor originally established in Italy.

The Andhra Pradesh government has announced that renowned historian and archaeologist MyNaa Swamy will be honored with the prestigious Ugadi Award for his outstanding contributions to historical research and social service.

Japanese mathematician Masaki Kashiwara has been awarded the 2025 Abel Prize for his exceptional contributions to algebraic analysis and representation theory.

AWARDS AND HONOURS 2025

MARCH 2025

Eminent Hindi poet and writer Vinod Kumar Shukla of Chhattisgarh has been selected for the prestigious 59th Jnanpith Award 2024.

Vinod Kumar Shukla is the first from Chhattisgarh and the 12th eminent Hindi writer to receive the prestigious award.

The 58th Jnanpith Award 2023 was awarded to Jagadguru Rambhadracharyaaji for Sanskrit and Gulzar for Urdu.

The Bharatiya Jnanpith Trust administers the Jnanpith and Moorti Devi awards.

Jnanpith Award which was first conferred on eminent Malayalam writer G S Kurup is considered one of the most prestigious awards in the field of literature in India.

About Vinod Kumar Shukla and His Work

His first poetry collection 'Lagbhag Jai Hind' was published in 1971. He has also written novels- 'Naukar ki Kameez', "Deewar mein ek Khidki Rehti Thi" and "Khilega to Dekhenge".

His novel Naukar ki Kameez was made into a film by noted filmmaker Mani Kaul in 1999.

Vinod Kumar Shukla was honoured with the 1999 Sahitya Akademi Award for his novel "Deewar mein ek Khidki Rehti Thi".

About the Jnanpith Award

The Jnanpith Award is given by the Bharatiya Jnanpith Trust.

The Award carries a cash prize of Rs 11 lakhs, a citation, and a statue of Vagdevi(Goddess Saraswati).

The award is given to an Indian Citizen only.

The award is given for work in the Indian language and English.

The first Jnanpith winner was eminent Malayalam writer G S Kurup in 1965.

The first woman to get the Jnanpith Award- Ashapura Devi (Bangla) in 1976.

Veteran Sculptor Ram Sutar Chosen for Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2024.

Ram Sutar was honoured with India's third highest civilian award Padma Bhushan in 2018.

He was honoured with the country's fourth highest civilian award Padma Shri in 1999.

He also received the 2016 Tagore Award for cultural harmony in 2016.

About the Maharashtra Bhushan Award

The Maharashtra Bhushan Award was instituted by the Maharashtra government in 1995.

It is the highest civilian award in Maharashtra and is given to a resident of Maharashtra.

The award winner is honoured with a memento and a cash prize of Rs 25 lakhs.

Ram Sutar designed the world's tallest statue 'The Statue of Unity' in Kevadia Gujarat. It is an 182-meter-tall statue of India's first deputy Prime Minister and Home Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel.

Mridulika Jha wins Ramnath Goenka Award in Journalism 2025.

Mridulika Jha of Aaj Tak won the Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism 2025 for her coverage of the "Dunki route" adopted by the youths of Haryana to illegally enter the United States of America.

27 journalists were felicitated in 20 categories at the 19th Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism 2025 in a function held in New Delhi on 19 March 2025.

Ramnath Goenka Award for Excellence in Journalism was instituted by the Indian Express Group on the birth centenary anniversary of its founder Ramnath Goenka.

The award is administered by the Ramnath Goenka Foundation.

The winners were presented with a citation, a Trophy, and a cash prize of Rs one lakh.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has bagged the 2025 Digital Transformation Award of the Central Banking Award announced by London-based Central Banking.

RBI's Sarthi and Pravaah digital initiatives recognised by Central Banking .

Sarthi Initiative

Sarthi went live in January 2023 to digitise RBI's internal workflow.

It helped RBI's staff to store and share documents securely, improving record management and increasing the options for data analysis through reports and dashboards

Pravaah Initiative

The Parvaah focused on providing a digital forum for external users to submit regulatory applications to the RBI.

Hockey India Awards 2024.

Indian men's hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh and veteran Indian women's hockey team goalkeeper Savita Punia won the 7th Hockey India's best male and female players awards, respectively.

7th Hockey India Awards and their winners

Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award:

Indian men's hockey team that won the 1975 World Cup. They defeated Pakistan in the final at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The team was led by Ajit Pal Singh.

Prize money- Rs 30 lakhs.

Balbir Singh Sr. Award for Player of the Year (Men): Harmanpreet Singh.

It was the second time he has won the prize.

Prize Money- Rs 25 lakhs

Balbir Singh Sr. Award for Player of the Year (women): Savita Punia

It was the third time she has won the prize.

Prize Money -Rs 25 lakhs.

Baljit Singh Award for Goalkeeper of the Year: Savita Punia

Prize Money- Rs 5 lakhs .

Pargat Singh Award for Defender of the Year: Amit Rohidas

Prize Money -Rs 5 lakhs

Ajit Pal Singh Award for Midfielder of the Year: Hardik Singh

Prize Money -Rs 5 lakhs .

The Mauritius government conferred its highest civilian award, "The Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean", to the visiting Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, on 12th March 2025.

Prime Minister Modi is on a two-day visit to Mauritius on 11 & 12 March 2025.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the chief guest of the 57th National Day celebration of Mauritius on 12th March 2025.

Dr Jayshree Vencatesan has become the first Indian to win the annual prestigious Ramsar Award in the 'Wetland Wise Use' category.

Dr Jayshree Vencatesan was one of the 12 women included by the Ramsar Secretariat in its second edition of Women Changemakers in the World of Wetlands.

The Women are recognised in three categories:

Fostering international collaboration for wetlands ,

Wise use of wetlands, and

Wetland protection

Jayshree Vencatesan was honoured in the " wise use of wetlands' category.

Andrew G. Barto and Richard S. Sutton of the United States of America have been selected for the prestigious 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award.

The winner of the prestigious A.M.Turner award, which is considered as a Nobel Prize in Computing, was announced by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) in New York, United States of America.

Both the winners will share the \$1 million prize money sponsored by Google.

The founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of online stock broking company Zerodha Limited, Nitin Kamath, has been conferred with the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India award.

Award Winners of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India

Lifetime Achievement Award: KV Kamath, Independent Director and Non-executive Chairman of the Jio Financial Service Limited.

Special Jury Award: Dr S. Somnath, former Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).

EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India: Nitin Kamath, CEO of Zerodha Limited.

The Government of Barbados conferred its prestigious Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados Award to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 6th March 2025.

Masaki Kashiwara Wins the 2025 Abel Prize for Mathematics.

Japanese mathematician Masaki Kashiwara has been awarded the 2025 Abel Prize for his exceptional contributions to algebraic analysis and representation theory.

The Abel Prize is an international award given annually for outstanding achievements in mathematics.

Prize Money : 7.5 million Norwegian kroner (approximately \$720,000).

Punjab & Sind Bank has been recognized with the Top Improvers award in the EASE 6.0 Reforms Index, acknowledging its advancements in banking efficiency and customer service.

This recognition is part of the Enhanced Access & Service Excellence (EASE) initiative, which evaluates public sector banks (PSBs) on key performance metrics.

Violinist R.K. Shriramkumar has been selected for the prestigious Sangita Kalanidhi award for 2025, presented by the Music Academy.

Renowned hydrologist Günter Blöschl has been awarded the 2025 Stockholm Water Prize for his pioneering research in flood hydrology.

The award was given for his groundbreaking contributions in flood risk analysis and climate change research.

Vijay Sankar Honoured with Denmark's Knight's Cross.

Vijay Sankar, the Honorary Consul General of Denmark for Southern India and Chairman of The Sanmar Group, has been awarded the prestigious Knight's Cross of the Order of Dannebrog by the King of Denmark.

Chiranjeevi Honoured with Lifetime Achievement Award by UK Government.

Veteran Telugu cinema superstar Chiranjeevi was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his immense contribution to Indian cinema, cultural influence, and public service.

The award was presented by London-based think tank Bridge India at the prestigious House of Commons in the UK Parliament

Muthoot Microfin Wins Double Gold at SKOCH Awards 2025.

Muthoot Microfin, a leading microfinance institution dedicated to empowering women entrepreneurs, has achieved a significant milestone by securing two prestigious Gold Awards at the SKOCH Awards 2025.

These awards recognize the company's outstanding contributions to digital financial inclusion and innovative insurance solutions, reinforcing its role as a key player in India's microfinance sector.

Muthoot Microfin received two Gold Awards in recognition of its customer-centric digital initiatives and inclusive financial solutions:

1. Corporate Excellence – “Best Customer Application on Digital Financial Inclusion”.

2. BFSI Award – “Best Insurance Scheme”.

Delhi International Airport Wins Prestigious ASQ Award for Best Airport in Asia-Pacific.

GMR Airports Infrastructure Limited has announced that its subsidiary, Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), has been honored with the prestigious Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Airport Experience Award, 2024, for the Best Airport Over 40 Million Passengers in the Asia-Pacific region.

The International Indian Film Academy Awards (IIFA) 2025 in Jaipur, Rajasthan.

IIFA 2025 Full List of Winners.

Best Picture: Laapataa Ladies

Best Direction: Kiran Rao (Laapataa Ladies)

Best Performance in a Leading Role (Male): Kartik Aaryan (Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3)

Best Performance in a Leading Role (Female): Nitanshi Goel (Laapataa Ladies)

Best Singer (Male): Jubin Nautiyal (Dua from Article 370)

Best Singer (Female): Shreya Ghoshal (Ami Je Tomar 3.0 from Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3).

Outstanding Achievement in Indian Cinema: Rakesh Roshan.

One of the most remarkable aspects of IIFA 2025 was the overwhelming success of “Laapataa Ladies”, directed by Kiran Rao.

Dr. Suborno Bose Honored for Revolutionizing Hospitality Education.

Dr. Suborno Bose, Chairman of the International Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM), has been conferred the ‘Lifetime Achievement in Hospitality and Education Through Technology’ award by Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Shekhawat at the Vibrant Bharat Global Summit 2025.

ICC Youngest Chairman, Jay Shah Honored with Icon of Excellence Award at FILA 2025

Jay Shah, the chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC), has been honored with the prestigious Icon of Excellence award at the 14th Edition of the Forbes India Leadership Awards (FILA 2025). This award recognizes his outstanding contributions to cricket administration, his efforts to bring new ideas into the game, and his role in making cricket more inclusive and competitive worldwide. At just 36 years old, Jay Shah became the youngest chairman of the ICC in history.

Oscar Award 2025 officially known as the 97th Academy Awards, was a grand celebration of cinematic excellence.

Organized by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), the event took place at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles on March 2, 2025.

97th Academy Awards (Oscars Awards 2025)

Best Picture : Anora

Best Actor : Adrien Brody (The Brutalist)

Best Actress : Mikey Madison (Anora)

Best Director : Sean Baker (Anora)

Best International Feature Film : I'm Still Here

AWARDS AND HONOURS 2024-24

FEBRUARY 2025

Assam's Purnima Barman named "Woman of the Year" by Time magazine.

Dr Purnima Devi Barman, a wildlife biologist from Assam, has been included in the Time Magazine 2025 "Women of the Year" list.

Dr Purnima Devi Barman is among the 13 women across the globe to be included on the Time Magazine list.

Dr Purnima Devi Barman and her Conservation effort

A two-time Whitley Gold Awardee (2017 & 2024), Dr Purnima Devi Barman, was recognised for her effort in conserving the endangered bird, Hargila or Greater Adjutant Stork and its wetland habitat.

Dr. Barman mobilised the local people, especially women and children, to protect the Hargila bird and its ecosystem in Assam

Union Territory of Puducherry has decided to honour the organ donors as a mark of respect for their life-saving contributions.

The Puducherry government has done this to increase awareness about organ donations and support the families of organ donors.

India ranks third in the world in Organ transplantation, but in most cases, the donors are family members or relatives.

Double Olympic medal winner shooter Manu Bhaker has been named the 2024 Indian Sportswomen of the Year by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) of the United Kingdom.

In 2020, Manu Bhaker won the BBC's Emerging Athlete of the Year award.

2024 BBC Indian Sportswomen of the Year Award Winners.

Sportswomen of the Year- Manu Bhaker (Shooter)

Para-sportswoman of the year award -Avani Lekhara (won gold in 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris Paralympics in shooting).

Lifetime Achievement Award - Mithali Raj (former Indian women's cricket team captain).

Emerging Athlete of the Year- Sheetal Devi (youngest para-athlete to win a medal in Paralympics. She won a bronze in the Archery's Mixed team Open event at the 2024 Paris Paralympics.)

Indian-born American musician Chandrika Tandon won her first Grammy award in the ' Best New Age Album, Ambient or Chant Album category' for her album Triveni at the 67th Grammy Awards 2025.

The 67th annual Grammy Awards function was held at Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles, the United States of America, on 2 February 2025.

Award Winners of 67th Grammy 2025

Album of the Year.

Cowboy Carter - by Beyoncé

Record of the Year.

Not Like Us- by Kendrick Lamar

Song of the Year.

Not Like Us- by Kendrick Lamar, songwriter (Kendrick Lamar)

Best New Age Album Ambient or Chant Album.

Triveni- Chandrika Tandon, Wouter Kellerman, and Eru Matsumoto.

U P Bags the Best State Tableaux Award of Republic Day Parade 2025.

1st Position - Uttar Pradesh with a theme of 'Mahakumbh 2025 - Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas'.

2nd Position- Tripura with a theme of 'Eternal Reverence: The worship of 14 Deities in Tripura - Kharchi Puja'.

3rd Position- Andhra Pradesh with a theme of 'Etikoppaka Bommalu - Eco-Friendly Wooden Toys'.

Popular Choice Category

1st Position- Gujarat with a theme of 'Swarnim Bharat: Virasat Aur Vikas'.

2nd Position – Uttar Pradesh with a theme of 'Mahakumbh 2025 - Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas'.

3rd Position - Uttarakhand with a theme of 'Uttarakhand: Cultural Heritage and Adventure Sports'.

Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto was the Chief Guest at the 76th Republic Day celebration

The Nagaland Forest Management Project (NFMP) has been honored with the SKOCH Award 2024.

Nita Ambani received the Governor of Massachusetts' Citation for her contributions to philanthropy across education, healthcare, sports, arts, culture, and women's empowerment.

78th BAFTA Awards

Best : FilmConclave

Best Director : Brady Corbet (The Brutalist)

Best Actor in a Leading Role : Adrien Brody (The Brutalist)

Best Actress in a Leading Role : Mikey Madison (Anora)

NTPC Ltd has been conferred with the prestigious Forward Faster Sustainability Award 2025 in the Water Resilience category.

Hollywood icon Tom Cruise has been honored with the Grande Médaille, the highest award from the Aero-Club de France.

Varsha Bharath's directorial debut, Bad Girl, has won the prestigious NETPAC (Network for the Promotion of Asian Cinema) Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) 2025.

Late Chaman Arora will be posthumously honored with the Sahitya Akademi Award 2024 in Dogri for his short story collection Ik Hor Ashwthama.

Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha was conferred with the prestigious Maharaja Hari Singh Award at a grand ceremony held at Satyam Resort, Jammu.

The Indian short film Anuja has been nominated for Best Live Action Short Film at the 97th Academy Awards.

The film, directed by Adam J. Graves.

Hariman Sharma: The Apple Man of India Honored with Padma Shri.

Shri Hariman Sharma, a pioneering farmer from Himachal Pradesh, has been honored with the esteemed Padma Shri for his groundbreaking contributions to Indian agriculture.

He developed the HRMN-99 apple variety, which has revolutionized apple farming by enabling it to flourish in tropical.

Dhanwantari Ayurveda Awards Honor India's Healthcare Legacy.

The Ministry of Ayush has honored three distinguished practitioners with the National Dhanwantari Ayurveda Awards for their exceptional contributions to traditional Indian medicine.

Each awardee received a citation, a statue of Lord Dhanwantari, and a cash prize of ₹5 lakh.

Kannada writer Banu Mushtaq's short story collection Heart Lamp, translated into English by Deepa Bhashti, has been longlisted for the prestigious International Booker Prize 2025.

Total Prize: £50,000 (equally split between author and translator).

Shortlisted books: £5,000 per book (£2,500 each for author and translator).

Tomb of Sand by Geetanjali Shree (Winner, 2022) – First Hindi novel to win.

Sunil Mittal Receives Honorary Knighthood from UK.

Bharti Enterprises founder and chairman, Sunil Bharti Mittal, has been awarded an Honorary Knighthood (KBE) for his contributions to strengthening India-UK business relations.

Mopa Airport Wins Prestigious 'Sarvashrestha Suraksha Puraskar'.

Manohar International Airport (GOX), developed and operated by GMR Goa International Airport Ltd. (GGIAL), has made history by becoming the first airport in India to receive the esteemed "Sarvashrestha Suraksha Puraskar (Golden Trophy)" at the National Safety Council of India (NSCI) Safety Awards 2024 under the 'Service Sector' category.

First Airport in India to receive the 'Sarvashrestha Suraksha Puraskar (Golden Trophy)' under the 'Service

Sector' category.

The Nagaland Forest Management Project (NFMP) has been honored with the SKOCH Award 2024, a prestigious recognition that celebrates outstanding contributions to national development.

AWARDS AND HONOURS 2024-24

JANUARY 2025

Indian men's cricket Test team vice-captain Jasprit Bumrah has been honoured with the 2024 Sir Garfield Sobers Award for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year Award and the ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year Award.

Fellow Indian pace bowler Arshdeep Singh was selected for the ICC Men's T20 International Cricketer of the Year Award and Smriti Mandhana was chosen for the ICC Women's ODI (One Day International) Cricketer of the Year Award.

Jasprit Bumrah became the fifth Indian cricketer after Rahul Dravid (2004), Sachin Tendulkar (2010), Ravichandran Ashwin (2016) and Virat Kohli (2017, 2018) to receive the Sir Garfield Sobers Award for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year Award

INCOIS gets Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2025.

Hyderabad-based Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) has been selected for the 2025 Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar in the Institutional category. No individual has been chosen for the award this year.

For the Institutional winners, the cash prize is Rs. 51 lakh and a certificate and in the case of an individual, the cash prize is Rs 5 lakh and a certificate.

Captain of Argentina men's football team Lionel Messi was among the 19 people to be honored with the United States of America's highest civilian award 'The Presidential Medal of Freedom' in a ceremony at the White House on 5 January 2025.

National Sports Award 2024.

Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award winners

Gukesh D - Chess

Harmanpreet Singh - Hockey

Praveen Kumar - Para-Athletics

Manu Bhaker - Shooting.

Arjuna Award winners

Jyothi Yarraji - Athletics

Annu Rani - Athletics

Nitu Ghanghas - Boxing

Saweety Boora - Boxing

Vantika Agrawal - Chess

Salima Tete - Hockey

Abhishek - Hockey

Sanjay - Hockey

Jarmanpreet Singh - Hockey

Sukhjeet Singh - Hockey

Rakesh Kumar - Para-Archery

Preeti Pal - Para-Athletics

Jeevanji Deepthi - Para-Athletics

Ajeet Singh - Para-Athletics

Sachin Sarjerao Khilari - Para-Athletics

Dharambir - Para-Athletics

Pranav Soorma - Para-Athletics

Hokato Hotozhe Sema - Para-Athletics

Simran Sharma - Para-Athletics

Navdeep Singh - Para-Athletics

Nitesh Kumar - Para-Badminton

Thulasimathi Murugesan - Para-Badminton

Nithya Sre Sivan - Para-Badminton

Manisha Ramadass - Para-Badminton

Kapil Parmar - Para-Judo

Mona Agarwal - Para-Shooting
 Rubina Francis - Para-Shooting
 Swapnil Kusale - Shooting
 Sarabjot Singh - Shooting
 Abhay Singh - Squash
 Sajan Prakash - Swimming
 Aman Sehrawat - Wrestling.

Arjuna Awards (Lifetime) winners

Sucha Singh - Athletics
 Murlikant Petkar - Para-Swimming
 Dronacharya Award winners

Regular Category

Subhash Rana - Para-Shooting
 Deepali Deshpande - Shooting
 Sandeep Sangwan - Hockey

Lifetime Category

S Muralidharan - Badminton
 Armando Colaco - Football
 Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puraskar winner
 Physical Education Foundation of India

Maulana Abul Kalam Azad Trophy winners

Overall winner University- Chandigarh University - Overall winner University
 1st runner up University-Lovely Professional University,
 2nd runner-up University- Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar

Doordarshan, India's national broadcaster, has been honoured with an award in the Electronic Media category for its outstanding campaign on Voter Awareness and Education during the Lok Sabha Elections 2024.

The recognition highlights its impactful series "Chunav Ka Parv Desh Ka Garv".

The 55th World Economic Forum in Davos honored David Beckham, Diane von Furstenberg, and Riken Yamamoto with the Crystal Award for their significant contributions to social and environmental change.

Professor Urbasi Sinha, a distinguished faculty member in the Light and Matter Physics theme at the Raman Research Institute (RRI), has been awarded the prestigious Gates-Cambridge Impact Prize 2025 by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation at Cambridge, UK.

Renowned mridangist T.V. Gopalakrishnan has been selected to receive the RK Srikantan Trust Award during the Sankranti Music Fest.

Kerala's renowned Kappad beach in Kozhikode and Chal beach in Kannur have been awarded the prestigious Blue Flag certification by the Denmark-based Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). India has 13 Blue Flag beaches, including Kappad and Chal, demonstrating its commitment to sustainable tourism.

Sai Paranjpye will be awarded the Padmapani Lifetime Achievement Award at the Ajanta-Ellora International Film Festival (AIFF) 2025.

Renowned Odia poet Prativa Satpathy will receive the prestigious Gangadhar National Award for Poetry 2023

AWARDS AND HONOURS 2024-24

DECEMBER 2024

President Droupadi Murmu conferred the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar on 17 children -ten girls and seven boys - at a ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhavan Cultural Centre, New Delhi on 26 December 2024.

The award was announced and conferred on the occasion of the Veer Baal Diwas.

The winner of the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar is awarded a Medal, a Certificate, and a Cash prize of Rs. One Lakh.

It is awarded to children aged between 5-18 years for their exceptional performance! abilities and outstanding achievements. In a year a maximum of 25 children are honoured.

Category of Award

The award is given in seven categories broadly divided into Child Bravery and Child Excellence. The Child Excellence Award is given to children with exceptional abilities and outstanding achievements in : (i) innovation (ii) Arts & Culture (iii) Science & Technology (iv) Environment (v) Social Service (vi) Sports.

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Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has achieved a significant milestone by being re-certified as a 'Great Place to Work' for the period January 2025 to January 2026.

Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL), the corporate entity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP), has won the prestigious Gold Award at the Andhra Pradesh State Energy Conservation Award 2024.

External Affairs Minister S. Jaishankar was awarded the Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award for Public Leadership by South Indian Education Society (SIES) .

Prime Minister Narendra Modi received Kuwait's highest civilian honor, the Order of Mubarak Al Kabeer. This esteemed recognition is the 20th international accolade conferred upon PM Modi.

The Order of Mubarak Al Kabeer is Kuwait's highest knighthood order.

Caitlin Sandra Neil Crowned Miss India USA 2024.

Caitlin Sandra Neil, a 19-year-old Indian-American teenager born in Chennai, India, has been crowned Miss India USA 2024 .

Tom Cruise has been awarded the US Navy's prestigious Distinguished Public Service Award for his exceptional contributions to the military, particularly through his iconic roles in movies like Top Gun.

Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairperson of Biocon, awarded the Jamsetji Tata Award by ISQ for pioneering the biosciences movement in India.

Awarded for significant contributions to quality and commitment in business and society

Hindi writer Suryabala has been awarded the 34th Vyas Samman 2024 for her novel Kaun Des Ko Vasi: Venu Ki Diary.

Instituted in 1991 by the KK Birla Foundation, the Vyas Samman honors outstanding Hindi literary works from the past decade, offering a cash prize of ₹4 lakh.

The Indian film "The Kumbaya Story" has gained international recognition by winning the Transforming Society Short Film category at the 13th tve Global Sustainability Film Awards (GSFA).

Two Indian heritage conservation projects—the Abathasahayeswarar Temple Conservation Project in Tamil Nadu and the BJPCI Conservation Project in Maharashtra—have garnered global recognition by winning the UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2024.

Ang Lee, the celebrated Taiwanese American filmmaker, has been named the recipient of the Directors Guild of America (DGA) 2025 Lifetime Achievement Award.

The 2024 Champions of the Earth, the United Nations' highest environmental honor, were awarded to six extraordinary individuals and organizations for their outstanding leadership, courageous actions, and sustainable solutions to combat land degradation, drought, and desertification.

UN Champions of the Earth Award 2024

1. Sonia Guajajara (Brazil) – Policy Leadership
2. Amy Bowers Cordalis (United States) – Inspiration and Action
3. Gabriel Paun (Romania) – Inspiration and Action
4. Lu Qi (China) – Science and Innovation
5. Madhav Gadgil (India) – Lifetime Achievement
6. SEKEM Initiative (Egypt) – Entrepreneurial Vision.

Veteran filmmaker Shaji N Karun has been selected for the prestigious JC Daniel Award 2023 for his

lifetime contributions to Malayalam cinema.

The JC Daniel Award is the highest honor for a filmmaker in Kerala.

The award includes a purse of Rs 5 lakh, a citation, and a statuette.

Telugu Woman Banker Honored as Rising Star in Banking 2024.

Bharati Kolli, a 43-year-old woman from Vizianagaram district in Andhra Pradesh, has been recognized as one of the Rising Star Women Leaders of Banking for 2024 by the renowned women's group, Women We Admire.

Payal Kapadia is the first Indian nominated for Best Director (Motion Picture) at the Golden Globes.

All We Imagine As Light is also nominated for Best Motion Picture (Non-English Language).

Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL), a leader in India's shipbuilding and ship repair industry, garnered two prestigious awards at the 3rd PSU Transformation Awards 2024.

India has been awarded the prestigious ISSA Good Practice Award for Asia and Pacific 2024.

Jasleen Kaur has been awarded the Turner Prize 2024, one of the world's most prestigious accolades in contemporary art.

Nurse Maria Victoria Juan has been honoured with the Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award 2024.

AWARDS AND HONOURS 2024-24

NOVEMBER 2024

Victoria Kjaer Theilvig of Denmark was crowned Miss Universe 2024 at the 73rd edition of the prestigious pageant in the Mexico City Arena.

The 73rd Miss Universe pageant held in Mexico marked a historic milestone for Denmark as Victoria Kjaer Theilvig was crowned the nation's first-ever Miss Universe.

First Runner-up: Chidimma Adetshina (Nigeria).

Second Runner-up: Maria Fernanda Beltran (Mexico)

Narendra Modi was conferred the prestigious national award, "Grand Commander of the Order of Niger", by Nigeria.

PM Modi became the second foreign leader after Queen Elizabeth (1969) to receive this honor.

This marks Modi's 17th international honor for his contributions to global leadership.

GMR Hyderabad International Airport Limited (GHIAL) has received global recognition at the prestigious 'Airport Excellence Awards'.

Manoj Bajpayee's 'The Fable' Triumphs at Leeds International Film Festival.

Manoj Bajpayee's critically acclaimed film The Fable has won the Best Film award at the 38th Leeds International Film Festival, adding to its growing recognition on the global stage. The film, directed by Raam Reddy.

British Writer Samantha Harvey Wins Booker Prize for Fiction with "Orbital".

British author Samantha Harvey has won the prestigious Booker Prize for Fiction for her novel "Orbital," a thought-provoking and imaginative exploration set in the unique setting of the International Space Station (ISS).

Harvey, who wrote "Orbital" during the COVID-19 pandemic lockdown, was deeply inspired by the sense of confinement and introspection brought on by the global crisis.

The Booker Prize, one of the most prestigious awards in the literary world, was awarded to Harvey with a £50,000 prize.

The Booker Prize is a literary award presented annually for the best original novel written in English and published in the UK or Ireland.

The award is given to novels written in English and published in the UK or Ireland. It is open to any nationality.

Veteran Australian filmmaker Phillip Noyce, renowned for his acclaimed works such as Clear and Present Danger, Salt, and Rabbit-Proof Fence, will be honored with the prestigious Satyajit Ray Lifetime Achievement Award at the 55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI).

The festival, which will be held in Goa from November 20-28, 2024, has Australia as its Country of Focus this year.

55th International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 2024.

Location: Goa

Organizers: Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (I&B), National Film Development Corporation (NFDC), Entertainment Society of Goa (ESG)

Theme: “Young Filmmakers” – The Future is Now.

Opening Film: Better Man by Michael Gracey (Asia premiere).

Country of Focus: Australia

The Golden Peacock Award at the International Film Festival of India (IFFI) comes with a cash prize of ₹40 lakh.

The Silver Peacock comes with a cash prize of ₹10 lakh.

Kunal Dalal Honored at Education World India School Rankings 2024.

Kunal Dalal, Managing Director of JBCN Education, was recently honored as the Education Leader of the Year at the Education World India School Ranking Awards 2024-2025 held in Gurgaon.

Anil Pradhan has been awarded the prestigious Rohini Nayyar Prize for 2024, recognizing his impactful contributions to rural development in India

The award includes a cash prize of Rs. 10 lakh, a citation, and a trophy.

Anil Pradhan, co-founder of the Young Tinker Foundation, received the Rohini Nayyar Prize for his work in STEM education for underserved communities.

Indian Chemical Council Honored with 2024 OPCW-The Hague Award.

Indian Chemical Council (ICC) was awarded the prestigious 2024 OPCW-The Hague Award at the 29th Session of the Conference of the States Parties (CSP) of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) held in The Hague on November 25, 2024.

PM Modi received the ‘Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Global Peace Award for Minority Upliftment’ in absentia.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been conferred prestigious awards by Guyana and Dominica in recognition of his significant contributions during the COVID-19 pandemic.

PM Modi was awarded ‘The Order of Excellence,’ Guyana’s highest honor, by President Irfaan Ali.

Modi was also conferred the ‘Dominica Award of Honour’ by President Sylvanie Burton of Dominica.

Shivangi Desai Crowned Miss Charm India 2024.

Coal India Limited Honoured with Green World Environment Award 2024 in the Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) category.

The Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development for 2023 was awarded to Daniel Barenboim, a world-famous pianist and conductor, and Ali Abu Awwad, a Palestinian peace activist.

This prestigious award recognizes their remarkable efforts to promote peace and non-violence.

APPOINTMENTS 2025

APRIL 2025

Dr. Mohan Rajan Elected Vice-President of All India Ophthalmological Society (AIOS).

Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) has appointed Viral Davda as its new Deputy Chief Information Officer (CIO).

The Oman India Joint Investment Fund (OIJIF) has appointed Satish Chavva as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Supreme Court collegium made a significant recommendation for the appointment of Justice Arun Palli as the Chief Justice of the Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) and Ladakh High Court.

Seema Agrawal, a senior Indian Police Service (IPS) officer, has been appointed as the new Director-General of Police (DGP)/ Director of Fire and Rescue Services.

She takes this position after the retirement of former DGP Abhash Kumar.

Mohsin Naqvi, the Chairman of the Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), has officially taken over as the new President of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC), succeeding Sri Lanka’s Shammi Silva.

The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has appointed Sohini Rajola as its Executive Director.

Renowned actor and filmmaker Kamal Haasan has been appointed as the Chairperson of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry’s (FICCI) Media and Entertainment Committee South.

Government of India has approved the appointment of Swaminathan S. Iyer as a whole-time member (life) of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).

SBI Cards and Payment Services (SBI Card) has appointed Salila Pande as its new Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO), effective April 1, 2025.

N Chandrasekaran, the Chairman of Tata Sons, has been appointed as a member of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) Managing Director’s Advisory Council on Entrepreneurship and Growth

APPOINTMENTS 2025

MARCH 2025

SBI Chief CS Setty Appointed as Chairman of Indian Banks Association (IBA).

The Indian Banks Association (IBA), the apex body representing the banking sector in India, has elected Challa Sreenivasalu Setty, the Chairman of State Bank of India (SBI), as its new chairman for the upcoming fiscal year.

He succeeds MV Rao, Chief Executive of the Central Bank of India, who served as the previous chairman.

Rajneet Kohli, the former CEO of Britannia Industries, has been appointed as Executive Director of the Foods and Refreshment Division at Hindustan Unilever (HUL).

He will take over from Shiva Krishnamurthy.

L&T Finance Ltd. Names Jasprit Bumrah as Brand Ambassador.

L&T Finance Ltd. (LTF), one of India's leading Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs), has announced Indian cricketer Jasprit Bumrah as its brand ambassador.

Yusuf Pachmariwala Appointed as Managing Director & CEO of Hitachi Cash Management Services.

Hitachi Cash Management Services (CMS), a subsidiary of Hitachi Payment Services, has officially announced the appointment of Yusuf Pachmariwala as its Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO), effective April 1, 2025.

He will be succeeding Anup Neogi.

Rahul Bhawe Appointed as MD & CEO of IFCI.

The government has approved the appointment of Rahul Bhawe as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI).

Canara Bank has appointed S. K. Majumdar as its Executive Director.

Former Cabinet Secretary Rajiv Gauba has been appointed as a Full-Time Member of NITI Aayog.

Sanjay Singh, the president of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), has been elected as a Bureau Member of United World Wrestling (UWW)-Asia.

Ashok Singh Thakur has been elected as the new chairman of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage (INTACH) for a three-year term.

Gopal Vittal, Vice Chairman and Managing Director of Bharti Airtel, has been elected as the Chairman of the Board of the Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA).

Ajay Seth, the current Economic Affairs Secretary, as the new Finance Secretary.

The Government of India has named Ajay Seth as the Finance Secretary, succeeding Tuhin Kanta Pandey.

Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company (EARC) has appointed Mythili Balasubramanian as its Interim Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Justice Harish Tandon has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court.

Online travel platform Goibibo has onboarded Indian cricketer Rishabh Pant as its new brand ambassador unveiling a campaign that also features legendary cricketer Sunil Gavaskar.

Anuj Kumar Singh has been appointed as Joint Secretary in UPSC

Amitabh Kant Appointed as NIIT University Chancellor.

NIIT University (NU) has appointed Shri Amitabh Kant, former NITI Aayog CEO and India's G20 Sherpa, as its new Chancellor (Chairperson).

Succeeds Shri K Kasturirangan, a distinguished scientist.

Kirsty Coventry of Zimbabwe has been elected as the 10th President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

She will succeed Thomas Bach on 23rd June 2025 which is also the Olympic Day.

Kirsty Coventry is the first woman and African to be elected as the President of the IOC.

The term of the IOC President is eight years. The President is eligible for re-election once for a period of four years.

Thus Kirsty Coventry will be in office till 2033.

About Kirsty Coventry

Kirsty Coventry is a former swimmer who represented Zimbabwe in international sporting events.

A five time Olympian, Kirsty won seven medals - two gold, four silver, one bronze.

She won gold at the 2004 Athens and 2008 Beijing Olympics.

She has won golds in the Commonwealth and African Games.

Fino Payments Bank (FPB) has re-appointed Deena Mehta as an Independent Director for a second

term.
Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed Indranil Bhattacharyya as Executive Director (ED).
Krishnamachari Srikanth Named Goodwill Ambassador of VISION 2020 India to Combat Avoidable Blindness
Former Indian cricket captain and renowned batsman Krishnamachari Srikanth has been appointed as the Goodwill Ambassador of VISION 2020 India, an initiative aimed at eliminating avoidable blindness in the country.
Bajaj Auto has announced the reappointment of Rajiv Bajaj as Managing Director and CEO for another five-year term.
Jasprit Bumrah Joins Skechers as Brand Ambassador, Strengthening Its Presence in Cricket.
Renowned Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana has been officially named as the 'Fit India Icon' by Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya.
Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited (TAFE) has appointed Dr. Lakshmi Venu as its Vice Chairman.
Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), replacing Professor Abhay Karandikar.
Tata Communications has officially announced the appointment of N Ganapathy Subramaniam (NGS) as the Chairman of the Board of Directors.
Arun Mammen Elected as Chairman of Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA).
Atul Kumar Goel Assumes Charge as Chief Executive of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA).
Takashi Nakajima has been appointed as the new President and CEO of Honda Cars India Ltd. Nakajima will succeed Takuya Tsumura.
The government has appointed Vikas Kaushal as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL).
Anju Rathi Rana appointed as The First Woman Law Secretary.
India has reached a significant milestone in its legal and administrative history with the appointment of Anju Rathi Rana as the country's first woman law secretary.
Ajay Bhadoo Appointed CEO of Government e Marketplace (GeM).
Dr. Mayank Sharma took charge as the Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA).
Levi's, the globally renowned denim brand, has appointed Diljit Dosanjh as its global ambassador.
Ajay Seth, the Economic Affairs Secretary, has been assigned the additional charge of Secretary, Department of Revenue.
The appointment was necessitated following the transition of Tuhin Kanta Pandey, the former Revenue Secretary, to his new role as the Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
Senior advocate Manan Kumar Mishra has once again secured his position as the Chairman of the Bar Council of India (BCI).
SBI Life Insurance Company has appointed Dorababu Daparti as its Deputy Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

APPOINTMENTS 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2025

The government has appointed Shaktikanta Das as Principal Secretary-2 to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
Shaktikanta Das, who was the 25th RBI governor, completed a six-year term in December 2024.
Shri Shaktikanta Das, IAS Retd., former Secretary, Department of Revenue and Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India assumed charge as the 25th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India effective December 12, 2018.
Immediately prior to his current assignment, he was acting as Member, 15th Finance Commission and G20 Sherpa of India.
Shri Das has also served as India's Alternate Governor in the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), New Development Bank (NDB) and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). He has represented India in international fora like the IMF, G20, BRICS, SAARC, etc.
Indian-origin Kash Patel was officially sworn in as the ninth Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).
The Indian government has extended V. Anantha Nageswaran's tenure as Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) until March 2027.

Gyanesh Kumar assumed office as India's 26th Chief Election Commissioner (CEC).
 He replaced Rajiv Kumar
 Vivek Joshi has been appointed as Election Commissioner of India.
 The other member of the three-member Election Commission of India is Dr Sukhbir Singh Sandhu.
 The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners hold office for six years or until they attain sixty-five years of age, whichever is earlier.
 The President of India appoints the Chief Election Commissioner under Article 324 of the Constitution.

Standard Chartered Bank has received RBI approval to appoint Prabdev (P.D.) Singh as its India and South Asia CEO, effective April 1, 2025.
 He will succeed Zarin Daruwala.

Nokia has appointed Justin Hotard as its new CEO, effective April 1, 2025, succeeding Pekka Lundmark.
 Telecom company Nokia belongs to Finland .

K Balasubramanian has been appointed as the new India Subcontinent Sub-Cluster and Banking Head for Citibank, succeeding Ashu Khullar, subject to approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Rekha Gupta of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was sworn in as the 4th woman and 9th Chief Minister of the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi.
 The first-time MLA from Shalimar Bagh constituency.
 Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma, who defeated former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the recently held 8th Delhi Legislative Assembly Election 2025, was sworn in as the Deputy Chief Minister of NCT Delhi.
 The BJP won 48 seats in the 70-member Delhi Legislative Assembly election held on 5th February 2025.
 The ruling Aam Aadmi Party won only 22 seats, and its founder and former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal lost his seat to Parvesh Verma of the BJP.

Bart De Wever was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Belgium .

Tuhin Kanta Pandey has been appointed as the 11th Chairperson of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for a three-year term.
 He succeeds Madhabi Puri Buch, the first woman chairperson of SEBI.

N Chandrasekaran, the Chairman of Tata Sons, has been appointed as the head of the Ratan Tata Endowment Foundation (RTEF).

Unilever CEO Hein Schumacher Steps Down.
 Unilever, a leading consumer goods giant, announced a significant change in its leadership, Hein Schumacher, who has been the CEO since July 2023, will step down in March 2025.
 His replacement will be Fernando Fernandez, the current CFO of the company.

APPOINTMENTS 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

Maruti Suzuki India Limited has re-appointment of Hisashi Takeuchi as its Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO).
 Takeuchi's term has been extended for a period of three years, effective from April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2028.

Rajesh Nirwan Appointed as Director General of Bureau of Civil Aviation Security (BCAS).

Vedanta Resources Ltd (VRL) has appointed Deshnee Naidoo as its first Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Sridhar Vembu, co-founder and CEO of Chennai/US-based Zoho Corp, will step down as the company's CEO.
 The company's co-founder Shailesh Kumar Davey will serve as new group CEO.

Jitender Pal Singh Appointed as India's New Ambassador to Israel.
 Bollywood actor Ayushmann Khurrana has been named the brand ambassador for the 25th anniversary edition of FICCI Frames in 2025.

Akhil Gupta, Vice Chairman of Bharti Enterprises, was appointed as the new Chairman of Bharti AXA Life Insurance.

Reliance Power Limited has appointed Neeraj Parakh as its Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer (CEO), effective January 20, 2025, for a tenure of three years.

Justice Devendra Kumar Upadhyaya Takes Oath as Chief Justice of Delhi High Court

Justice Alok Aradhe Appointed as Chief Justice of Bombay High Court

Sanjiv Ranjan has been appointed as the new Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association (IORA).

Angel One has appointed Ambarish Kenghe as its Group Chief Executive Officer, effective March 2025.
Gyanendra Pratap Singh, currently DGP of Assam police, is appointed as the new Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) till November 30, 2027, succeeding Anish Dayal Singh.
Justice Arun Mishra has been appointed as the Ombudsman and Ethics Officer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI).
Justice Krishnan Vinod Chandran was sworn in as the newest judge of the Supreme Court of India . Judicial Strength : Supreme Court now has 33 judges, one short of its sanctioned strength of 34.
Arunish Chawla has been appointed as the Secretary, of the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM). DIPAM Tuhin Kanta Pandey has been appointed by the government of India as the new Revenue Secretary, Union Ministry of Finance. Tuhin Kanta Pandey has also been designated as the Finance Secretary of India.
Bahadur Singh Sagoo has been unanimously elected as the new President of the Athletics Federation of India. Bahadur Singh Sagoo will replace Adille Sumariwalla who has been the President of the Athletics Federation of India since 2012. The term of the newly elected President, Secretary General and the Treasurer is four years (2025-2029).
The government of India has appointed V. Narayanan as the 11th chairman of ISRO and secretary of the Department of Space (DOS). He will succeed the current chairman S.Somanth and assume office on 14 January 2025. V. Narayanan has been appointed for a term of two years . V.Narayanan joined ISRO in 1984 and later became the director of the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC).
Faiz Ahmed Kidwai has been appointed as the new Director-General (DG) of the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA).
The Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM) has appointed Manish Singhal as its new Secretary General replacing Deepak Sood.
Bhuvnesh Kumar has taken over as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI). He replaces Amit Aggarwal
Alexander Lukashenko has been reelected for the seventh consecutive time as the President of the tiny Eastern European nation of Belarus, for a term of five years.
Micheal Martin became the (taoiseach) Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland.
The Institute of Company Secretaries of India (ICSI) has elected its new office bearers for 2025.
Company Secretary (CS) Dhananjay Shukla has been elected as the President and CS Pawan G Chandak has been elected as the Vice-President of the ICSI.
Nripendra Mishra reappointed Chairperson of PM Museum & Library Society for a term of 5 years.
Joseph Aoun was elected as the President of Lebanon

APPOINTMENTS 2024-25

DECEMBER 2024

President Droupadi Murmu appointed former Supreme Court judge V Ramasubramanian as the 9th Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) . Justice (retd) V Balasubramanian will succeed Vijaya Bharathi Sayani.
Dr. Sandip Shah has been appointed as the new Chairperson of the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL).
President Droupadi Murmu appointed five new governors of the state. Ajay Kumar Bhalla Governor of Manipur. Ajay Kumar Bhalla is the longest-serving Home Secretary.
Former Army Chief General V.K Singh appointed Mizoram Governor . President also appointed Arif Mohammed Khan, presently Governor of Kerala as Bihar governor. He will replace Vishwanath Arlekar who has been appointed as the new Governor of Kerala. Odisha Governor Raghubar Das, the President appointed the Mizoram Governor Hari Babu Kambhampati as the new Governor of Odisha.
List of newly appointed Governors

Bihar - Arif Mohammed Khan
 Kerala- Vishwanath Arlekar
 Manipur - Ajay Kumar Bhalla
 Mizoram- Retd. General Vijay Kumar Singh
 Odisha - Hari Babu Kambhampati .

About State Governors

Article 153 of the constitution provides for a Governor for each state in India. A person can be appointed as a Governor of two or more states.

The Governor is appointed by the President of India on the advice of the Union Council of Ministers headed by the Prime Minister.

The governor of a state in India should be a citizen of India and at least 35 years of age.

The normal term of a governor is five years, but the governor holds the office at the pleasure of the President.

Justice Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia as the new Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court.

The Kho Kho Federation of India (KKFI) has officially appointed Bollywood superstar Salman Khan as the brand ambassador for the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup, which will be held in New Delhi from January 13 to 19, 2025.

Google has announced the appointment of Preeti Lobana as its new Country Manager and Vice President for India.

Bhavesh Jain has been appointed as the new MD & CEO of TransUnion CIBIL, succeeding Rajesh Kumar, who stepped down after five years.

Eurogrip Tyres, a leading Indian brand known for its 2, 3-wheeler, and off-highway tyres, has recently signed M.S. Dhoni, the legendary cricketer, as its brand ambassador.

Dr. Jaiteerth Raghavendra Joshi has been named the new Chief of BrahMos Aerospace.

Sanjay Malhotra Appointed 26th Governor of RBI.

Revenue Secretary, Union Ministry of Finance, Sanjay Malhotra, has been appointed the 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

He will assume office on 11 December 2024 after the incumbent Governor, Shaktikanta Das, retires on 10 December 2024.

Sanjay Malhotra has been appointed for three years.

Under section 8 of the Reserve Bank of India Act 1934, the Central government appoints the Governor and four Deputy Governors of the RBI.

According to the RBI Act 1934, the Governor or the Deputy Governor can be appointed for a maximum term of five years and is eligible for reappointment.

It means that one term of the Governor or the Deputy Governor can be up to 5 years.

APPOINTMENTS 2024-25

NOVEMBER 2024

The President of India, Droupadi Murmu, has appointed K Sanjay Murthy as India's next Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

He will succeed the incumbent, Girish Chandra Murmu.

For 6 years from the date of assumption of office or till age 65 (whichever is earlier).

The Comptroller and Auditor General is a constitutional body under Article 148 of the Indian constitution.

Valdecy Urquiza Elected New Secretary General of Interpol.

Brazilian Federal Police Commissioner Valdecy Urquiza has been elected as the new Secretary General of Interpol at the organization's 92nd General Assembly, held in Glasgow, Scotland, from November 4 to 7, 2024.

Urquiza will assume office on November 7, 2024, succeeding Jurgen Stock, who served for 10 years.

International Criminal Police Organization.

Founded: 1923

Headquarters: Lyon, France.

Member Countries: 196

Australia has appointed Chris Evans as its first Anti-Slavery Commissioner to combat modern slavery, including human trafficking and forced labour.

Amandeep Johl appointed CEO of The Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) effective January 1, 2025.

He replaces Uttam Singh Mundy
Arvindar Singh Sahney has been appointed as the new chairman of Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), the nation's largest oil firm.
Mara Kocho has been recommended as the next Managing Director (MD) of the North Eastern Handicrafts & Handlooms Development Corporation Limited (NEHHDC)
Sonu Sood, the celebrated actor, humanitarian, and philanthropist, has taken on an exciting new role as the Brand Ambassador and Honorary Tourism Advisor for Thailand.
Justice Sanjiv Khanna sworn in as the 51st Chief Justice of India. Justice Khanna's term as CJI will last until May 13, 2025. He succeeds Justice D.Y. Chandrachud, whose term ended on November 10, 2024. Oath Administered By : President Droupadi Murmu at Rashtrapati Bhavan
Harsha Vardhan Agarwal has been named the President of Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI). He Will succeed Anish Shah as President of FICCI.
Itaru Otani appointed as the new Chairman of India Yamaha Motor.
Multi Commodity Exchange of India (MCX), Praveena Rai has officially taken office as Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and Managing Director (MD) on October 31, 2024, embarking on a five-year term.
Dr. Jacqueline d'Arros Hughes, the outgoing Director General of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), is set to take up the role of Secretary General of the World Agriculture Forum (WAF) in mid-November 2024.
Dinesh Bhatia has been appointed as the next Ambassador of India to Brazil.
Balasubramanian, a distinguished Indian Foreign Service (IFS) has been appointed as the next High Commissioner of India to the Republic of Maldives.
Actor Pankaj Tripathi has been appointed as the festival ambassador for the Arunachal Rang Mahotsav 2024.
Mithali Raj has been appointed as the mentor for Women's Cricket Operations by the Andhra Cricket Association (ACA).

AGREEMENT, SIGN & MOU

APRIL 2025

India & Italy sign MoU for cooperation in the field of scientific research.
India signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Nepal to further cooperation in Agriculture.
India and Sri Lanka have signed seven memorandum of understanding (MoUs) during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to Sri Lanka. During his Sri Lankan visit, Prime Minister Modi was also honoured with Sri Lankan highest civilian award - Mitra Vibhushana. MoUs MoU on Interconnection for Import/Export of Power; MOU on digital transformation, to enable the development and scaling up of digital solutions for Sri Lanka across the entire digital public infrastructure domain; MoU on Development of Trincomalee as an Energy Hub by India, Sri Lanka, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE); MoU on Defence Cooperation; MoU on Grant Assistance of 2.37 billion from India for socio-economic projects in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka; Cooperation in the Field of Health & Medicine; MoU on recognition of the Indian pharmacopoeia by Sri Lanka.
India and Thailand have agreed to elevate their bilateral relationship to a Strategic Partnership. This was agreed during the meeting of Prime Minister Narendra Modi with Thailand's Prime Minister Ms Paetongtarn Shinawatra in Bangkok on 3rd April 2025. India and Thailand also signed five Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) to deepen bilateral ties.
Microsoft signs MoU with Maharashtra to set up three AI Centers. In a boost to Digital India and to boost the adoption of artificial intelligence in the state administration, the Government of Maharashtra has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Microsoft

Corporation to establish three Artificial Intelligence (AI) centres of excellence in Mumbai, Pune, and Nagpur.

India and Chile have signed four Memorandum of Understanding (MoUs) during the visit of the Chilean President Gabriel Boric Font to India.

President Boric was on his first official visit to India from 1-6 April 2025.

MoUs

Letter of Intent to Strengthen Existing Antarctic Cooperation. It will facilitate joint scientific research in Antarctica.

Bilateral Cultural Exchange Program for the period 2024 - 2028.

Cooperation on Disaster Management.

MoU between CODELCO, Chile, and Hindustan Copper Limited for cooperation and exchange of information regarding exploration and mining. Chile is the largest producer of Copper in the world.

AGREEMENT, SIGN & MOU 2025

MARCH 2025

India and New Zealand have signed five agreements including on defence and agreed to launch a negotiation on free trade area agreement to boost the trade ties between the two countries.

The agreements were signed during the visit of New Zealand's Prime Minister Christopher Luxon to India.

Christopher Luxon was on his first official visit to India from 16-20 March 2025.

Five MoU and Agreements

MoU to further Defence Cooperation between India and New Zealand;

Memorandum of Cooperation on Horticulture;

Memorandum of Cooperation in Sports;

Cooperation Agreement between the two countries on Education;

Cooperation on Forestry.

About New Zealand

Capital: Wellington

Currency: New Zealand Dollar

Prime Minister: Christopher Luxon.

India and Nepal have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to promote cooperation in the field of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) sector and waste management.

DARPG and Bhashini Collaborate for a Multimodal, Multilingual Grievance Redressal System.

Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG) has partnered with Digital India Bhashini to launch an AI-powered, multimodal, multilingual grievance redressal system for CPGRAMS.

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI), in collaboration with IIIT-Hyderabad, has launched a large-scale Biometric SDK Benchmarking Challenge to enhance fingerprint authentication for children.

The Lanka India Business Association (LIBA) has been officially launched in Sri Lanka to enhance economic collaboration between India and Sri Lanka.

With India poised to become the world's second-largest economy by 2075.

Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) YuWaah have signed a Statement of Intent (SOI) to empower rural women and youth across India

Centrico Insurance Repository, a subsidiary of Central Depository Services Limited (CDSL), has signed an agreement with the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) to provide digital insurance repository services.

India and Singapore have signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) on Green and Digital Shipping Corridor (GDSC).

SEBI Partners with DigiLocker to Reduce Unclaimed Assets and Strengthen Investor Protection.

Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Bank of Mauritius (BOM) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to facilitate the use of the Indian Rupee (INR) and the Mauritian Rupee (MUR) for cross-border transactions.

UIDAI Partners with Sarvam AI to Enhance Aadhaar Services with AI-Powered Solutions.

The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) has joined hands with Sarvam AI, a Bengaluru-

based indigenous Generative AI (GenAI) company, to improve the user experience of Aadhaar services.
Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH) and Adamas University, Kolkata, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance academic and research collaboration in homoeopathy.

HDFC Bank, in collaboration with the Indian Army and CSC Academy, has renewed its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to expand Project NAMAN—an initiative aimed at supporting Army veterans.

DPIIT and Mercedes-Benz India Sign MoU to Boost Manufacturing, Road Safety, and Sustainability.
The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and Mercedes-Benz India have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance manufacturing, road safety, and sustainability in India.

Australia-India Sports Excellence Forum was officially inaugurated by the Minister of State for Sports, Raksha Khadse, at GIFT City, Gujarat.

SIDBI and Federal Bank Partner to Strengthen MSME Financing.

HDFC Bank, under its Parivartan initiative, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Air Force (IAF) and CSC Academy to launch Project HAKK (Hawai Anubhavi Kalyan Kendra).

IWAI Signs MoU with J&K Government for Boosting River Cruise Tourism in J&K.

The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Jammu & Kashmir (J&K) government to develop river cruise tourism in the Union Territory

CII IGBC and India Overseas Bank MoU on Green Building Financing.

The Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) and Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to provide accessible financing options for IGBC-certified green buildings.

Paytm Partners with Perplexity to Enhance AI-Driven Search and Assistance.

AGREEMENT, SIGN & MOU 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2025

India and Qatar signed five memorandums of understanding (MoU) and two agreements during the state visit of the Emir of Qatar, Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani, to India on 17 & 18 February 2025.

Five MoUs

Financial and Economic Cooperation.

Cooperation in the field of Youth and Sports between the two

Cooperation in the field of Documents and Archives.

Cooperation between Invest India and Invest Qatar.

Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) and Qatar Business Association to promote business relationships.

About Qatar

Capital: Doha

Currency: Qatari Riyal.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi concluded his two-day visit to the United States of America (USA) with an agreement to more than double bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030 and a new framework for the US-India major defence partnership for the next 10 years.

India and the US will sign a new 10-year “ Framework for the U.S.-India Major Defence Partnership in the 21st Century”.

US will sign an agreement with India for the sale and co-production of its Javelin Anti-Tank Guided Missiles and "Stryker" Infantry Combat Vehicles.

U.S.-India TRUST ("Transforming the Relationship Utilizing Strategic Technology") initiative launched to advance U.S.-India industry and academic partnerships and foster investments in space, energy, and other emerging technologies.

India Oman to amend Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement.

India and Oman have signed a protocol to amend the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) and have also agreed to continue negotiations on the proposed India-Oman Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (CEPA).

About Oman

Capital: Muscat

Currency: Omani Rial

TRIFED Partners with Meesho, IFCA, and MGIRI.

TRIFED (Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd) has formed strategic alliances with Meesho, the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA), and the MGRI.

India and Argentina Ink MoU for Lithium Exploration.

IIITDM Kancheepuram and ERNET India Collaborate to Establish Joint Research Lab for IoT.

The Indian Institute of Information Technology, Design and Manufacturing (IIITDM) Kancheepuram has entered into a significant partnership with Education and Research Network of India (ERNET), an autonomous scientific society under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) – which comprises Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein – have taken a major step towards deeper economic collaboration with the inauguration of the India-EFTA Desk.

IICA, CMAI Sign MoU to Boost Decarbonisation Efforts.

In a significant move to advance India's carbon markets and decarbonisation initiatives, the Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) and the Carbon Market Association of India (CMAI) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in New Delhi.

SIDBI Signs MoU with Tata Capital Limited to Strengthen MSME Financing.

Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) & Defence Institute of Advanced Technology (DIAT), Pune, Collaborate for Aerospace Innovation.

Bisleri & Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) Join Hands to Restore Heritage Water Bodies.

Bisleri International has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) under the 'Adopt a Heritage 2.0 Programme' to restore and conserve historic water bodies at heritage sites across India.

This initiative is part of Bisleri's CSR program 'Nayi Umeed' and aims to combine heritage preservation with sustainable water management.

AGREEMENT, SIGN & MOU 2024-25**JANUARY 2025****5 MoU signed between India & Indonesia during Prez. Subianto's visit.**

President Prabowo Subianto of Indonesia successfully concluded his four-day official visit to India on 26 January 2025.

He was the Chief Guest at the 76th Republic Day ceremony.

Five MoUs between India and Indonesia.

Cooperation in Health.

Renewal of the agreement between the Indian Coast Guard and the Indonesian Coast Guard on Maritime Safety and Security.

Cooperation in Traditional Medicine Quality Assurance between Pharmacopoeia Commission for Indian Medicine & Homeopathy and Indonesian Food and Drug Authority.

Cooperation in the Fields of Digital Development.

Cultural Exchange Program between the two countries for the 2025-28 period.

The Permanent Court of Arbitration situated in The Hague, Netherlands has endorsed the Indian government's stand and has ruled that the World Bank-appointed neutral expert 'is competent' to decide on the design and water usage by two hydropower projects in Jammu and Kashmir under the provisions of the Indus Water Treaty (IWT) 1960.

The ruling of the Permanent Court of Arbitration came on the petition of Pakistan which approached the court against the Kishanganga and Ratle Hydroelectric Project in Kashmir. India opposed this as it insisted on the matters to be resolved through a World Bank-appointed Neutral Expert.

Background to the Case and IWT

Under the Indus Water Treaty of 1960, the waters of the Indus River and its five tributaries—Beas, Sutlej, Ravi, Jhelum, and Chenab—were divided between India and Pakistan.

India got the right to develop the Sutlej, Beas, and Ravi rivers, while Pakistan has the right to develop the Indus, Jhelum, and Chenab rivers.

Pakistan's Objection to the Kishanganga and Ratle Project

India is constructing the 330 MW Kishanganga hydroelectric project on the Kishanganga River, a tributary of Jhelum in the Bandipora district, and the 850 MW Ratle Hydroelectric Project on the Chenab River in the Kishtwar district.

About the Permanent Court of Arbitration

Headquarters: The Hague, Netherlands.

India and Spain have signed two memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen and deepen the bilateral relations between the two countries.

The agreement was signed during External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar's visit to Spain.

Two MoUs were signed between the two countries;

MoU on cooperation in sports;

Cooperation on sustainable urban development.

Union Cabinet has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Union Ministry of Cooperation and the Ministry of Trade of Indonesia.

India will supply one million metric tonnes of non-basmati white rice to Indonesia per year at the prevalent international price.

International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON) and Adani Group Collaborate to Serve Meals at Maha Kumbh Mela.

Uttarakhand-Iceland Partnership for Geothermal Energy.

Achieving carbon neutrality by 2070.

C-DOT and IIT Bombay Unite for Indigenous 6G Optical Chipset.

India is advancing next-generation telecom technology with C-DOT and IIT Bombay collaborating to develop an "Optical Transceiver Chipset for High-Bandwidth 6G Wireless Links."

This initiative, part of the DoT's Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF).

India is poised to sign a preliminary agreement with Mongolia to enhance bilateral cooperation in the fields of geology and exploration.

C-DOT & IIT Mandi to Develop Wideband Spectrum Sensor Chip.

The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), in collaboration with IIT Mandi and IIT Jammu, has taken a significant step in developing state-of-the-art telecommunications technology by signing an agreement for the development of a Wideband Spectrum-Sensor ASIC-Chip.

This project is aimed at enhancing spectrum utilization, ensuring efficient broadband services, particularly in rural India.

The Uttar Pradesh government has signed an MoU with Google Cloud (India) to launch the Uttar Pradesh Open Network for Agriculture (UPONA).

AGREEMENT, SIGN & MOU 2024-25

DECEMBER 2024

India & Kuwait sign MoU to set up Joint Commission for Cooperation.

India and the United Kingdom have signed a framework agreement for co-designing, co-creating and co-production of Electric Propulsion Systems (engines) for the next generation of Indian Naval ships.

The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the European Space Agency (ESA) have signed a landmark agreement to enhance collaboration in human space exploration.

Ministry of Defence (MoD) signed a Rs 7,628.70 crore contract with Larsen & Toubro Limited (L&T).

The procurement involves 155 mm/52 calibre K9 VAJRA-T Self-Propelled Tracked Artillery Guns, a cutting-edge addition to India's artillery fleet.

To procure K9 VAJRA-T artillery guns under the "Buy (Indian)" procurement category.

Government of India and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) have signed a \$350 million policy-based loan under the second subprogram of the Strengthening Multimodal and Integrated Logistics Ecosystem (SMILE) program.

Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya (GSV) and the Indian Navy signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance education, research, and training in logistics for the Navy.

AGREEMENT, SIGN & MOU 2024-25

NOVEMBER 2024

India and Japan have signed a memorandum of Implementation (MoI) for the co-production of the Japanese-developed Unified Complex Radio Antenna (UNICORN) system to be installed on Indian naval ships.

India and Russia have signed a major agreement to jointly manufacture the Pantsir air defence missile-gun

system.

Bharat Dynamics Ltd (BDL) and Russia's Rosoboronexport (ROE) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

This collaboration supports India's Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative in the defence sector.

The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) has announced the signing of an agreement to establish the BIMSTEC Energy Centre in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

Indian government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a \$200 million loan agreement for the Uttarakhand Livability Improvement Project.

IREL (India) Limited and Kazakhstan's UKTMP have formed a joint venture, IREUK Titanium Limited, to produce titanium slag in Odisha.

India and Algeria have formalized their commitment to strengthening bilateral defense ties with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on defense cooperation

Cairn Oil & Gas, a part of Vedanta Group, has become the first oil and gas producer in India to join the United Nations Environment Programme's Oil & Gas Methane Partnership (OGMP) 2.0.

Union Ministry of Mines has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Energy Agency (IEA) to collaborate in the field of critical minerals.

India and Spain have agreed to observe 2026 as the Year of Culture, Tourism, and Artificial Intelligence (AI).

SPORTS NEWS 2025

APRIL 2025

Mohun Bagan Super Giants win their 2nd ISL title beating Bengaluru FC.

Kolkata-based Mohun Bagan Super Giant won the 11th edition of the Indian Super League (ISL) 2024-25, defeating Bengaluru FC 2-1 in the final.

This was the second ISL Title for Mohun Bagan Super Giant, who previously won it in 2022-23 as ATK Mohun Bagan.

The 2024-25 ISL final was played at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan Stadium in Kolkata on 12 April 2025.

Mohun Bagan Super Giant, also known as Mariners, defeated Odisha FC in the final to lift the 2024-25 ISL Winners Shield.

Indian shooters finished their campaign at the ISSF World Cup Buenos Aires 2025 with 8 medals - four gold, two silver, and two bronze - to finish second behind China on the medal tally.

The ISSF World Cup/Rifle/Shotgun was held at the Argentinian capital, Buenos Aires, from 1-10 April 2025.

Medal winners for India

India won 8 medals - four gold, two silver, and two bronze medals at the Buenos Aires event.

Gold medal

Vijayveer Sidhu became the first Indian ever to win a gold medal in the men's 25m rapid fire pistol event in ISSF World Cup history.

Sift Kaur Samra in the women's 50m rifle 3 positions event

Rudranksh Patil in the men's 10m air rifle event

Suruchi Singh in the women's 10m air pistol event

Silver Medal winners

Esha Singh in the women's 25m pistol event

Arya Borse/Rudranksh Patil in the mixed 10m air rifle event

Bronze medal winner

Saurabh Chaudhary/Suruchi Singh in the 10m air pistol mixed team event

Chain Singh in the men's 50m rifle 3 positions event.

China finished at the top of the medal tally with 11 medals - five gold, three silver, and three bronze.

India finished second with 8 medals.

Hitesh Gulia led the Indian boxing contingent to six medals - one gold, one silver, and four bronze at the first leg of the World Boxing Cup Brazil 2025.

Hitesh Gulia became the first Indian boxer to win a gold medal at the World Boxing Cup.

India finished second in the men's category behind Uzbekistan.

The first leg of the World Boxing Cup 2025 was held at the Foz do Iguaçu in Brazil from 31 March to 5 April 2025, where the world's top men and women boxers participated.

Gold for Hitesh Gulia and Indian Medal Winners

India sent a 10-man contingent to the World Boxing Cup Brazil 2025. No Indian women boxers were sent to Brazil.

Hitesh Gulia became the first Indian boxer to win a gold medal in the World Boxing Cup. In the final of the 70 kg weight category, his opponent, Odel Kamara of England, gave a walkover due to his injury. Thus, Hitesh was awarded the gold medal by default.

Silver Medal winner

The lone silver medal for India was won by Abhinash Jamwal. He lost the final in the 65kg category to Brazilian Yuri Reis to settle for a silver medal.

Bronze Medal winners

The semi-finalists in the World Boxing Cup Brazil 2025 were awarded a Bronze medal. The four Indian boxers who lost in the semi-finals were awarded bronze medals.

Jadumani Singh Mandengbam (men's 50kg)

Manish Rathore (men's 55kg)

Sachin (men's 60kg)

Vishal (men's 90kg)

Manisha Bhanwala won the solitary gold for India at the 2025 Senior Asian Wrestling Championship as India finished its campaign with 10 - one gold, three silver, and six bronze medals.

At the 20th edition of the Asian Wrestling Championship 2024 held in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan, Indian wrestlers won nine medals - four silvers and five bronzes.

12th Men's Asia Cup Hockey 2025 to be hosted by Rajgir, Bihar.

Bihar also recently hosted the SepakTakraw World Cup 2025, where India, for the first time won a gold medal at a major Sepaktakraw event.

SPORTS NEWS 2025

MARCH 2025

The Indian Open 2025 Squash Titles.

Women's Singles

Winner : Anahat Singh (India)

Runner-up : Helen Tang (Hong Kong)

Men's Singles

Winner : Kareem El Torkey (Egypt)

Runner-up : Abhay Singh (India)

The second edition of the Khelo India Para Games (KIPG) 2025 was held in New Delhi from March 20 to 27.

The Khelo India Para Games 2025 saw Haryana once again emerging as the top-performing state with 34 gold medals.

Medal Tally of Khelo India Para Games 2025.

Khelo India Para Games 2025 concludes in New Delhi, Haryana tops

Rank	State	Gold	Silver	Bronze	Total
1	Haryana	34	39	31	104
2	Tamil Nadu	28	19	27	74
3	Uttar Pradesh	23	21	20	64
4	Rajasthan	22	18	24	64
5	Maharashtra	18	13	12	43
6	Gujarat	12	24	23	59
7	Karnataka	10	5	7	22
8	Delhi	8	11	20	39
9	Punjab	8	2	5	15
10	Andhra Pradesh	4	8	3	15

India's doubles badminton specialist B Sumeeth Reddy has announced his retirement from professional badminton to fully dedicate himself to coaching.

Success in International Badminton Tournaments

2015 Mexico City Grand Prix Champion

2016 Canada Open Champion

Runner-up in 2015 US Open and Dutch Open

Won the 2016 South Asian Games gold medal.

He co-founded the Sikki Sumeeth Badminton Academy.

Japan secured its place in the 2026 FIFA World Cup, becoming the first team to qualify after the host nations (United States, Canada, and Mexico).

The Khelo India Para Games 2025 is set to take place from March 20 to 27, 2025, across three venues in New Delhi.

The mascot, 'Ujjwala,'.

The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced a cash reward of INR 58 crore for Team India after their remarkable victory in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

Indian long-distance runner Archana Jadhav has been handed a four-year ban by World Athletics' Athletes Integrity Unit (AIU) after testing positive for a banned substance, Oxandrolone.

The Kabaddi World Cup 2025 begins in England.

Hockey Jharkhand defeated Hockey Haryana to win the 15th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship 2025 Held on March 12, 2025, at the Tau Devi Lal Complex, Panchkula, Haryana.

India won 33 medals at the Special Olympics World Winter Games 2025 in Turin, Italy.

Total 33 Medals Won : 8 Gold, 18 Silver, 7 Bronze.

Mumbai Indians won 2nd WPL Title beating Delhi Capitals.

Mumbai Indians defeated Delhi Capitals by eight runs in the final of the 3rd Women's Premier League(WPL) to win their second WPL title.

The final of the 3rd WPL 2025 was played at the Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai on 15 March 2025.

Award winners of the 3rd WPL 2025.

Emerging player of the season (Rs. 5 lakh) - Amanjot Kaur of Mumbai Indians
 Most Valuable Player (Rs. 5 lakh) - Nat Sciver-Brunt of Mumbai Indians
 Orange Cap for maximum run scorer in the tournament (Rs. 5 lakh) - Nat Sciver-Brunt of Mumbai Indians. She scored 523 runs.
 Purple Cap for highest wicket-taker in the tournament (Rs. 5 lakh) - Amelia Kerr of Mumbai Indians. She took 18 wickets.
 Mumbai Indians captain Harmanpreet Kaur .
 Meg Lanning is the captain of Delhi Capitals in WPL.
 JioStar is official broadcaster and streaming partner for WPL 2025.
 State Bank of India (SBI) is a co-presenting sponsor for the live broadcast of the TATA Women's Premier League (WPL) 2025.
 The TATA Group is the title sponsor of the Women's Premier League (WPL), securing the rights for five seasons, from 2023 to 2027.

India finished on top of the medal tally at the World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2025 held in New Delhi, winning a total of 134 medals, including 45 gold, 40 silver, and 49 bronze.
 Indian para-athlete Preethi Pal, who previously made history at the Paris Paralympics as the first Indian woman to win two Paralympic medals in track and field, continued her success by securing a bronze medal in the women's 200m T35–T38 event.

The cricketing world mourns the loss of Syed Abid Ali, a former Indian all-rounder, who passed away.
 Memorable Debut : Took 6 wickets for 55 runs in his Test debut against Australia in Brisbane.
 Historic Moment ; Scored winning runs in India's 1971 victory against England at The Oval.

Commonwealth Games Federation Rebrands as 'Commonwealth Sport' on Commonwealth Day 2025.
 Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF) has announced that it will now be known as Commonwealth Sport.
 This decision was officially unveiled on March 10, 2025, in celebration of Commonwealth Day.
 A historic moment in the transition of Commonwealth Sport was marked by the inaugural Commonwealth Sport King's Baton Relay for the Glasgow 2026 Commonwealth Games.

India win their 3rd Champions Trophy, beating New Zealand at Dubai.
 India won their third ICC Champion Trophy by beating New Zealand by 4 wickets in the final of the 9th edition of the Champions trophy in Dubai on 9th March 2025.
 India previously won it in 2002 under Sourav Ganguly and in 2013 under MS Dhoni's captaincy.

It was the second consecutive ICC Title for the Indian men's cricket team led by Rohit Sharma.
 Under Rohit Sharma's captaincy, India won the 9th ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 in Barbados defeating South Africa.
 The members of the Indian team that won the Champions Trophy were given the iconic white jackets.
 The white jacket ,designed by Mumbai fashion designer Babita M, was first introduced in the 2009 Champions Trophy held at South Africa and given to the victorius Australian team.
 The final of the 9th Champions Trophy was a repeat of the 2000 finals, where New Zealand defeated India by 4 wickets.
 New Zealand team, nicknamed Kiwi or Black Cap, captain Mitchell Santner won the toss and decided to bat first.

Man of the Match: Rohit Sharma (India)
 Player of the Tournament: Rachin Ravindra (263 Runs) [New Zealand]
 India is the most successful team in the tournament's history, with three title wins in 2002, 2013, and 2025.

Legendary Indian male table tennis player Achnata Sharath Kamal has announced his retirement from professional table tennis after the 2025 WTT Star Contender Chennai tournament.

Sharath Kamal Career Achievements

Sharath Kamal won his first National title in 2003. He has won the National title 10 times in his career.
 He is the first Indian table tennis player to win a gold medal in the singles event of the Commonwealth Games. He won the gold at the 2006 Melbourne Commonwealth Games.
 He won gold in the singles title in the 2006 Melbourne and 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games.
 Sharat Kamal, along with female badminton player PV Sindhu, was the flag bearer of the Indian contingent at the opening ceremony of the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Honours and Awards

Padma Shri: Sharath Kamal was honoured with India's fourth highest civilian award, Padma Shri, in 2019
Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award: India's highest sports award, which was given to Shartath Kamal in 2022.

Arjuna Award: Sharath Kamal was conferred the 2004 Arjuna Award.

India wins a historic gold in the Sepak Takraw World Cup 2025 in Patna.

The Indian Men's Regu team created history by winning the first-ever gold medal at the BIHAR SepakTakraw World Cup 2025, defeating Japan in the final 2-1.

India finished the World Cup with seven medals- one gold, one silver, and five bronze medals.

The BIHAR SepakTakraw World Cup 2025 was organised by the International Sepaktakraw Federation (ISTAF) and hosted by the Sepaktakraw Federation of India at the Patliputra Indoor Stadium in Kankarbagh Patna from 20-25 March 2025

Shi Yu Qi of China and An Se-young of South Korea respectively won the men's and women's singles titles at the All England Open Championships 2025 in Birmingham, England.

World no.1 player Shi Yu Qi of China won his second All England Badminton Championship title by defeating Chinese Taipei's (Taiwan) Lee Chia-Hao in the final 21-17, 21-19.

In the women's section, world no.1 An Se-young of South Korea defeated the Chinese Wang Zhiyi in a three-game final 13-21, 21-18, 21-18 to win her second All-England single's title.

Grandmaster (GM) Pranav Venkatesh became the 7th Indian to win the World Junior Chess Championship.

He is also the seventh Indian to win the World Junior Chess Championship.

The first Indian to win the title was the legendary Vishwanathan Anand in 2017.

Pentala Harikrishnan was the second Indian to win the title in 2004, followed by Abhijeet Gupta in 2008, Koneru Humpy in 2001, Harika Dronavalli in 2008, and Divya Deshmukh in 2024.

Women's International Master (WIM) Anna Shukhman of Russia won the women's section of the 2025 World Junior Chess Championship.

Siddhant Banthia of India, in partnership with Bulgarian Alexander Donski, won the doubles title at the 2025 Rwandan Challenger tennis tournament.

Indian women's Kabaddi team defeated Iran to win their fifth Asian Women's Kabaddi Championship title.

The Indian team defeated the host, Iran, 32-25, in the final of the 6th Asian Women's Kabaddi Championship 2025, held in Tehran on 8th March 2025.

The Indian Kabaddi team, led by Sonali Shingate.

India is the most successful team in the history of the championship, having won it 5 times, and the South Korean team has won it once.

SPORTS NEWS 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2025

Saudi Arabia has been selected to host the first-ever Olympic Esports Games in 2027.

Indian pacer Mohammed Shami made history by becoming the fastest Indian bowler to claim 200 ODI wickets during the India vs Bangladesh match in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 in Dubai.

He surpassed Ajit Agarkar's Indian record (133 matches), achieving the feat in fewer games.

Indian cricket captain Rohit Sharma achieved a major milestone in his career by becoming the second fastest batsman to complete 11,000 runs in One-Day Internationals (ODIs).

Rohit Sharma reached 11,000 ODI runs in his 261st innings and 270th match.

He is the second fastest to achieve the feat, only behind Virat Kohli, who did it in 222 innings.

India U19 star G Kamalini etched her name in history as the youngest debutant in the Women's Premier League (WPL).

The 16-year-old left-handed batter made her first appearance for Mumbai Indians (MI) on February 18, 2025, in a match against Gujarat Giants (GG) at Kotambi Stadium, Vadodara.

Jacob Kiplimo of Uganda broke the world half-marathon record in Barcelona, finishing the 21.0975 km race in 56 minutes and 42 seconds.

Cristiano Ronaldo has emerged as the highest-paid athlete of 2025, earning \$285 million.

World's richest athletes for 2025

1. Cristiano Ronaldo – \$285 million
2. Jon Rahm – \$218 million
3. Lionel Messi – \$135 million
4. LeBron James – \$128.7 million
5. Neymar – \$110 million

Bangladesh's Shohely Akhter has become the first woman cricketer to be banned by the International Cricket Council (ICC) for corruption charges

The world cricket governing body, the International Cricket Council (ICC), has appointed former Indian cricketer Shikhar Dhawan as one of the four ambassadors of the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025. The 9th ICC Men's Champions Trophy is being co-hosted by Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from 19 February -9 March 2025.

The four ambassadors of the 2025 Champions Trophy are Shikhar Dhawan of India, Sarfraz Ahmed of Pakistan, Shane Watson of Australia, and New Zealand's legendary fast bowler, Tim Southee.

Ace india cueist, Pankaj Advani won the 2025 Asian Snooker Championship's men's title, defeating Amir Sarkosh of Iran in the final.

Pankaj Advani's win in Doha was his 14th title win across all the formats in Asia.

Ace cueist Pankaj Advani won his 36 National Billiards and 10th Snooker title at the 91st Billiards and Snooker National Championships 2024 held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.

He defeated Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) Brijesh Damani 5-1 in the final.

Meghalaya will host the 39th edition of the National Games in February/March 2027.

French tennis player Kyrian Jacquet won his first ATP title by clinching the 2025 Chennai Open men's singles title.

He defeated Elias Ymer of Sweden.

Swiss tennis player Jil Teichmann won the 2025 Mumbai Open singles title by defeating Mananchaya Sawangkaew of Thailand in the final.

Mumbai Indians Acquire 49% Stake in The Hundred's Oval Invincibles.

Mumbai Indians (MI) owner Reliance Industries, through its subsidiary RISE Worldwide, has successfully bid for a 49% stake in Oval Invincibles, a franchise in The Hundred, England and Wales Cricket Board's (ECB) 100-ball cricket league.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has announced a new initiative, 'Donate Organs, Save Lives,' to promote organ donation awareness.

Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers won the 6th Men's Hockey India League 2024-25 title, beating Hyderabad Toofans 4-3 in a tense final at a packed Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela Odisha on 1 February 2025.

The International Cricket Council (ICC) has officially launched the theme song for the upcoming ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025, titled 'Jeeto Baazi Khel Ke', sung by the renowned Pakistani singer Atif Aslam.

Simona Halep, the renowned Romanian tennis star and two-time Grand Slam champion, announced her retirement from professional tennis at the age of 33.

She secured 24 titles, including Grand Slam victories at Roland Garros in 2018 and Wimbledon in 2019.

Halep won the French Open in 2018 and Wimbledon in 2019.

R Praggnanandhaa emerged as the champion of the Tata Steel Masters chess tournament held in the Netherlands on February 2, 2025.

He defeated D Gukesh

India's ace cueist Pankaj Advani secured the 2025 Asian Snooker Championship men's title, defeating Amir Sarkosh of Iran in the final.

This marks his 14th Asian title across snooker and billiards events.

Mohun Bagan Super Giant secured their second consecutive Indian Super League (ISL) Winners Shield with a dramatic 1-0 victory over Odisha FC at Kolkata's Salt Lake Stadium .

Indian squash legend Saurav Ghosal has marked a sensational return from retirement by clinching the Octane Sydney Classic title.

Virat Kohli has once again etched his name in cricketing history by becoming the fastest batter to reach 14,000 ODI runs.

He achieved this milestone in just 287 innings, surpassing Sachin Tendulkar (350 innings) and Kumar Sangakkara (378 innings).

Indian cricket captain Rohit Sharma achieved a major milestone in his career by becoming the second fastest batsman to complete 11,000 runs in One-Day Internationals (ODIs).

Rohit Sharma reached 11,000 ODI runs in his 261st innings and 270th match.

He is the second fastest to achieve the feat, only behind Virat Kohli, who did it in 222 innings.

SPORTS NEWS 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

Geoff Allardice, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the International Cricket Council (ICC), resigned.

Geoffrey John Allardice is an Australian administrator and former cricketer, who is the CEO of the International Cricket Council.

The 2025 Senior National Table Tennis Championships.

Men's Singles : Manush Shah

Women's Singles : Diya Chitale.

Odisha Warriors Club won the inaugural edition of the Women's Hockey India League 2024-25 title by defeating Soorma Hockey Club 2-1 in the final played at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf Hockey Stadium in Ranchi.

Union Territory of Ladakh and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir will jointly host the Khelo India Winter Games 2025.

Australia has once again asserted its dominance in women's cricket by winning the ICC Women's Championship for the third consecutive time.

Indian pace sensation Jasprit Bumrah was awarded the prestigious Sir Garfield Sobers Award for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year 2024.

Bumrah Crowned ICC Men's Test Cricketer of the Year.

Smriti Mandhana Named ICC Women's ODI Cricketer of the Year 2024.

Arshdeep Singh, ICC Men's T20I Cricketer of the Year 2024

New Zealand's Melie Kerr emerged as the standout player in women's cricket, clinching the prestigious Rachael Heyhoe Flint Trophy (Known as ICC Women's Player of the Year), awarded to the best player of the year.

Indian Grandmaster Iniyar Panneerselvam showcased an exceptional performance to win the 9th Johor International Open Chess Tournament in Malaysia.

Former Australian cricket captain Michael Clarke has been inducted into the prestigious Australian Cricket Hall of Fame, becoming the 64th cricketer to receive this remarkable honor.

The Marylebone Cricket Club (MCC) has introduced a new World Cricket Connects advisory board, which will replace the club's previous World Cricket Committee.

India is set to host the prestigious FIDE Chess World Cup 2025, marking a major milestone as the country takes on the role of hosting its first significant international chess event since the 2022 Chennai Chess Olympiad.

The first International Olympic Research Conference will be held at Rashtriya Raksha University, Gandhinagar, Gujarat from January 27-30, 2025.

2024 Paris Olympic gold medal winner Denmark's Viktor Axelsen defeated Lee Cheuk Yiu of Hong Kong China and South Korea's An Se-young defeated Pornpawee Chochuwong of Thailand respectively won the men's and women's singles title of the 2025 India Open Badminton Tournament.

Third Indian Open Singles Title for Viktor Axelsen

Viktor Axelsen who was appearing in the final of the Indian Open for the sixth time in the last 10 years defeated Lee Cheuk Yiu of Hong Kong China 21-16, 21-8 to win his third India Open Title.

Viktor Axelsen had previously won the Indian Open singles title in 2017 and 2019.

2nd India Open Title for An Se-young

Paris Olympic gold medal winner An Se-young of South Korea had little trouble in defeating Pornpawee Chochuwong of Thailand in the final by 21-12, 21-9 in just 39 minutes.

This was the second India Open Badminton singles title for An Se-young having won it in 2023.

Karnataka men's senior cricket team won its 5th Vijay Hazare Trophy by defeating Vidarbha in the final by 36 runs.

The final of the 2024-25 Vijay Hazare Trophy was played at the Kotambi Stadium in Vadodara, Gujarat.

Indian men and women's team wins inaugural Kho Kho World Cup 2025.

The Indian women's and men's teams made a clean sweep at the inaugural edition of the World Kho Kho by winning the respective titles.

In the final of the World Cup played at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi, the Indian men's and women's teams defeated Nepal in both finals.

The 20 countries' men's teams and 19 countries' women's teams participated in the World Cup.

Badminton star PV Sindhu has partnered with PUMA India in a multi-year deal.

Indian Grandmaster Arjun Erigaisi has made a significant impact in the online chess world by defeating both World No. 1 Magnus Carlsen and World No. 2 Fabiano Caruana during the Titled Tuesday blitz competition organized by Chess.com.

The inaugural edition of the Kho Kho World Cup kicked off with great enthusiasm on January 13, 2025, at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi.

Shreyas Iyer has been appointed as the captain of Punjab Kings for the upcoming Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 season.

Devajit Saikia and Prabhtej Singh Bhatia were elected as the new Secretary and Treasurer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) following the resignations of Jay Shah and Ashish Shelar.

Inter Miami CF captain Lionel Messi was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom by United States President .

Argentinian footballer Lionel Messi is considered to be one of the greatest football players of all time.

33rd Santosh Trophy title for Bengal as they beat Kerala in the final.

The most successful team in the history of the Santosh Trophy, West Bengal added one more to its collection by defeating Kerala in the final of the 78th edition of the Santosh Trophy. It was the 33rd Santosh Trophy for the Bengal team.

The final of the 78th edition of the Santosh Trophy 2024-25 was played at the GMC Balayogi Stadium in Hyderabad, Telangana on 31st December 2024.

Santosh Trophy is a premier domestic state-level football tournament for men in India organised by the All India Football Federation

SPORTS NEWS 2024-25

DECEMBER 2024

Kerala achieved a historic milestone by winning their first-ever Senior National Men's Handball Championship title.

They triumphed over Chandigarh with a 34-31 victory in a thrilling final.

Haryana Steelers etched their name in Pro Kabaddi League (PKL) history by clinching their maiden title with a 32-23 victory over Patna Pirates in the Season 11 final.

The Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC), a prestigious institution managing the iconic Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG), has announced that legendary Indian cricketer Sachin Tendulkar has accepted its invitation to become an Honorary Cricket Member.

Russian tennis player Daniil Savelev has been given a two-year suspension for testing positive for the banned substance meldonium.

India will, for the first time, host the prestigious World Para Athletics Championships in 2025. Jawahar Lal Nehru Stadium, in the Indian capital city of New Delhi, will be the venue of the 12th World Para Athletics Championships, to be held in September /October 2025.

The Indian men's hockey team has clinched the fifth spot in the latest FIH world rankings, following a stellar performance at the 2024 Paris Olympics.

Real Madrid won the 2024 FIFA Intercontinental Cup with a dominant 3-0 victory over Mexico's Pachuca at Lusail Stadium in Qatar.

The Indian women's junior hockey team successfully defended their Women's Junior Asia Cup title by defeating China 3-2 in the final held in Muscat, Oman.

Mumbai showcased a stellar performance to defeat Madhya Pradesh by five wickets and claim the Syed Mushtaq Ali Trophy (SMAT) 2024.

Gukesh Dommaraju, or D.Gukesh of Chennai, defeated the Chinese Grandmaster (GM) Ding Liren to become the youngest FIDE World Chess Champion.

D.Gukesh broke the record of the legendary Russian chess player Gary Kasparov, who became the world champion at the age of 22 years in 1985 after beating fellow Russian Anatoly Karpov.

D.Gukesh is the 18th chess player to be crowned FIDE World Chess Champion. He is also the second Indian to become the world chess champion after Viswanathan Anand.

Viswanathan Anand became the 15th chess player to become a world chess champion in 2007.

The total prize money for the 2024 FIDE World Championship was \$2.5 million. Each victory in the championship games fetched the victor \$200,000.

Gukesh's three wins got him \$600,000, while Ding Liren, with two wins, got \$400,000.

FIFA has officially announced the hosts for the 2030 and 2034 Men's Football World Cups.

Spain, Portugal, and Morocco will jointly host the 2030 tournament, with additional matches in Argentina, Paraguay, and Uruguay to commemorate the centenary of the competition. Saudi Arabia has been chosen to host the 2034 tournament

SPORTS NEWS 2024-25

NOVEMBER 2024

FIFA has revealed the new 2025 Club World Cup trophy, a golden masterpiece created in collaboration with Tiffany & Co.

The trophy, which will be awarded at the first-ever 32-team tournament in June and July 2025.

Indian Tennis Star Prajnesh Gunneswaran Announces Retirement.

Prajnesh Gunneswaran, the Indian tennis star who won a bronze medal in singles at the 2018 Jakarta Asian Games, announced his retirement from professional tennis.

Grand Slam Appearances: Competed in all four Grand Slams, with multiple appearances in the Australian Open (2019, 2020).

Highest ATP Rankings: Achieved a career-high singles ranking of World No. 75 in 2019.

Aravindh Chithambaram Clinches Masters Title at Chennai Grandmasters 2024.

Pankaj Advani, the veteran Indian cueist, has once again showcased his mastery in the sport by securing his 28th world title.

He defeated Robert Hall of England 4-2 in the final.

Tayyab Ikram has been re-elected as the President of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) for a second consecutive term, a significant achievement for Pakistan's hockey

FIH Hockey Star Awards 2024.

Men's Player of the Year : Harmanpreet Singh (India)

Women's Player of the Year : Yibbi Jansen (Netherlands)

Men's Goalkeeper of the Year : PR Sreejesh (India)

Women's Goalkeeper of the Year : Ye Jiao (China)

PR Sreejesh, widely known as the "Great Wall of India," won the Goalkeeper of the Year award for the third time, having previously won in 2021 and 2022.

India's celebrated badminton star and Olympic medallist, PV Sindhu, laid the foundation stone for the PV Sindhu Centre for Badminton and Sports Excellence on November 7, in Chinna Gadili village on the outskirts of Visakhapatnam.

Alexander Zverev, the German tennis star from Hamburg, claimed his second Masters 1000 title of 2024 with a decisive 6-2, 6-2 victory over France's Ugo Humbert in the Paris Masters final.

Indian boxer Mandeep Jangra won the World Boxing Federation's (WBF) super featherweight world title. He defeated British boxer Conor McIntosh in the Cayman Islands.

India has formally submitted its bid to host the 2036 Summer Olympics, with the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) expressing interest through a Letter of Intent to the IOC.

World No.1 men's tennis player Jannik Sinner of Italy won his first ATP Finals title in Turin, Italy, by defeating American Taylor Fritz in straight sets in the final. Earlier, American Coco Gauff won the season-ending 2024 WTA Finals by defeating Zheng Qinwen of China

Dubai Sports Council has appointed ex-Indian cricket player Harbhajan Singh and women's Tennis player Sania Mirza as the Sports Ambassador.

They join Russian Khabib Nurmagomedov and French football player Patrice Evra as the four sporting icons appointed by the Dubai Sports Council.

Indian shooters finished their campaign at the 2024 FISU World University Championship Shooting with a rich haul of 24 medals, including 9 gold, 9 silver, and 6 bronze

Legendary Indian cueist Pankaj Advani won his 28th world title at the IBSF World Billiards Championship in Doha, Qatar. In the final, played on 9 November 2024, he defeated Robert Hall of England 4-2.

This was Pankaj Advani's seventh consecutive title win at the IBSF World Billiards Championships. The IBSF World Billiards and Snooker Championship is for non-professional snooker and billiards players Pakistani cueist Muhammad Asif made history by winning the IBSF Men's World Snooker Championship 2024 for the third time. He is the only player in the world after Pankaj Advani to have won the IBSF World Men's Snooker Championship three times.

World No. 3 Coco Gauff of the United States won her first WTA (Women Tennis Association) Finals by

beating world number 7 Zheng Qinwen of China 3-6, 6-4, 7-6(2) in a 3-hour and 4-minute final.

Harmeet Desai of India had a fabulous run at the 2024 WTT Feeder Caracas tournament, winning both the men's singles and mixed doubles titles. The World Table Tennis (WTT) Feeder Series was held in Caracas, Venezuela, from 31 October to 3 November 2024.

Anish Sarkar of Kolkata, West Bengal, has become the youngest-rated FIDE chess player in the world. At the age of three years, eight months, and 19 days, Anish secured a FIDE rating of 1555.

Rodri and Aitana Bonmati of Spain won football's most prestigious Ballon d'Or award for the best male and female footballer, respectively.

Men's Ballon d'Or: Rodri of Spain (Manchester City Club and Spain)

Women's Ballon d'Or - Aitana Bonmati of Spain(Barcelona Club and Spain).

The Ballon d'Or award was instituted by the French news magazine France Football.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS 2025

APRIL 2025

President Droupadi Murmu was honored with an Honorary Doctorate by Constantine The Philosopher University in Nitra, Slovakia.

Union Minister of Health and Family Welfare, J.P. Nadda, recently launched the Inter-AIIMS Referral Portal as part of the government's ongoing efforts to transform healthcare management in India.

The portal, developed indigenously by the All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), New Delhi, is designed to enhance patient referral systems and streamline healthcare delivery.

IIM-Ahmedabad has announced the establishment of its first international campus in Dubai.

According to the latest Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) released by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, India's unemployment rate among persons aged 15 years and above dipped slightly from 5.0% in 2023 to 4.9% in 2024.

The auction of 400 acres of forested land in Kancha Gachibowli, Hyderabad, has sparked widespread protests, particularly among students of the University of Hyderabad.

Central Government of India announced an increase in excise duties on petrol and diesel by ₹2 per litre each.

The Haryana government has officially declared two Harappan civilization sites located in Bhiwani district — Mitathal and Tighrana — as protected archaeological sites and monuments.

1st vertical lift railway sea bridge inaugurated in Rameswaram.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the newly built Pamban bridge, which is India's first vertical railway sea bridge, at Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu on 6th April 2025.

The Prime Minister also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone, and dedicated to the nation various rail and road projects worth over Rs 8,300 crore in Rameswaram.

Newly Built Pamban Bridge

The newly built Pamban bridge has been built adjacent to the old Pamban bridge.

It replaces the 110-year-old Pamban Bridge, which was decommissioned in 2022.

Features of the new Bridge

It is the country's first vertical railway sea bridge.

It is 2.08 Km long, connecting Rameswaram, located in Pamban Island in Palk Strait, to Mandapam town in mainland Tamil Nadu.

The bridge has been built by Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL) of the Indian Railways at a cost of over Rs 700 crore.

The bridge has a 'vertical lift span' of 72.5 metres in the middle, which can lift upwards 17 metres so that the ship can pass underneath.

Indian Railways and DMRC Sign MoU for Automatic Wheel Profile Measurement Systems.

China and India commemorated the 75th anniversary of the establishment of their diplomatic relations

NATIONAL AFFAIRS 2025

MARCH 2025

The 37th Kathak Mahotsav 2025, organized by Kathak Kendra, New Delhi.

World's first-ever Kathak Literary Festival.

The Government of India has notified an increase in wage rates under the Mahatma Gandhi National

Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) for the financial year 2025-26.

The hike ranges from 2.33% to 7.48%, with wages increasing by Rs 7 to Rs 26 per day depending on the state.

This marks the first time NREGS wages have reached Rs 400 per day in any state, with Haryana recording the highest increase.

The lowest increase of Rs 7 per day has been recorded in Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, and Telangana.

The new wage rates will come into effect from April 1, 2025.

Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah announced the launch of a new app-based taxi service, 'Sahkar', modeled on Ola and Uber but operating under the cooperative framework.

Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan inaugurated Techkriti 2025, Asia's largest intercollegiate technical and entrepreneurial festival, at the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Kanpur.

Theme: "Panta Rhei" (Everything Flows) .

The Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare has introduced the Digital Crop Survey (DCS) System to collect real-time crop-sown details directly from the field via a mobile interface.

This system enhances accuracy in crop area estimation, contributing to precise agricultural production forecasting.

India Becomes the World's Second-Largest Tea Exporter in 2024.

Tea Board of India indicates that India has emerged as the second-largest tea exporter in the world in 2024, surpassing Sri Lanka and trailing behind Kenya, which retained the top position.

India exported 254 million kilograms (Mkg) of tea in 2024, marking a significant jump from its 231 Mkg exports in 2023.

Kenya, which remains the world's largest tea exporter, shipped over 500 Mkg of tea in 2024.

India's 2024 export figures (254 Mkg) were the second highest in its history, only behind 2018, when the country exported around 256 Mkg.

The Indian tea industry aims to achieve an export target of 300 Mkg by 2030, given the recent upward trend.

India has taken a historic step in its clean energy transition with the launch of an ambitious Nuclear Mission, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable energy.

The initiative, announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and detailed by Dr. Jitendra Singh, aims to generate 100 GW of nuclear energy by 2047.

India's journey to net-zero emissions by 2070.

Target: Generate 100 GW of nuclear power by 2047, covering 10% of India's energy needs.

India has emerged as the top milk producer in the world, with a current production of 239 million metric tons (MMT).

India aims to increase milk production to 300 MMT in the next five years.

The nation contributes more than 24% of global milk production.

Kerala has become the first state in India to establish a Senior Citizens Commission by passing the Kerala State Senior Citizens Commission Bill, 2025.

Government Launches BAANKNET and e-BKray to Enhance PSU Bank E-Auctions for Asset Sales.

To improve the efficiency and transparency of bank e-auctions, the Department of Financial Services directed Public Sector Banks (PSBs) to redesign their e-auction platform. As a result, the "e-BKray" platform was launched on February 28, 2019.

Further advancing this initiative, the government introduced the enhanced "BAANKNET" portal on January 3, 2025.

This new platform is designed to streamline the listing and auctioning of assets, particularly focusing on the disposal of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs), ensuring secure transactions and maximizing the realized sale value of bank-owned properties.

The Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum is an upcoming national museum in New Delhi, set to be housed in the North and South Blocks as part of the Central Vista Redevelopment Project.

Oeko-Tex certification from Germany for eri silk.

The Ministry of Culture, through the Lalit Kala Akademi (LKA) and National Gallery of Modern Arts (NGMA), is dedicated to preserving public art installations created under the Public Art of India (PARI) project.

The Purple Fest 2025 was held at Rashtrapati Bhavan and organized by the Department of Empowerment

of Persons with Disabilities (DePwD), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) has launched 'Samarth', a dedicated incubation program aimed at fostering innovation in telecommunications and IT sectors. The initiative will support startups and innovators in Telecom Software Applications, Cybersecurity, 5G/6G, AI, IoT, and Quantum Technologies.
The Indian government is advancing its nuclear energy initiatives with two key projects: the Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant in Maharashtra and the Gorakhpur (Fatehabad District) Nuclear Power Project in Haryana, the first nuclear facility in North India. The Jaitapur plant, once completed, will contribute 10% of India's 100 GW nuclear energy target by 2047.
India's First PPP Green Waste Processing Plant in Indore. Indore is set to achieve another milestone in sustainable waste management by establishing India's first green waste processing plant under the Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model. This project, initiated under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban.
Stuart Young is set to be sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago.
Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw visited the Hyperloop testing facility at IIT Madras on Saturday, where he announced that the 410-meter-long Hyperloop tube would soon become the world's longest high-speed tube.
The Fit India Carnival, a first-of-its-kind three-day fitness and wellness event, was inaugurated by Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports, Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium (JLN), New Delhi.
The National Archives of India (NAI) marked its 135th Foundation Day on March 11, 2025, with the inauguration of an exhibition titled "Indian Heritage through Architecture".
The e-Shram portal was launched by the Ministry of Labour and Employment on August 26, 2021, to create a comprehensive National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW). The portal aims to provide unorganised workers with a Universal Account Number (UAN) and link them to various social security and welfare schemes. As of March 3, 2025, more than 30.68 crore unorganised workers have registered on the portal, with women constituting 53.68% of the total registrations.
58th Tiger Reserve of India : Madhav National Park of Madhya Pradesh. Union Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change has notified the Madhav National Park of Madhya Pradesh as the 58th Tiger Reserve of the country under the centrally sponsored scheme Project Tiger. It is the 9th Tiger Reserve of the state under the Tiger Project of the central government. In December 2024, the Union Ministry notified the Ratapani Tiger Reserve of Madhya Pradesh as the 57th Tiger Reserve of India. About the Madhav National Park Madhya Pradesh The Madhav National Park is situated in the Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh. It was notified as a National Park in 1958. It is spread over 375.233 sq.km.
9th Tiger Reserve of Madhya Pradesh Madhav National Park is Madhya Pradesh's ninth Tiger Reserve. The others are Kanha, Pench, Bandhavgarh, Satpura, Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve, Panna, Sanjay-Dubri, and Ratapani. Madhya Pradesh has the largest number of Tiger reserves under Project Tiger. Project Tiger was launched as a centrally sponsored project in 1973 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
The Government of India has approved the construction of a 12.9 km ropeway from Sonprayag to Kedarnath under the National Ropeways Development Programme – Parvatmala Pariyojana.
The Government of India has approved the construction of a 12.4 km ropeway from Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji in Uttarakhand under the National Ropeways Development Programme – Parvatmala Pariyojana.
India has conducted its first-ever population estimation of riverine dolphins, revealing a total of 6,327 dolphins across the Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Indus river systems. The maximum number of dolphins were reported in Uttar Pradesh, followed by Bihar, West Bengal, and Assam.
India has launched the Cities Coalition for Circularity (C-3), marking a significant step towards sustainable urban development.
Prime Minister Narendra Modi recently inaugurated Vantara, an advanced animal rescue,

conservation, and rehabilitation center in Gujarat's Jamnagar district.

India's First World Peace Center Inaugurated in Gurugram.

Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Recently launched 'One Nation, One Port Process' Initiative.

It is an initiative to standardize and streamline operations across India's Major ports.

Aim – To remove inconsistencies in documentation and processes that led to inefficiencies, increased costs, and operational delays.

Nodal Ministry - Ministry of Shipping, Ports and Waterways.

Implementation - 1st phase – It has standardised documentation with Immigration, the Port Health Organisation, and Port Authorities.

By reducing container operation documents by 33% (from 143 to 96) and bulk cargo documents by 29% (from 150 to 106).

Champakam Dorairajan, a Brahmin woman from Madras, played a pivotal role in shaping India's constitutional history through her legal challenge to caste-based reservations in educational institutions.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2025

PM Narendra Modi inaugurated the largest-ever Jhumoir dance performance in Assam on February 24, 2025.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the largest-ever Jhumoir dance performance at Guwahati's Sarusajai Stadium.

PM Narendra Modi praised the Soliga tribe in the 119th episode of 'Mann Ki Baat' on February 23, 2025, for their role in tiger conservation at BRT Tiger Reserve.

Location : Biligirirangana Hills (BRT) Tiger Reserve, Chamarajanagar district, Karnataka.

NITI Aayog, the Indian government's top policy think tank, has set up a committee to develop a strategic plan for upgrading AIIMS, New Delhi, into a globally recognized center for medical research and healthcare excellence.

Headed by NITI Aayog member VK Paul.

Vishvaa Rajakumar from India has been crowned the winner of the Memory League World Championship, as reported by The New York Times.

Darjeeling's Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park has established India's first zoo-based biobank and animal museum.

Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHNP) in Darjeeling, West Bengal.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will visit Mauritius as the Guest of Honour at the country's National Day celebrations on March 12, 2025. Mauritian PM Navin Ramgoolam announced the visit, highlighting strong bilateral ties.

Mauritius celebrates National Day on March 12 every year to mark its independence from British rule in 1968.

The Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) is a major global birdwatching event, and for the third year in a row, Bengal topped India's bird species count

Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science & Technology, Earth Sciences, and other key departments, inaugurated India's first "Open Air Art Wall Museum" at Mausam Bhawan, New Delhi.

The Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoLE) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with APNA, a leading job recruitment platform, to enhance employment opportunities for job seekers in India. This partnership is set to bring over 10 lakh job opportunities annually to the National Career Service (NCS) Portal, aiming to strengthen employment accessibility across the country.

Indian Ambassador to the Philippines, Harsh Kumar Jain, unveiled a statue of renowned Tamil poet and philosopher Thiruvalluvar at Gullas College of Medicine (GCM) in Cebu.

Union Minister for Rural Development and Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Shivraj Singh Chouhan, inaugurated the National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA) pilot program on February 18th in Raisen, Madhya Pradesh.

The Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has officially inaugurated its state-of-the-art headquarters, 'Keshav Kunj,' in Jhandewalan, New Delhi.

India and Qatar have agreed to elevate their bilateral relations to a strategic partnership, enhancing

collaboration in trade, investment, and energy.

India-Qatar to Double Trade to \$28B by 2030

The National Tribal Festival 'Aadi Mahotsav' was inaugurated by the President of India, Smt. Droupadi Murmu, in New Delhi on February 16, 2025. The festival, organized by the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, is a celebration of India's rich tribal heritage, culture, and traditions.

India is set to host the first-ever Regional Dialogue on the Global Coalition for Social Justice on February 24-25, 2025, at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi met Tesla and SpaceX CEO Elon Musk at the Blair House in Washington, D.C.

Government announced a ₹100 commemorative coin for Mohammed Rafi on his 100th birth anniversary. Narendra Modi called him a "musical genius" with a timeless impact.

Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla announced the extension of translation services in the House to six additional languages—Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Manipuri, Sanskrit, and Urdu.

The initiative is part of a broader effort to eventually offer translation services for all 22 languages recognized under Schedule 8 of the Indian Constitution

The Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA), in partnership with MyGov, has introduced the 'Culinary, Crafts & Clicks – Moods & Magic' festival.

NITI Aayog organized a high-level conclave titled "Towards Viksit Bharat @ 2047: Strengthening Economy, National Security, Global Partnerships, and Law" at Sushma Swaraj Bhawan, New Delhi.

The Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India, celebrated the 75th anniversary of the National Sample Survey (NSS) at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on 7th February 2025.

UNICEF launches a roadmap to improve child road safety, aiming to reduce road traffic fatalities among children.

India is set to strengthen its logistics sector through initiatives like PM Gati Shakti and the National Logistics Policy, aiming to enter the top 25 of the World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI) by 2030. Currently ranked 38th out of 139 nations.

Indian Army has renamed Kolkata's Fort William, the headquarters of its Eastern Command, as 'Vijay Durg'.

The government has prioritized nuclear power as a cornerstone of the country's long-term energy strategy. With a target of achieving 100 GW of nuclear power capacity by 2047.

Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan launched the national-level mass outreach campaign "Watershed Yatra" on February 4, 2025, to promote awareness and active participation in watershed development activities under the Watershed Development Component of Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY 2.0).

Aero India 2025, Asia's premier aerospace and defence exhibition, will take place in Bengaluru from February 10–14 at the Air Force Station Yelahanka.

Maharashtra is set to establish India's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) university, marking a significant step in advancing AI education, research, and innovation.

The Central Zoo Authority (CZA) has approved India's first white tiger breeding centre in Madhya Pradesh's Rewa district.

It will be set up in Govindgarh, Rewa district, Madhya Pradesh.

The Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) and IIT Indore have launched AgriHub, a state-of-the-art AI-driven Center of Excellence (CoE) aimed at transforming Indian agriculture.

The Economic Survey for 2024-25 highlighted a significant rise in the Female Labour Force Participation Rate (FLFPR) in India, driven largely by women in rural areas joining the workforce.

From 23.3% in 2017-18 to 41.7% in 2023-24.

Rural FLFPR increased from 24.6% in 2017-18 to 47.6% in 2023-24.

India's railway safety is about to undergo a major transformation with the nationwide rollout of the Kavach Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system.

Madhya Pradesh has introduced India's first Global Capability Centers (GCC) Policy 2025

India's First Wildlife Biobank Opens at Darjeeling Zoo.

India has taken a major step in wildlife conservation with the establishment of the country's first zoo-based biobank at the Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHZZP) in Darjeeling, West Bengal.

Vishvaa Rajakumar from India has been crowned the winner of the Memory League World Championship, as reported by The New York Times.

Recalled 80 digits in just 13.5 seconds, setting a new benchmark in memory competitions.

NITI Aayog, the Indian government's premier think tank, has established a committee to devise a roadmap for transforming AIIMS, New Delhi, into a world-class institution for medical research and healthcare excellence.

Led by NITI Aayog member VK Paul.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the largest-ever Jhumoir dance performance at Guwahati's Sarusajai Stadium.

Jhumoir is a traditional dance integral to Assam's tea garden workers and Adivasi communities.

Union Minister for Civil Aviation, Shri Ram Mohan Naidu, inaugurated the UDAN Yatri Cafe at Chennai International Airport

NATIONAL AFFAIRS 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

Indore and Udaipur have achieved a significant milestone by becoming the first two cities from India to join the global list of accredited Wetland Cities under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

Union Minister of Commerce & Industry, Shri Piyush Goyal, announced an ambitious target of reaching 10,000 Geographical Indication (GI) Tags by 2030.

Target of 10,000 GI Tags by 2030, up from the current 605.

The Centre has made a significant decision to increase the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for raw jute by Rs 315, setting it at Rs 5,650 per quintal for the 2025-26 marketing season.

Sarla Aviation, a Bengaluru-based aerospace startup, has unveiled 'Shunya,' India's first electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL) air taxi prototype.

Uttarakhand is set to become the first state in India to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC).

The Musi River Historic Buildings in Hyderabad have been included on the prestigious 2025 World Monuments Watch list, an initiative by the New York-based World Monuments Fund (WMF).

Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) has launched the "One Plate, One Bag" campaign at the Maha Kumbh 2025.

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, has approved the constitution of the 8th Central Pay Commission.

The 7th Pay Commission's recommendations remain effective until 2026.

The 8th Pay Commission's recommendations will be prepared for implementation by January 1, 2026

Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Sri Sri Radha Madanmohanji Temple of ISKCON in Kharghar, Navi Mumbai.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi commissioned three significant naval assets—INS Surat, INS Nilgiri, and INS Vagsheer—at the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) in Mumbai.

INS Surat is the fourth and final ship of the Project 15B, also known as the Visakhapatnam-class destroyers. Designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and constructed by MDL.

INS Nilgiri is the lead ship of Project 17A, an initiative aimed at developing advanced stealth frigates for the Indian Navy.

INS Vagsheer is the sixth and final submarine of the Kalvari-class, developed under Project 75 through an Indo-French collaboration between MDL and the French Naval Group.

Ministry of Education and Government of India has initiated the APAAR ID, known as the "One Nation One Student ID Card."

APAAR ID stands for "Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry." The Government of India introduced the Academic Bank of Credits (ABC Bank) to administer the issuance of APAAR ID cards.

These cards function as a registry within the educational system, commonly known as an 'EduLocker.'

Understand how the card includes a unique 12-digit APAAR number for each student.

Shri Piyush Goyal, inaugurated the National Turmeric Board in New Delhi, appointing Shri Palle Ganga Reddy as its first Chairperson.

The Board's headquarters is established in Nizamabad, Telangana, a prominent turmeric-producing region.

The INROAD (Indian Natural Rubber Operations for Assisted Development) project, launched with a financial backing of ₹100 crore, aims to enhance the quality of natural rubber produced in India's North-East.

India achieved a record renewable energy capacity addition of 30 GW in 2024, according to data from the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE). This marks a 113% increase from 13.75 GW in 2023.

Retired Supreme Court Justice B.N. Srikrishna has been appointed Chairman of the Advisory Board for Equal, an identity verification firm, and its investee, OneMoney, a data-sharing platform.

Union Animal Husbandry and Fisheries Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh launched the country's first-ever organic fisheries cluster in Soreng District, Sikkim.

Aero India 2025, Asia's premier aerospace exhibition, is set to take place from February 10 to 14, 2025, at Air Force Station, Yelahanka, Bengaluru. Under the theme "The Runway to a Billion Opportunities".

Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually inaugurated the Jammu Railway Division, marking it as the 69th division under the Northern Railway Zone.

India has achieved a significant milestone by expanding its metro rail network to over 1,000 kilometers of operational lines, positioning it as the third-largest in the world, following China and the United States.

According to the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM), domestic migration decreased by 53.7 million in 2023, an 11.8% drop from 2011 levels.

The overall migration rate fell from 37.6% in 2011 to 28.9% in 2023, with economic migration declining by 5 million, from 45 million in 2011 to 40 million in 2023.

Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin, along with several dignitaries, inaugurated India's first-ever glass bridge in Kanniyakumari.

The bridge connects two iconic landmarks Vivekananda Rock Memorial and the 133-foot Thiruvalluvar Statue enhancing Kanniyakumari's appeal as a premier tourist destination.

Design and Dimensions
Length: 77 meters
Width: 10 meters

The PM CARES Fund, created in March 2020 in response to the COVID-19 crisis, saw a significant drop in contributions in the financial year 2022-23, with total donations reaching Rs 912 crore, a steep fall from the Rs 7,184 crore received in 2020-21. Voluntary contributions accounted for Rs 909.64 crore, while foreign donations were just Rs 2.57 crore.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS 2024-25

DECEMBER 2024

The government of India abolished the 'No-detention policy' for students in class 5 and 8 who fail their year end exams.

The no-detention policy, which ensured automatic promotion for students up to Class 8, has been abolished for Classes 5 and 8.

Union Minister for Road Transport and Highways, Nitin Gadkari, inaugurated India's first bio-bitumen-based National Highway stretch on NH-44 in Mansar, Nagpur, Maharashtra.

Former Supreme Court Judge of India, Justice Madan B Lokur, has been appointed as the Chairperson of the United Nations Internal Justice Council (IJC) by UN Secretary-General António Guterres.

Indian educationist Arun Kapur, known for his contributions to education in India, Bhutan, and Oman, has been honoured by Bhutan's King Jigme Khesar Namgyel.

India's ascent from the 23rd position in global smartphone exports in 2019 to securing the 3rd spot in 2024 marks a monumental achievement in its manufacturing and export capabilities

India has made a major step in wildlife conservation with the first-ever satellite tagging of a Ganges River Dolphin in Assam.

Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, unveiled Kisan Kavach, India's first indigenous anti-pesticide bodysuit. Developed by BRIC-inStem, Bangalore, in collaboration with Sepio Health Pvt. Ltd.

The "Viraasat Sari Festival 2024" is an exclusive handloom sari exhibition organized by the Ministry of Textiles, Government of India, at Handloom Haat, Janpath, New Delhi.

IndiGo's CSR initiative, IndiGoReach, has launched the Zero Waste Airport Project at Indore Airport, in partnership with the Airports Authority of India (AAI) and AAS Foundation, Indore.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh and Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath paid tribute to 'Bharat Ratna' and former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee by unveiling his statue at Kudiya Ghat along the Gomti River.

Ladakhi Losar, marking the New Year in the Tibetan calendar, is a vibrant festival celebrated with great enthusiasm across Ladakh.

Madhya Pradesh has earned global recognition as one of the Wall Street Journal's "Go-To Global

Destinations for 2025,”.
Masali, a village in Gujarat’s Banaskantha district, has become India’s first ‘solar village’.
Uttarakhand will become the first Indian state to implement the Uniform Civil Code (UCC).
Uber has launched a pilot program called ‘Moto Women’ in Bengaluru to improve safety and inclusivity in urban mobility.
The 4th edition of the Eaglenest Bird Festival, a celebrated event in Arunachal Pradesh.
Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah unveiled an 11-ft tall statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Jodhpur, Rajasthan.
Google and the Telangana government have signed an agreement to establish the Google Safety Engineering Centre (GSEC) in Hyderabad.
Uber has launched Asia’s first water transport service, Uber Shikara, in the scenic Dal Lake in Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir.
Telangana government will implement the Rythu Bharosa Scheme after Sankranti, offering ₹15,000 annual subsidies per farmer, replacing the previous Rythu Bandhu.
Gujarat’s iconic handicraft, ‘Gharchola,’ has been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Union government, taking the state’s total GI tags to 27, with 23 dedicated to handicrafts.
The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) has revealed that Telangana, Karnataka, and Maharashtra have emerged as the top states registering the highest number of cybercrime cases in the last three years. Telangana recorded 30,596 cybercrime cases, Karnataka registered 31,433, and Maharashtra saw 19,307 incidents.
The Gujarat government has introduced an ambitious Cottage and Rural Industries Policy 2024-29.
Amara Raja Infra, part of the \$2 billion Amara Raja Group, has completed the setup of India’s first green hydrogen fuelling station in Leh, Ladakh, for NTPC Ltd.
A potential cyclone named ‘Fengal,’ suggested by Saudi Arabia, is forming in the Bay of Bengal, according to the India Meteorological Department (IMD). The system, originating as a cyclonic circulation on November 21 near the South Andaman Sea, is likely to evolve into a Low Pressure Area (LPA) by November 23 and intensify into a depression by November 24. This comes on the heels of Cyclone Dana, which severely impacted Odisha in October 2024.

NATIONAL AFFAIRS 2024-25

NOVEMBER 2024

External Affairs Minister Inaugurates Symbiosis University’s First International Campus in Dubai.

Clean Ganga mission to start special Dolphin Ambulance.

Special ambulance for rescuing injured Ganga Dolphins. Focus on awareness and community training.
Budget – Rs 1 crore.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the first-ever Bodoland Mohotsav on 15th November at the SAI Indira Gandhi Sports Complex in New Delhi

Theme: “Peace and Harmony for Prosperous Bharat”.

The 18th Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) Convention will be held from January 8 to January 10, 2025, in Bhubaneswar, Odisha, in collaboration with the state government.

The theme for the 2025 PBD Convention is “Diaspora’s contribution to a Viksit Bharat”.

The 43rd India International Trade Fair (IITF) is back at Pragati Maidan, Delhi, from November 14 to 27, showcasing India’s commitment to “Vocal for Local, Local to Global” with products from across the country and the world.

President Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the Swami Vivekananda Vidya Mandir school at Zanda Chowk in Silvassa.

Hindalco Tops Global Sustainability Rankings for 5th Year.

Hindalco Industries Ltd., the metals arm of the Aditya Birla Group, has secured the top position as the world’s most sustainable aluminium company for the fifth consecutive year, according to the 2024 S&P Global Corporate Sustainability Assessment (CSA) rankings.

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched the National MSME Cluster Outreach Programme in Bengaluru, aiming to enhance financial access for MSMEs nationwide.

Bengaluru marked a milestone with the inauguration of its first digital population clock at the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC).

The Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment inaugurated the 'Shilp Samagam Mela 2024' with a grand opening at Dilli Haat, New Delhi.

Organized by key Corporations under the Ministry, including the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation (NSFDC), National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation (NBCDFC), and National Safai Karmachari Finance and Development Corporation (NSKFDC).

New Delhi is considering inviting Indonesia's newly elected President, Prabowo Subianto, as the chief guest for its Republic Day 2025 celebrations, according to sources.

Indonesia's first President, Sukarno, was the first chief guest at India's Republic Day in 1950.

President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono was a guest in 2011, while President Joko Widodo attended in 2018 along with ASEAN leaders.

Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Shri Bhupender Yadav, recently announced the notification of the Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve in Chhattisgarh as the 56th Tiger Reserve in India.

Guru Ghasidas-Tamor Pingla Tiger Reserve is located in Chhattisgarh, covering a sprawling area of 2,829.38 sq. km, making it the third-largest tiger reserve in India after:

Nagarjunasagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve in Andhra Pradesh.

Manas Tiger Reserve in Assam.

Australia's University of Wollongong (UOW) has officially inaugurated its India campus at Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) in Gandhinagar.

Odisha, 24 coastal villages from six districts have been officially recognised as 'Tsunami Ready' by the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO.

Uttarakhand CM Pushkar Singh Dhami inaugurated the Jauljibi Mela 2024 in Pithoragarh, calling it an "invaluable heritage" of the state.

The Sarai Kale Khan Chowk has been renamed to Bhagwan Birsa Munda Chowk by Union Home Minister Amit Shah to honor the tribal freedom fighter on his 150th birth anniversary

The World Bank and Asian Development Bank have granted a ₹13,500 crore loan for the development of Amaravati, Andhra Pradesh's capital city.

The project will focus on sustainable infrastructure, including roads, flood management, green spaces, and essential utilities.

The UP Cabinet has approved projects by Vamasundari (HCL Group) and Tarq Semiconductor (Hiranandani Group), aiming to establish a semiconductor manufacturing hub in Jewar, near the Noida International Airport.

Ningol Chakkouba, one of the most significant festivals of the Meitei community in Manipur, was celebrated across the state with immense religious fervor and joy.

Madhya Pradesh cabinet, chaired by Chief Minister Mohan Yadav, approved a 35 percent reservation for women in all state government recruitments

Karnataka is celebrating the Bali Padyami festival (Bali Pratipada) on marking the fourth day of Deepavali. This festival commemorates the return of the Asura king, Bali Chakravarty, from Pathala Loka to Bhuloka, a journey made possible by the boon granted to him by Lord Vishnu during his Vamana Avatar.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 2025

APRIL 2025

Mauritius has marked a historic milestone by becoming the first African nation and the fourth globally to sign the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) with the International Solar Alliance (ISA).

India and Italy have taken a major step toward deepening their bilateral ties by focusing on critical areas such as trade, defence, clean energy, and strategic connectivity, particularly through the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEEC) and the Joint Strategic Action Plan (JSAP) 2025–29.

India announced a financial grant of USD 990,000 to Sierra Leone for a project aimed at empowering persons with disabilities.

Japan Builds World's First 3D-Printed Train Station in Record Time.

West Japan Railway Company has unveiled the first-ever 3D-printed train station in Arida City, showcasing a rapid, cost-effective innovation in rail infrastructure.

The trade war between the United States and China has escalated dramatically, with China announcing a sharp increase in retaliatory tariffs.

In response to the Trump administration's 104% tariffs on Chinese imports, China has raised its tariffs on

US goods to as high as 84%, marking a significant intensification of the trade dispute.

Kazakhstan has uncovered its largest-ever reserve of rare earth metals at the Kuirektykol site in the Karaganda region.

Saudi Arabia has imposed a temporary visa ban on individuals from 14 countries, including India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 2025

MARCH 2025

US President Donald Trump has announced a 25% tariff on imported cars and auto components. This move is expected to have global implications, affecting markets like the European Union (EU), Canada, India, and China.

Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah Sworn in as Namibia's First Female President.

US President Donald Trump is reportedly considering a travel ban on citizens from 43 countries in 2025.

Armenia and Azerbaijan have agreed on the text of a peace treaty, ending almost four decades of conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh region.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched the 'UN80 Initiative' to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness within the United Nations.

This initiative aims to address the shrinking resources, streamline operations, and enhance the organization's ability to deliver on its mandates effectively.

China has recently deployed a sophisticated Large Phased Array Radar (LPAR) system in Yunnan province, near the China-Myanmar border.

The world's largest iceberg, A23a, has run aground near South Georgia.

Israel has appointed Eyal Zamir as its new Chief of Staff at a critical juncture in its military history.

Uttarakhand Cabinet Approves Unified Pension Scheme and New Excise Policy for 2025.

The Trump administration has imposed sweeping tariffs on imports from Canada, Mexico, and China.

Yamandú Orsi was sworn in as Uruguay's President on March 1, 2025.

President Donald Trump announced that English would be the official language of the country.

The government of India has launched Operation Brahma to help the earthquake-hit victims in Myanmar.

A 7.7 magnitude quake hit Myanmar on 28 March 2025, killing at least 1000 people.

Two Indian Air Force C-130J aircraft carrying relief material for the quake-hit Myanmar took off from Hindon Air Force Station, Uttar Pradesh.

Chinese government has approved a deep-sea research facility also known as a deep-sea space station- in the resource-rich South China Sea

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 2024-25

FEBRUARY 2025

President Donald Trump has appointed Dan Bongino, a former Secret Service agent and conservative commentator, as the new Deputy Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Mount Dukono, one of Indonesia's most active volcanoes, erupted on February 20, 2025.

Brazil has officially announced its decision to join the OPEC+ group of oil-producing nations as an observer, marking a significant step in its energy policy.

India and Nepal have strengthened their scientific collaboration with a new MoU signed between CSIR (India) and NAST (Nepal) on February 18, 2025.

India has been elected as the Vice President of the International Organization of Aids to Marine Navigation (IALA) during its inaugural General Assembly in Singapore.

UNESCO has launched the "Imagine a world with more women in science" campaign to mark the 10th anniversary of the International Day of Women and Girls in Science (February 11).

India is making strides in its defense exports, with a potential \$200 million deal on the table for the supply of its Akash missile system to the Philippines.

China has officially approved the construction of a deep-sea research facility in the strategically significant South China Sea.

The facility, referred to as a "deep-sea space station," will be anchored 2,000 meters (6,560 feet) below the

ocean surface.
PM Narendra Modi's US visit marked a significant boost in Indo-US relations, focusing on trade, defense, and security. Both nations set a target to double bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030.
Hellenic Parliament elected Constantine Tassoulas, the former parliamentary speaker, as the new president of Greece.
Jotham Napat has been elected as Vanuatu's new Prime Minister.
Tulsi Gabbard has made history as the first Hindu to lead the US intelligence community after being confirmed as the Director of National Intelligence (DNI).
U.S. President Donald Trump has officially announced a 25% tariff on all steel and aluminum imports, a move set to take effect from March 4, 2025. The decision eliminates previous country-specific exemptions, impacting key exporters like Canada, Brazil, Mexico, and South Korea.
The 14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (14AFAF), themed "Greening the Blue Growth in Asia-Pacific," is set to take place from February 12 to 14, 2025, at the ICAR Convention Centre, Pusa Campus, New Delhi.
DPIIT & Korea Transport Institute (KOTI) Ink MoU for Logistics & Infrastructure Growth.
Bangladesh has launched a large-scale security operation, "Operation Devil Hunt," targeting loyalists of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina.
US President Donald Trump has officially recognized February 9 as "Gulf of America Day," following a significant change to the name of the Gulf of Mexico.
India and Nicaragua have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to implement Quick Impact Projects (QIPs).
The International Buddhist Confederation (IBC) is set to launch the Lord Buddha Trination Triservices Expedition, a historic initiative uniting the armed forces of India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.
Pakistan's space program, the Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) has partnered with China National Space Administration (CNSA) for the upcoming Chang'e-8 lunar mission, scheduled for launch in 2028.
Gujarat's iconic handicraft, 'Gharchola,' has been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag by the Union government, taking the state's total GI tags to 27, with 23 dedicated to handicrafts.
The Chinese AI chatbot, DeepSeek AI, has quickly become a topic of global controversy. Initially hailed as China's answer to ChatGPT, the AI platform rapidly gained attention worldwide.
Panama has officially announced its withdrawal from China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI), marking a significant geopolitical realignment. Panama became a part of China's BRI in 2017 after establishing diplomatic relations with Beijing and cutting ties with Taiwan.
Argentina has announced its withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO), following a similar decision made by the United States under President Donald Trump.
President Donald Trump signed an executive order, titled the "No Men in Women's Sports Executive Order."
The order prohibits transgender women and girls from competing in female sports, marking the fourth executive order targeting transgender individuals.
President Donald Trump signed an executive order that significantly impacted U.S. involvement in various United Nations bodies, including the U.N. Human Rights Council and UNRWA, the agency providing humanitarian aid to Palestinians. The U.S. stopped funding UNRWA, which provides aid to Palestinian refugees in Gaza, the West Bank, and neighboring countries.
Soweto-born Tshego Gaele has made history by becoming the first Black woman to win the Mrs World 2025 title at the grand finale in Las Vegas.
United Kingdom is taking a historic step in the fight against child sexual abuse by becoming the first country to criminalize AI-generated child sexual abuse material (CSAM).
U.S. President Donald Trump signed an executive order imposing steep tariffs on imports from Mexico, Canada, and China. The U.S. imposed 10% tariffs on all imports from China and 25% on imports from Mexico and Canada. Energy imports from Canada, including oil, natural gas, and electricity, were subjected to a 10% tariff.
World Health Organization (WHO) announced that Niger has become the first country in the African

region to officially eliminate onchocerciasis, also known as river blindness.

United Arab Emirates (UAE) has introduced the first phase of the Blue Visa system, a 10-year residency permit focused on individuals contributing to environmental sustainability.

Friedrich Merz, leader of the Christian Democratic Union (CDU), is set to take over as Germany's next chancellor.

Cali Fund Launched at CBD COP16 to Boost Biodiversity Finance.

A groundbreaking initiative in global biodiversity conservation was announced on February 25, 2025, with the launch of the Cali Fund at the 16th Conference of Parties (COP16) to the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in Rome, Italy.

Denmark has announced the launch of the Green Transition Alliance India (GTAI) to strengthen its collaboration with India on sustainable energy solutions.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 2024-25

JANUARY 2025

UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan announced that 2025 will be the "Year of Community," a national initiative aimed at fostering unity and inclusion within society.

The campaign, under the slogan "Hand in Hand," emphasizes the UAE leadership's commitment to building a cohesive and empowered community.

5 MoUs signed between India and Indonesia during President Prabowo Subianto's visit in January 2025.

- Key MoUs Areas
1. Health Cooperation
 2. Maritime Safety & Security
 3. Traditional Medicine Quality Assurance
 4. Digital Development
 5. Cultural Exchange Program (2025-2028).

India and Oman to Amend Tax Treaty and Accelerate Trade Pact Negotiations.

Chinese AI startup DeepSeek has made headlines by surpassing OpenAI's ChatGPT as the most-downloaded free app in the U.S. on Apple's App Store.

Alexander Lukashenko has secured a seventh term as President of Belarus, extending his 30-year authoritarian rule.

Micheál Martin has been re-elected as Ireland.

Thailand became the first Southeast Asian nation to legalize same-sex marriage, marking a significant victory for LGBTQ+ rights in the region.

Yala Glacier in Nepal Set to Vanish by 2040s Due to Climate Change.

Yala Glacier, situated in Nepal's Langtang National Park, has been a focal point for glaciological studies due to its significant retreat over recent decades.

Nigeria was officially admitted as a partner country of the BRICS bloc.

President Donald Trump initiated the United States' second withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement.

Adopted in 2015, the Paris Agreement is a global accord aimed at limiting global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels, with efforts to limit the increase to 1.5°C.

Jotham Napat has been elected as Vanuatu's new Prime Minister.

President Donald Trump signed an executive order initiating the United States' withdrawal from the World Health Organization (WHO) and suspending all foreign aid for 90 days.

China has completed the construction of the Tianshan Shengli Tunnel, the world's longest expressway tunnel.

The Tianshan Shengli Tunnel spans 22.13 kilometers and is a pivotal component of the Urumqi-Yuli Expressway, which connects Urumqi in northern Xinjiang to Yuli County in the south.

Donald Trump was sworn in as the 47th President of the United States on January 20, 2025, marking his return to the White House after four years.

TikTok faced a brief shutdown in the United States due to a law banning the app over national security concerns.

China successfully launched Pakistan's first indigenous Electro-Optical (EO-1) satellite, PRSC-EO1, from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center.

India is projected to overtake Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy by 2026, according to the PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI).

United States Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS) has updated its Entity List, removing three Indian organizations and adding eleven Chinese firms due to national security concerns.

The entities removed are:

Indian Rare Earths

Indira Gandhi Atomic Research Center (IGCAR)

Bhabha Atomic Research Center (BARC)

India and Spain have announced 2026 as a 'dual year' to celebrate their cultural, tourism, and AI collaborations.

NPCI and Magnati Partner to Boost UPI Use in UAE.

NPCI International Payments Ltd (NIPL), the international arm of India's National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has partnered with UAE-based fintech firm Magnati to enable Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions for Indian travelers in the UAE.

Singapore awarded the Honorary Citizen Award to Tarun Das, former CII Director General, for his pivotal role in enhancing Singapore-India relations.

Nicolas Maduro, the President of Venezuela (46th President), was sworn in for a third six-year term following a contentious election.

Mount Ibu, situated in North Maluku, Indonesia, erupted on January 11, 2025.

India is set to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mongolia in the areas of geology and exploration, aiming to enhance resource security and diversify supply chains.

Southern California experienced a severe wildfire outbreak that devastated large portions of Los Angeles, including celebrity homes and neighborhoods like Hollywood Hills.

At 116 years old, Sister Inah Canabarro Lucas from Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, has been confirmed as the world's oldest living person by LongeviQuest

Tomiko Itooka, a Japanese woman recognized by Guinness World Records as the world's oldest person, passed away at the age of 116 in January 2025.

Hanoi, Vietnam's capital, has recently been identified as the world's most polluted city, with PM2.5 levels reaching 266 micrograms per cubic meter.

Mike Johnson, a Republican from Louisiana, was re-elected as the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives in a tense

Pakistan commenced its two-year tenure as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).

This marks Pakistan's eighth term on the 15-member council, succeeding Japan as the Asian representative.

This is Pakistan's eighth term on the UNSC, with previous terms in 2012-13, 2003-04, 1993-94, 1983-84, 1976-77, 1968-69, and 1952-53.

Switzerland is implementing a series of significant changes starting January 1, 2025, which impact various sectors including legal, economic, and social frameworks.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 2024-25

DECEMBER 2024

China has introduced the CR450, the world's fastest high-speed train prototype, with test speeds reaching 450 km/h. Surpassing the current CR400 Fuxing trains (350 km/h).

The 18th Elephant and Tourism Festival, held in Sauraha, Chitwan, Nepal.

President Joe Biden signed a historic law officially designating the bald eagle as the national bird of the United States.

Two UK universities, Queen's University Belfast and Coventry University, Set to Establish Campuses at GIFT City, Gujarat.

China has approved the construction of the world's largest dam on the Yarlung Zangbo (Brahmaputra) in Tibet, close to the Indian border.

President-elect Donald Trump has named Indian-American entrepreneur and tech leader Sriram Krishnan as Senior Policy Advisor for AI at the White House.

Japan and India have joined forces to tackle the growing challenge of space debris, marking a significant collaboration in the space sector.

The Gadhimai Festival, held every five years in southeastern Nepal.

Moldova has joined the International Solar Alliance (ISA) by signing the ISA Framework Agreement in

New Delhi, marking its commitment to renewable energy.

The ISA, co-founded by India and France in 2015, aims to mobilize USD 1,000 billion for solar energy by 2030.

Cyclone Chido, a Category 4 storm, caused widespread destruction in Mayotte before making landfall in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province on December 15, 2024.

United Kingdom officially became the first European nation to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

The U.S. military has successfully tested its Long-Range Hypersonic Weapon (LRHW), also known as "Dark Eagle," bringing it closer to being fielded as a crucial asset in modern warfare.

Mount Semeru, located in East Java, Indonesia, erupted on 15th December.

Mikheil Kavelashvili, the 53-year-old former footballer, was elected president of Georgia.

Switzerland has decided to suspend the application of the 'Most Favoured Nation' (MFN) clause in its tax treaty with India.

French President Emmanuel Macron has appointed François Bayrou as the new Prime Minister of France.

Time magazine has named Donald Trump as its Person of the Year for 2024.

Trump was also named Person of the Year in 2016.

President Droupadi Murmu, honored Nepal's Army Chief, General Ashok Raj Sigdel, with the prestigious honorary rank of 'General of the Indian Army.'

Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah, nicknamed "NNN," made history by becoming Namibia's first female president

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS 2024-25

NOVEMBER 2024

Super Typhoon Man-yi, locally known as Pepito, has made a second landfall on the Philippines.

Tulsi Gabbard was appointed as the Director of National Intelligence (DNI) by U.S. President-elect Donald Trump.

China's \$1.3 billion megaport in Chancay, Peru, majority-owned by Chinese shipping giant Cosco, promises to connect South America to Asia and boost regional trade

Tropical Storm Sara made landfall in Honduras, bringing heavy rain and flooding risks to Central America and Mexico.

Scarecrow Incorporated, located in Tokyo's Shibuya Ward, has successfully acquired the world's first patent for its animal supplement, Pinfenon (S) (R).

President-elect Donald Trump has chosen Republican Rep. Elise Stefanik to serve as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations, marking his first Cabinet pick for his second term.

Mount Lewotobi Laki-laki in eastern Indonesia erupted on November 7, spewing a massive ash column over 6,500 meters high, as authorities ramped up warnings and evacuation efforts.

Australia is set to implement a significant move by banning social media access for children under 16, starting in November.

Zimbabwe has launched its second satellite, ZIMSAT-2, from the Vostochny Cosmodrome in Russia, a major milestone in the country's growing space programme.

Switzerland is set to enforce its controversial "burqa ban" starting January 1, 2025, following approval in a closely contested 2021 referendum.

Donald Trump Set to Back in the White House as 47th President of USA.

Donald Trump has clinched a critical victory in Wisconsin, securing 276 electoral votes—well above the 270 needed—to reclaim the White House as America's 47th president.

Donald Trump will succeed Joe Biden as the 47th President of the United States on 20 January 2025.

James David Vance of the Republican party will be the new Vice-President of the United States.

Kemi Badenoch, 44, made history on November 2 as the first Black woman to lead the UK's Conservative Party, succeeding Rishi Sunak, Britain's first British Indian party leader.

Q. RBI has set up by the to review the rupee interest rate benchmarks in the country, especially the usage of Mumbai Interbank Outright Rate (MIBOR), and to examine the need for transition to new benchmarks. Who is the headed of these committee?

- A) Manoj Govil
B) M. Rajeshwar Rao
C) V. Ravi Anshuman
D) Ramanathan Subramanian

Answer : D

- ✓ The Reserve Bank had set up the Committee on the MIBOR Benchmark headed by Ramanathan Subramanian to review the rupee interest rate benchmarks in the country, especially the usage of Mumbai Interbank Outright Rate (MIBOR), and to examine the need for transition to new benchmarks.
- ✓ The Committee recommended several important measures to further develop the interest rate derivative market and improve the credibility of interest rate benchmarks

COMMITTEE IN NEWS 2025

- SEBI has announced the formation of a six- member high level committee headed by Pratyush Sinha , a retired IAS officer and former chief vigilance commissioner to review conflict of interest rules.
- The Reserve Bank had set up the Committee on the MIBOR Benchmark headed by Ramanathan Subramanian to review the rupee interest rate benchmarks in the country, especially the usage of Mumbai Interbank Outright Rate (MIBOR), and to examine the need for transition to new benchmarks.
- Government think tank NITI Aayog has formed a committee to create a roadmap aimed at transforming AIIMS, New Delhi, into a premier institution for medical research and practice.
- Committee led by NITI Aayog member V K Paul.
- IRDAI has set up a seven-member committee headed by former chairman of State Bank of India Dinesh Khara to look into the proposed amendments to the Insurance Act, 1938 and suggest a framework for implementation of the same.
- The Central Advisory Committee (CAC) for Pradhan Mantri Scheduled Castes Aayudaya Yojana (PM-AJAY) met under the chairmanship of Dr. Virendra Kumar, Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment and Chairman of the CAC.
- The Centre has established a 19-member committee to address misleading publicity about processed food products, led by Union Minister of Food Processing Industries Chirag Paswan.
- RBI retains 3-member advisory committee for AVIOM India Housing Finance insolvency process. The members of the advisory committee are Paritosh Tripathi (ex-CGM, State Bank of India), Rajneesh Sharma (ex-CGM, Bank of Baroda), and Sanjaya Gupta (ex-MD & CEO, PNB Housing Finance)
- The Reserve Bank of India has appointed a five-member Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC), led by MK Jain, to assess applications for Universal and Small Finance Banks.
- To develop a framework for responsible and ethical enablement of artificial intelligence (FREE-AI) in the financial sector, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an eight-member expert committee.
- The chairman of the expert committee is Professor Pushpak Bhattacharyya.
- The government of India has set up a Working Group to revise the base year of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and also suggest a road map to gradually transit from the existing WPI to the Producer Price Index.
- The base year of the present WPI is 2011-12 and it is to be switched to 2022-23.
- The Working Group will be headed by Professor Ramesh Chand.

Q. The RBI will develop a new interest rate benchmark based on secured money markets. Which of the following is the proposed new benchmark rate?

- A) Secured Overnight Financing Rate (SOFR)
- B) Secured Overnight Funding Rate (SOFR)
- C) Secured Overnight Rupee Rate (SORR)
- D) Secured Overnight Repo Rate (SORR)

Answer : C

- ✓ The Reserve Bank had set up the Committee on the MIBOR Benchmark headed by Ramanathan Subramanian to review the rupee interest rate benchmarks in the country, especially the usage of Mumbai Interbank Outright Rate (MIBOR), and to examine the need for transition to new benchmarks.
- ✓ Based on the recommendations, it is proposed to develop a benchmark based on the secured money markets (both basket repo and TREP) – the Secured Overnight Rupee Rate (SORR).

RBI IN NEWS 2024-25

- BharatPe secures RBI nod to operate as online payment aggregator.
- Industry experts have welcomed the RBI's proposal to revise UPI transactions limits for paying money to merchants and expand its co-lending framework.
- At present the Transaction amount for UPI , covering both person to person (p2p) and person to merchant (p2m) is capped at Rs.1 lakh , except for specific use cases of P2M payments which have higher limits, some at Rs.2 lakh and others at Rs.5 lakh
- RBI released revised draft regulations under FEMA to streamline export and import transactions, aiming to enhance ease of doing business.
- Exporters with over two years of unrealised export proceeds exceeding Rs 25 crore must receive full advance or an irrevocable letter of credit for further exports.
- The Reserve Bank of India will soon issue Rs 10 and Rs 500 denomination banknotes in the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series, bearing the signature of Governor Sanjay Malhotra. These new notes will retain the same design as previous issues and will be legal tender along with existing Rs 10 and Rs 500 banknotes.
- RBI kept the investment limits unchanged for Foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) in government and corporate bonds for the fiscal 2025-26.
- 6% for government securities
- 2% for state government
- 15% for corporate bonds
- RBI had set up the Committee on the MIBOR Benchmark headed by Ramanathan Subramanian to review the rupee interest rate benchmarks in the country, especially the usage of Mumbai Interbank Outright Rate (MIBOR), and to examine the need for transition to new benchmarks
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reported that 98.21% of the ₹2000 banknotes in circulation have been returned to the banking system since the withdrawal announcement on May 19, 2023.
- This means that only ₹6,366 crore worth of ₹2000 notes remain in circulation.
- While the majority have been deposited or exchanged, the ₹2000 notes still hold their legal tender status.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a fresh round of open market operation (OMO) purchases totalling Rs. 80,000 crore to support liquidity in the banking system.
- These purchases will be conducted in four equal tranches of Rs. 20,000 crore each on April 3, April 8, April 22, and April 29, 2025.
- The Reserve Bank of India has raised the maximum ATM withdrawal fee banks can charge to Rs 23, starting May 1, 2025

- RBI imposed a monetary penalty of ₹75.00 lakh on HDFC Bank Limited (the bank) for non-compliance with certain directions issued by RBI on 'Know Your Customer'.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has permitted bilateral trade transactions between India and the Maldives to be settled in Indian Rupees (INR) and Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR), in addition to the existing Asian Clearing Union (ACU) mechanism.
- BRISKPE Gets RBI's In-Principle Nod To Operate As Cross Border Payment Aggregator.
- Reserve Bank of India has been selected for the Digital Transformation Award 2025 by Central Banking, London, UK.
- RBI was awarded and recognised for its initiatives, including Pravaah and Sarthi systems, that have been developed by in-house developer team.
- RBI has unveiled a framework for recognising self-regulatory organisations (SROs) for the account aggregator (AA) ecosystem, even as it invited applications for recognition of SRO-AAs
- Under the framework, an SRO-AA should be set up as a not-for-profit company registered under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013.
- The applicant should have/ demonstrate to achieve a minimum net worth of ₹2 crore within one year after recognition as an SRO-AA by the RBI, or before commencement of operations as an SRO-AA, whichever is earlier.
- RBI has reduced the risk weight on microfinance loans by 25 percentage points, bringing it down to 100%, effective from April 1, 2025. This reduction, previously set at 125%, aims to boost lending to NBFCs and microfinance institutions by easing capital requirements for banks.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed depositors of New India Cooperative Bank Ltd to withdraw Rs25,000 per depositor.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the Priority Sector Lending (PSL) limit for loans secured by electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipts (e-NWRs) from ₹75 lakh to ₹90 lakh per borrower.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to postpone the implementation of the proposed Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) norms and project financing guidelines by a year, with the new deadline set for no earlier than March 31, 2026.
- RBI has decided to postpone the implementation of new guidelines requiring banks to allocate additional funds for digitally-linked deposits. Initially planned for an earlier rollout, these norms will now take effect no sooner than March 2026
- Reserve Bank of India has sanctioned the Scheme of Amalgamation of Pune Commercial Co-operative Bank Ltd., Satara (Maharashtra) with Pimpri Chinchwad Sahakari Bank Maryadit, Pune (Maharashtra).
- The Scheme has been sanctioned in exercise of the powers conferred under Sub-Section (4) of Section 44A read with Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fined Federal Bank Limited ₹27.30 lakh for violating RBI's interest rate directions on deposits.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) fined Karur Vysya Bank Limited ₹8.30 lakh for not complying with RBI guidelines on credit delivery.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently permitted Small Finance Banks (SFBs) to offer pre-sanctioned credit lines through the Unified Payment Interface (UPI).
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched an 'RBIDATA' mobile app, which offers macroeconomic and financial statistics-related data about the Indian economy.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to inject Rupee liquidity for longer duration through long-term USD-INR Buy/Sell swap auction of \$10 billion for a tenor of three years.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a Currency Swap Agreement with the Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA) under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework 2024-27.
- India's Financial Support to Maldives:
- India will extend financial support to the Maldives, providing \$400 million under the US Dollar/Euro Swap Window.

- Additionally, ₹30 billion (approximately \$357 million) will be made available under the INR Swap Window.
- The Currency Swap Agreement will remain valid until June 18, 2027.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) revoked the Certificate of Authorization (CoA) of UAE Exchange Centre LLC (UAEEC).
- Reserve Bank of India set a minimum networth of Rs 300 crore for entities seeking authorisation as Central Counterparties (CCP).
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced the creation of an AI-powered model named MuleHunter.AI to tackle the growing issue of digital fraud involving "mule" bank accounts.
- Developed by the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH).
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Governor Shaktikanta Das has been awarded an 'A+' rating in the prestigious Global Finance Central Banker Report Cards 2023.
- SEBI has proposed a minimum ticket size or investment threshold of Rs 1 crore for the RBI-regulated originators and unregulated entities engaged in securitisation activities.
- Ujjivan Small Finance applies for universal banking license with RBI.
- Eligibility for SFBs to transitioning into UBs
- Net Worth: SFBs must have a minimum net worth of Rs 1,000 crore.
- Status: SFBs must be scheduled banks with a satisfactory track record of performance for a minimum of 5 years.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has expanded the Fully Accessible Route (FAR) to include 10-year Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrBs).
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the wallet limit for UPI Lite from ₹2,000 to ₹5,000.
- The UPI Lite wallet limit is now Rs. 5,000, up from the previous limit of Rs. 2,000, and the per transaction limit is now Rs. 1,000, previously at Rs. 500.
- UPI123Pay transaction limit: The per-transaction limit for UPI123Pay has been raised from ₹5,000 to ₹10,000.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has given Banks a ₹1.16 lakh crore liquidity injection by announcing a 50 basis points cut in the cash reserve ratio from 4.5 per cent of their deposits to 4 per cent.
- Revenue Secretary, Union Ministry of Finance, Sanjay Malhotra, has been appointed the 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- He will assume office on 11 December 2024 after the incumbent Governor, Shaktikanta Das, retires on 10 December 2024.
- Sanjay Malhotra has been appointed for three years.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) raised the collateral-free agricultural loan limit from ₹1.6 lakh to ₹2 lakh per borrower, effective January 1, 2025.
- To develop a framework for responsible and ethical enablement of artificial intelligence (FREE-AI) in the financial sector, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an eight-member expert committee.
- The chairman of the expert committee is Professor Pushpak Bhattacharyya of IIT Bombay.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) requires banks to allocate a certain percentage of their adjusted net bank credit (ANBC) to PSL.
- The target is 40% for public, private, and foreign banks, and 75% for small finance banks (SFBs).
- RBI proposed a name lookup facility for NEFT and RTGS to verify beneficiary names, mandating implementation by April 1, 2025.
- RBI Instructs Banks to Adopt '1600xx' Number Series for Transactional Calls.
- To address the rise in financial fraud, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has mandated that banks and other regulated entities (REs) exclusively use the '1600xx' number series for transactional calls and the '140xx' series for promotional calls.
- RBI paves way for faster resolution of retail NPAs for ARCs.
- ARCs can settle dues up to ₹1 crore without an independent advisory committee.
- ARC is required to have a minimum net owned fund (NOF) of Rs 300 crore and thereafter, on an ongoing basis.
- RBI has set up a new standing external advisory committee, which will evaluate applications for universal banks and small finance banks (SFBs).

- ✓ Disclaimers regarding risk-return metrics are mandatory, ensuring compliance with the new framework.
- ✓ This structured approach by SEBI aims to empower investors, strengthen market integrity, and enhance accountability among financial service providers.

SEBI IN NEWS 2024-25

- SEBI has announced the formation of a six- member high level committee headed by Pratyush Sinha , a retired IAS officer and former chief vigilance commissioner to review conflict of interest rules
- SEBI has directed all its regulated and registered entities to exclusively use the 1600 phone number series for service and transactional voice calls to their customers
- SEBI issued a framework for recognition and operationalisation of a performance validation agency , to be called Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA).
- Eligibility Criteria for PaRRVA:-
 - (i)Number of years of existence of the CRA(Credit Rating Agencies)should be minimum 15 years
 - (ii)Minimum net worth of the CRA should be INR 100 crores
 - (iii)Number of issuers which have obtained ratings of listed or proposed to be listed debt securities from the CRA should be 250 or more; and
 - (iv)CRA should have Investor grievance redressal mechanism including Online Dispute Resolution (“ODR”) Mechanism
- The eligibility criteria for a SE to act as PaRRVA Data Centre (“PDC”) :-
 - (i)Number of years of existence of the SE should be minimum 15 years
 - (ii)Minimum net worth of the SE should be INR 200 crores
 - (iii)The SE should have nation-wide terminals
 - (iv)SE should have Investor grievance redressal mechanism including Online Dispute Resolution (“ODR”) Mechanism
- Aye Finance, an Alphabet-backed non-banking financial company (NBFC), has received final observations from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for its proposed ₹1,450 crore IPO.
- SEBI extends suspension of trading in 7 commodity derivatives until Mar 2026
- (moong, wheat, paddy(non-basmati), chana, mustard, soyabean, crude palm oil)
- SEBI has extended the limit for advance fee collection by Investment Advisers (IAs) and Research Analysts (RAs) to up to one year. Previously, IAs could collect fees in advance for up to two quarters, and RAs for a quarter.
- SEBI has eased disclosure norms for foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) by raising the asset threshold for granular beneficial ownership disclosures from Rs 25,000 crore to Rs 50,000 crore
- SEBI Partners with DigiLocker to Reduce Unclaimed Assets and Strengthen Investor Protection.
- Tuhin Kanta Pandey, has been appointed as the 11th chairperson of the SEBI for a three-year term.
- He will succeed Madhabi Puri Buch.
- SEBI asset management companies (AMC) should deploy the funds garnered from investors in a new fund offering (NFO) within 30 days from the date of allotment of units.
- SEBI introduced a digital platform called MITRA (Mutual Fund Investment Tracing and Retrieval Assistant) to help investors find inactive or unclaimed mutual fund folios.
- SEBI has proposed a minimum investment of Rs 1 crore for RBI-regulated originators and unregulated entities involved in securitization
- SEBI is working on a secure Unified Payments Interface (UPI) mechanism for registered market intermediaries.
- Currently, UPI transactions for capital markets are capped at ₹2 lakh per day.
- SEBI proposes increasing this limit to ₹5 lakh per day.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed SEBI-registered non-bank brokers to participate in the Negotiated Dealing System-Order Matching (NDS-OM).
- SEBI is working on revamping its Business Responsibility and Sustainability Reporting (BRSR) standards to align with internationally recognised environmental, social, and governance (ESG) norms.

- The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is introducing a "when-listed" platform to reduce grey market activity.
- SEBI introduces Integrated SEBI Portal for Technical Glitches (iSPOT) to centralize and streamline reporting of technical issues by MIIs (stock exchanges, clearing corporations).
- SEBI has introduced a new asset class and liberalized the MF Lite framework to enhance the investment landscape in India.
- The MF Lite framework caters to passively managed mutual fund schemes, with a minimum investment limit of ₹10 lakh per investor.
- SEBI has launched a digital knowledge repository, "Dharohar - Milestones in the Indian securities market".
- SEBI introduced 6 new measures aimed at regulating the equity index derivatives market, commonly known as futures and options (F&O).
- New Minimum Contract Size: The minimum contract size for index derivatives has been raised from ₹5-10 lakh to ₹15 lakh.
- SEBI allows mutual funds (MFs) to invest in overseas funds and unit trusts (UTs) with up to 25% exposure to Indian equities.
- Unifi Asset Management receives SEBI approval to launch mutual fund operations.
- SEBI has proposed several changes to make the SME IPO process safer for investors. These changes include increasing the minimum SME IPO size to Rs 10 crore, raising the IPO application size to Rs 4 lakh, limiting promoters' offers for sale to 20%, and establishing a compliance monitoring agency for listed SMEs.
- Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) launched the Association of Registered Research Analysts of India (ARRAI).
- SEBI is establishing the Past Risk and Return Verification Agency (PaRRVA) as a Performance Validation Agency (PVA).
- SEBI has proposed bit-sized systematic investment plans (SIP) of Rs.250 in a step to increase the mutual fund footprint in the under-served section of the country.
- SEBI has proposed raising the threshold for identifying High Value Debt Listed Entities (HVDLEs) to ₹1,000 crore from ₹500 crore at present to reduce compliance burdens.
- Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI):
- It is the regulatory body for securities and commodity markets in India established in 1988.
- It is the regulator of the Capital market and Commodities market in India.
- The first SEBI chairman was Dr S A Dave (1988-90)
- Headquarters : Mumbai
- 11th Chairperson : Tuhin Kanta Pandey

Q. Renault Group will buy what percent stake of Nissan in Indian joint venture?

- A) 49%
- B) 51%
- C) 74%
- D) 63%

Answer : B

- ✓ Renault Group to acquire Nissan's 51% stake in Indian JV.
- ✓ Renault group of France and Nissan of Japan have signed a framework agreement by which Renault group would control 100% equity in Renault Nissan Automotive india pvt ltd by acquiring 51% stake owned by Nissan.
- ✓ Renault Nissan Technology & Business Center India (RNTBCI) will be operated jointly in which Nissan will retain its 49% stake and Renault Group its 51% stake

Q. The Reserve Bank of India has increased the overall limit available to standalone primary dealers (SPDs) under the standing liquidity facility from Rs 10,000 crore to how many rupees at the current repo rate?

- A) Rs 15,000 crore B) Rs 25,000 crore
C) Rs 20,000 crore D) Rs 30,000 crore

Answer : A

- ✓ RBI raises liquidity limit for standalone primary dealers to Rs 15,000 cr.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India has raised the aggregate limit available to Standalone Primary Dealers (SPDs) under the Standing Liquidity Facility at the prevailing repo rate, from Rs 10,000 crore to Rs 15,000 crore, effective from April 2, 2025.
- ✓ SPDs were permitted to participate in all overnight liquidity management operations, excluding the Marginal Standing Facility.
- ✓ SPDs could participate in other operations, such as long-term Variable Rate Repo (VRR) operations and daily VRRs, on a case-by-case basis.

Q. The Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has increased the limit of Automatic Settlement of Advance Claims (ASAC) from Rs one lakh to how many lakh rupees?

- A) Rs 2 lakh
B) Rs 4 lakh
C) Rs 3 lakh
D) Rs 5 lakh

Answer : D

- ✓ Centre set to hike limit for auto settlement of PF withdrawal from Rs.1 lakh to Rs.5 lakh.
- ✓ The Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has announced to increase in the auto-settlement of advance claims (ASAC) limit, raising it five times from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.
- ✓ The move is designed to enhance the 'ease of living' for its 7.5 crore members

Q. Who has been appointed as the Managing Director and Head of the Consumer Banking Group at DBS Bank India?

- A) Ambuj Chandna
B) Rajat Verma
C) Prashant Joshi
D) Vikram Kumar

Answer : A

- ✓ Ambuj Chandna has been appointed as the Managing Director (MD) and Head of the Consumer Banking Group at DBS Bank India.
- ✓ With over 16 years of experience at Kotak Mahindra Bank, where he served as President and Head of Consumer Bank (Products), Chandna brings extensive expertise in retail banking and consumer financial products.
- ✓ His leadership role at DBS Bank India follows the appointment of Rajat Verma as CEO

MD & CEO IN NEWS 2024-25

- IDBI Bank has announced the reappointment of Rakesh Sharma as Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for another three-year term.
- Ashok Chandra took over as MD and CEO of Punjab National Bank (PNB)
- Binod Kumar has taken charge as the MD and CEO of Indian Bank.
- Rajat Verma, currently heading the Institutional Banking Group at DBS Bank India, will take over as the new CEO of DBS Bank India starting March 1, 2025.
- Pratima Sengupta takes charge as MD, CEO of Bandhan Bank
- Shashwat Sharma to take over as MD, CEO of Airtel.
- RBI clears re- appointment of Amitabh Chaudhary as Axis Bank Md & CEO for three years

- Pranav Chawda has been appointed as the new chief executive officer (CEO) of JP Morgan Chase India for a term of three years.
- Prasun Sikdar appointed as MD, CEO of Bima Sugam India Federation for 3 yrs
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) re-appointed V. Vaidyanathan as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO) of IDFC First Bank for a three-year.
- Piyush Gupta, the Indian origin Chief Executive of Singapore's largest bank DBS Group, will step down in March 2025. He will be succeeded by Tan Su Shan.
- NPCI incorporates NPCI BHIM Services Ltd (NBSL) as a wholly owned subsidiary, Lalitha Nataraj has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) .
- Salee Sukumaran Nair appointed as MD & Ceo of Tamilnad Mercantile Bank.
- Brian Niccol, the former CEO of Chipotle, was appointed as the new CEO of Starbucks, replacing Laxman Narasimhan.
- Reserve Bank of India has approved the re-appointment of Inderjit Camotra as MD and CEO of Unity Small Finance Bank
- KV Subramanian appointed as Federal Bank MD & CEO for 3 year
- ESAF Small Finance Bank has received the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI's) nod for re-appointment of K Paul Thomas as its Managing Director & CEO for another three years

Q. Who has been appointed as the whole-time member (life) of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)?

A) Ramesh Singh

B) Swaminathan S. Iyer

C) Anil Kumar

D) Priya Mehta

Answer : B

- ✓ Swaminathan S. Iyer has been appointed as a full-time member of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), a key regulatory body for the insurance sector in India.
- ✓ His extensive background in legal, regulatory affairs, and insurance, including roles at Tata AIA Life Insurance and HDFC Standard Life Insurance, positions him to effectively oversee the life insurance segment.

IRDAI IN NEWS 2024-25

- IRDAI has set up a seven-member committee headed by former chairman of SBI Dinesh Khara to examine proposed amendments to the Insurance Act, 1938, and suggest a framework for its implementation.
- IRDAI introduced Bima-ASBA, a UPI-based premium payment system for life and health insurance.
- With an aim to provide “Insurance for All by 2047,” the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has announced the ‘Bima Vahak’ initiative, a women-centric insurance field sales force, which is inching closer to implementation.
- The portal for 'Bima Vahak' is near completion and gearing up for a soft launch in April 2025.
- Neo-bank Freo has secured a Corporate Agent licence from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).
- As per the latest annual report published by the IRDAI, Rs 20,062 crore lies unclaimed by insurers by the end of FY 2023-24.
- All insurers having unclaimed amounts of policyholders for a period of more than 10 years.
- Bima Sugam is a transformative project launched by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).
- IRDAI has introduced a new regulation that caps annual premium increases for senior citizens' health insurance policies by a maximum of 10%.
- Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)
- IRDAI was established on the recommendation of the R.N. Malhotra Committee, which the government of India established on Insurance Sector reform in 1993.

- Parliament passed the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act 1999, which made the authority a statutory body in April 2000.
- Headquarters: Hyderabad, Telangana
- Chairperson: Debasish Panda
- It is the regulator of the Insurance sector in India

Q. Who has been appointed as the new Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)?

- A) Arvind Kumar
B) Sneha Sharma
C) Poonam Gupta
D) Rajesh Mehta

Answer : C

Q. What is the term of the newly appointed Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, Dr Poonam Gupta?

- A) 2 years
B) 3 years
C) 5 years
D) 6 years

Answer : B

- ✓ The government of India has appointed Dr Poonam Gupta, director of the New Delhi-based think tank National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), as the new Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ✓ Dr Poonam Gupta will replace Dr
- ✓ Michael Patra, who relinquished his office on 14 January 2025.
- ✓ Term of Dr Poonam Gupta
- ✓ Dr Poonam Gupta has been appointed for a term of three years.
- ✓ Legal provision regarding the Deputy Governor of the RBI.
- ✓ According to section 8 of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Act 1934, there shall be a maximum of four Deputy Governors of the RBI.
- ✓ By convention, the government appoints two officers of the RBI as Deputy Governors, one from the Commercial Banks and one an economist.
- ✓ The Deputy Governors are appointed by the Central government.
- ✓ The maximum term of a Deputy Governor shall not be more than 5 years.
- ✓ However, the government specifies the term of the Deputy Governor while appointing them.
- ✓ The Deputy Governor is eligible for reappointment.
- ✓ The maximum age of the Deputy Governor shall not be more than 60 years as on the specified date.
- ✓ About Dr Poonam Gupta
- ✓ Dr Poonam Gupta did her Master's in Economics from the Delhi School of Economics, Delhi University and her Ph.D in Economics from the University of Maryland, USA.
- ✓ She became the first woman to head the prestigious NCAER.
- ✓ She has also worked at the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank..
- ✓ She has also taught at the Delhi School of Economics and the University of Maryland
- ✓ Deputy Governors of the RBI
- ✓ At present, Swaminathan J, M. Rajeshwar Rao, and T. Rabi Sankar are the Deputy Governors of the RBI.
- ✓ First Deputy Governor - Captain Sir Sikander Hyat Khan and Sir James B. Taylor, appointed on 1st April 1935.
- ✓ First woman Deputy Governor- K.J. Udeshi (2003-2005).

- Q.** What post was held by Sivasubramanian Ramann before he was appointed the Chairperson of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)?
- A) Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General
 - B) Deputy Attorney General of India
 - C) Deputy Solicitor General of India
 - D) Chief Election Commissioner of India

Answer : A

- ✓ Deputy CAG Sivasubramanian Ramann appointed Chairman of PFRDA.
- ✓ The government of India has appointed Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) India, Sivasubramanian Ramann, as the Chairperson of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA).
- ✓ Sivasubramanian Ramann will replace the current chairperson, Deepak Mohanty, whose term comes to an end in May 2025.
- ✓ Tenure of the Chairperson of PFRDA
- ✓ According to the PFRDA Act 2013, the tenure of the chairperson of the PFRDA shall be five years, and is eligible for reappointment.
- ✓ However, the retirement age of the PFRDA chairperson is 65 years.
- ✓ Sivasubramanian Ramann has been appointed for a tenure of five years or till he attains the age of 65 years.
- ✓ About Sivasubramanian Ramann
- ✓ Sivasubramanian Ramann is a 1991 batch of the Indian Audit & Accounts Service (IA&AS).
- ✓ He was Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Small Industrial Development Bank of India (SIDBI) from 2021-2024.
- ✓ He has also been the MD & CEO of National E-Governance Services Limited (NeSL).

- Q.** What is the term of the Chairperson of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)?
- A) Five years or 65 years, whichever is earlier
 - B) Five years or 63 years, whichever is earlier
 - C) Five years or 62 years, whichever is earlier
 - D) Five years or 66 years, whichever is earlier

Answer : A

- ✓ About Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA)
- ✓ In 2003, the government of India set up an interim Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) as an administrative body under the Union Ministry of Finance.
- ✓ It was made a statutory body on 1st February, 2014, under the provisions of the Pension Fund Regulatory & Development Authority Act 2013.
- ✓ Functions
- ✓ It is the regulator of the pension system in India.
- ✓ It is mandated to develop an organized pension system to serve the old age income needs of people on a sustainable basis.
- ✓ It is the regulator of the newly notified Unified Pension System, which came into effect on 1 April 2025.
- ✓ Headquarters of PFRDA: New Delhi

Q. What is the name of the Microsoft artificial intelligence (AI) platform?

- A) Microsoft Co-Pilot
- B) Microsoft Alexa
- C) Microsoft Zensar
- D) Microsoft Kellton

Answer : A

- ✓ Microsoft signs MoU with Maharashtra to set up three AI Centers.
- ✓ In a boost to Digital India and to boost the adoption of artificial intelligence in the state administration, the Government of Maharashtra has signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Microsoft Corporation to establish three Artificial Intelligence (AI) centres of excellence in Mumbai, Pune, and Nagpur.
- ✓ The Maharashtra government has also decided to form a high-power committee to strengthen Maharashtra Advanced Research and Vigilance for Enforcement of Reformed Laws Limited (MARVEL) for the efficient use of AI in government and semi-government offices.
- ✓ MoU with Microsoft
- ✓ Microsoft will help train the Maharashtra government staff in the use of Microsoft's Co-pilot AI platform that will make the government more efficient, transparent, and responsive to people's needs.

MICROSOFT IN NEWS 2024-25

- Microsoft has introduced a new voice-activated AI assistant called Dragon Copilot.
- Microsoft released Majorana 1, the world's first quantum chip built on a topological core, recently.
- Microsoft CEO Satya Nadella discusses Jevons Paradox, noting that improved efficiency in AI may boost its demand and make it a commodity.
- Microsoft Chairman and CEO Satya Nadella has unveiled a series of AI-driven strategic partnerships with the Government of India and major industry players, furthering the country's AI and cloud ecosystem.
- Microsoft plans to invest \$3 bn on AI , cloud infrastructure in India.
- Karnataka signed 5 MoU with Microsoft, IBM , Intel , Accenture and the Bfsi consortium to skill one lakh individuals in the state.
- NASA and Microsoft are collaborating to develop Earth Copilot, an AI chatbot that will simplify access to NASA's Earth Science data
- MICROSOFT
- Founded : 1975
- Founders : Bill Gates and Paul Allen
- Headquarters : Washington DC
- Chairman : Satya Nadella
- CEO : Satya Nadella
- President : Brad Smith

Q. Who has been appointed as the new Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SBI Card, effective April 1, 2025?

- A) Arundhati Bhattacharya
- B) Salila Pande
- C) Rajnish Kumar
- D) D. S. Rawat

Answer : B

- ✓ Salila Pande has been appointed as the new Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of SBI Card, effective from April 1, 2025.
- ✓ With nearly three decades of

- ✓ experience in the banking sector, particularly with the State Bank of India (SBI), she brings extensive expertise in retail banking, credit services, and financial management

Q. Which company has unveiled AI-powered ad tools and omnichannel features to accelerate India's e-commerce growth?

- A) Flipkart
- B) Amazon
- C) Meta
- D) Reliance industries

Answer : C

- ✓ Meta unveils AI-powered ad tools and omnichannel features to accelerate India's e-commerce growth.
- ✓ The tools include AI-enhanced catalog ads, creator-led campaigns, and omnichannel features aimed at connecting digital shoppers with offline stores.

Q. Which cement company will buy 100% stake in Wonder Wallcare for ₹235 crore?

- A) UltraTech Cement
- B) Ambuja Cement
- C) Dalmia Bharat
- D) Shree Cement

Answer : A

- ✓ UltraTech Cement to Acquire 100% Equity of Wonder WallCare in ₹235 Crore Deal.
- ✓ Aditya Birla Group's flagship company, UltraTech Cement Ltd has board of directors has approved the acquisition of 100% equity in Wonder WallCare at an enterprise value of up to ₹235 crore

CEMENTS COMPANY ACQUIRED STAKE IN NEWS 2024-25

- UltraTech Cement to acquire 100% stake in Wonder WallCare for ₹235 crore.
- Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the proposed acquisition of up to 72.8% shareholding in Orient cement Ltd by Ambuja cement ltd.
- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved the proposed acquisition of up to 72.64% shareholding in ITD Cementation India Limited by Renew Exim DMCC, an arm of the Adani Group, following an open offer for an additional 26% stake.
- UltraTech Cement has acquired an 8.69% stake in Star Cement for ₹851 crore.
- Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved UltraTech Cement's acquisition of a 32.72% stake in India Cements from its promoters, along with an open offer to acquire an additional 26% stake.
- Ambuja Cements merges with Sanghi Industries and Penna Cement.
- Adani's Ambuja Cements has acquired a 46.8% stake in Orient Cement Ltd (OCL) for an equity value of Rs 8,100 crore.

Q. What is the duration of the recently approved Centrally Sponsored Scheme, Vibrant Villages Programme -II?

- A) 2024-25 to 2028-29
- B) 2025-26 to 2028-29
- C) 2025-26 to 2029-30
- D) 2024-25 to 2030-31

Answer : A

- ✓ Union Government approves Central Vibrant Villages Programme-II.
- ✓ The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSC) Vibrant Villages Programme -II in a meeting held on 4 April 2025.
- ✓ Prime Minister virtually chaired the meeting from Bangkok, Thailand, as he is on a state visit to Thailand on 3rd and 4th April 2025.
- ✓ The Vibrant Villages Programme -II will complement the Vibrant Villages Programme -I, launched by the central government in 2023.
- ✓ The duration of the Vibrant Villages Programme -II is from 2024-25 to 2028-29.
- ✓ Allocation of Funds
- ✓ The total allocation for the scheme is Rs 6,839 crore.
- ✓ It is 100 % funded by the central government
- ✓ The Vibrant Villages Programme -I & II is being implemented by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ✓ The Vibrant Villages Programme -II will cover the 17 States/Union Territories of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Bihar, Gujarat, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Punjab, Rajasthan, Sikkim, Tripura, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, West Bengal and the Union Territory of Ladakh and the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✓ About Vibrant Villages Programme -I
- ✓ It was launched by the central government as a centrally sponsored scheme on 15th February, 2023.
- ✓ It covers select villages in 46 blocks of 19 districts in the States of Arunachal Pradesh, Himachal Pradesh, Sikkim, Uttarakhand, and the Union Territory of Ladakh.

Q. What is the share of the state government in the funding of the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, Vibrant Villages Programme -II?

- A) 60%
- B) 40%
- C) 50%
- D) 100%

Answer : D

- ✓ 100 % funded by the central government. Total outlay Rs 6,839 crore.
- ✓ Objective of the Vibrant Villages Programme -II
- ✓ The scheme aims to develop the backward villages located in these blocks along the international borders so that the people do not migrate from these areas, and also do not fall prey to hostile enemy propaganda.
- ✓ Focus will be on creating opportunities for livelihood for these people through the promotion of tourism, skill development & entrepreneurship.
- ✓ Building of all-weather roads under the Pradhan Mantri Gram Sadak Yojana -IV to improve connectivity in these regions.
- ✓ Providing telecom connectivity, television connectivity, and electrification.

Q. Which ministry of the government of India is implementing the Centrally Sponsored Scheme, Vibrant Villages Programme -II?

- A) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- B) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- C) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
- D) Ministry of Home Affairs

Answer : D

- ✓ Nodal Ministry for the Vibrant Villages Programme -II.
- ✓ The Vibrant Villages Programme -I & II is being implemented by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.

Q. According to the Forbes World Billionaires List 2025, which country had the largest number of billionaires in the world?

- A) India
- B) Russia
- C) Japan
- D) United States

Answer : D

- ✓ According to Forbes' annual World's Billionaires list 2025, India has the third highest number of billionaires in the world, with 205 billionaires.
- ✓ The world's largest economy, the United States of America, retained the status of having the largest number of billionaires on Earth, with 902, and China (including Hong Kong) in the second spot with 516 billionaires.
- ✓ Elon Musk of the United States remained the richest person in the world, while Mukesh Ambani was the richest Indian and the 18th richest person in the world.
- ✓ About the Forbes World Billionaire List
- ✓ The American multimedia company Forbes releases the annual World Billionaires list.

Q. According to the Forbes World Billionaires List 2025, who is the richest person in the world?

- A) Mark Zuckerberg
- B) Johannes von Baumbach
- C) Larry Ellison
- D) Elon Musk

Answer : D

- ✓ Highlights of the Forbes World Billionaires List 2025
- ✓ For the first time, more than 3000 billionaires were included in the list. The total number of billionaires in the world was 3028, an increase of 247 as compared to last year..
- ✓ The combined wealth of billionaires was \$16.1 trillion, an increase of \$2 trillion as compared to last year.
- ✓ Three people -Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg, and Jeff Bezos, all American, have a net worth of more than \$ 200 billion.
- ✓ Richest Women- American multinational company Walmart heir Alice Walton, with a net worth of \$101 billion.
- ✓ World's youngest billionaire - 19-year-old Johannes von Baumbach of Germany.
- ✓ He has inherited the wealth as heir to Germany's Boehringer Ingelheim, the world's largest privately owned pharmaceutical company.
- ✓ Youngest self made Billionaire - 28 year old Scale AI co- founder and CEO Alexandr Wang of America, with net worth of \$2 billion.
- ✓ **World's Richest People's List**

- ✓ This indicates a strong response from the public in exchanging or depositing the notes.
- ✓ The other options are incorrect percentages that do not reflect the actual return rate of ₹2000 notes.

Q. Who joined the International Monetary Fund's Advisory Council on Entrepreneurship & Growth?

- A) N Chandrasekaran B) Kristalina Georgieva
C) John Maynard Keynes D) Harry Dexter White

Answer : A

- ✓ N Chandrasekaran has been appointed to the IMF's Advisory Council on Entrepreneurship & Growth to contribute to fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and productivity.
- ✓ The other options are notable figures related to the IMF or economic history Kristalina Georgieva is the IMF Managing Director, while John Maynard Keynes and Harry Dexter White are founders associated with the Bretton Woods system.

Q. Which company merged with Aditya Birla Capital Limited to enhance operational efficiencies and financial strength?

- A) Aditya Birla Insurance Ltd B) Aditya Birla Finance Ltd
C) Aditya Birla Asset Management Ltd D) Aditya Birla Housing Finance Ltd

Answer : B

- ✓ Aditya Birla Capital Limited (ABCL) has merged with its fully owned NBFC subsidiary, Aditya Birla Finance Ltd. (ABFL), effective from April 1, 2025.
- ✓ This strategic merger aims to simplify the corporate structure, improve operational efficiency, and strengthen financial stability.
- ✓ The merger received necessary approvals from regulatory bodies like SEBI, RBI, and NCLT, along with shareholders and creditors.

Q. Which company has unveiled AI-powered ad tools and omnichannel features to accelerate India's e-commerce growth?

- A) Flipkart B) Amazon
C) Meta D) Reliance industries

Answer : C

- ✓ Meta unveils AI-powered ad tools and omnichannel features to accelerate India's e-commerce growth.
- ✓ The tools include AI-enhanced catalog ads, creator-led campaigns, and omnichannel features aimed at connecting digital shoppers with offline stores.

Q. Who has been appointed as the Executive Director of growth at the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)?

- A) Priya Sharma
B) Sohini Rajola
C) Anjali Mehra
D) Deepak Kumar

Answer : B

- ✓ Sohini Rajola has been appointed as the Executive Director of growth at NPCI, where she will focus on driving the adoption of NPCI's payment solutions, enhancing product offerings, and managing strategic partnerships with banks and fintech companies.

NPCI IN NEWS 2024-25

- NPCI will start delinking UPI IDs linked to the mobile number revocation list (MNRL) and the digital intelligence platform (DIP) from April 1, 2025.
- NPCI has extended the deadline for implementing transaction volume cap on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) apps by two years till December 31, 2026.
- NPCI removed the user onboarding limit for WhatsApp Pay on January 6, 2025.
- WhatsApp Pay must continue to comply with all existing UPI guidelines and regulations for Third-Party Application Providers (TPAPs).
- NPCI approved 20 third-party Unified Payments Interface (UPI) applications, a record since UPI's launch in 2016.
- NPCI eyes Rupay, UPI expansion to 10 countries.
- For UPI, we have signed up with three countries With Namibia, Trinidad and Tobago, and Peru, the commercial agreements have been signed.
- Currently, UPI is available in seven countries — France, the UAE, Singapore, Bhutan, Sri Lanka, Mauritius and Nepal.
- NPCI has launched a UPI Safety Awareness Campaign, Main Moorkh Nahi Hoon.
- As the campaign's brand ambassador, renowned actor Pankaj Tripathi will star in a series of six and films .
- India's Unified Payments Interface (UPI) technology set a new record in October 2024 with 16.58 billion transactions worth ₹23.50 lakh crore.
- NPCI has granted approval to Paytm to onboard new UPI users, subject to the adherence to all procedural guidelines and circulars.
- Maldivian President Mohamed Muizzu has decided to take the necessary steps to introduce India's Unified Payment Interface (UPI) in the Maldives.
- National Payments Corporation of India is already operational in several international locations, including UAE, Sri Lanka, France, Malaysia, Singapore, Nepal, the UK, and Mauritius.
- NPCI and The Times of India (TOI) have announced a partnership to launch a nationwide campaign to promote digital payment safety.
- The campaign will feature R.K. Laxman's iconic cartoon character, Common Man, to raise awareness about digital payment frauds.
- NPCI has incorporated Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) as a wholly-owned subsidiary, hiving it off into a new entity known as NPCI-BHIM Services Ltd (NBSL).
- NPCI International and Qatar National Bank (QNB) have partnered to launch UPI payments in Qatar.
- NPCI Inks Pact With Peru To Build UPI-Like Payments System. With this, Peru becomes the first country in South America to adopt UPI.
- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) is developing a UPI-like system for the Bank of Namibia.
- National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)
- Founded : 2008
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Non-Exe Chairman : Ajay Kumar Chaudhary
- MD & CEO : Dilip Asbe

Q. What is the FPI investment limit in Government Securities (G-Secs) as a proportion of the outstanding stock for FY 2025-26?

- [illegible]

Answer : B

- ✓ RBI Retains FPI Investment Limits in Government & Corporate Bonds for FY26

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to maintain the existing investment limits for Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) in both government and corporate bonds for the financial year 2025-26.
- ✓ Unchanged Percentage Limits: The percentage limits for FPI investments as a proportion of the outstanding stock of securities will remain the same as in the previous financial year:
- ✓ Government Securities (G-Secs): 6%
- ✓ State Government Securities (SGSs): 2%
- ✓ Corporate Bonds: 15%
- ✓ Rupee-Denominated Limits: The RBI has also specified the investment limits in Indian Rupees for the two halves of the financial year 2025-26:
- ✓ Government Bonds:
- ✓ April - September 2025: ₹2.79 trillion
- ✓ October 2025 - March 2026: ₹2.89 trillion
- ✓ Corporate Bonds:
- ✓ April - September 2025: ₹8.22 trillion
- ✓ October 2025 - March 2026: ₹8.80 trillion
- ✓ Fully Accessible Route (FAR): All eligible FPI investments in 'specified securities' will continue to be reckoned under the Fully Accessible Route (FAR).
- ✓ G-Sec Limit Allocation: The incremental changes in the G-Sec limit (in absolute terms) will continue to be allocated equally (50:50) between the 'General' and 'Long-term' sub-categories.
- ✓ SGS Limit Allocation: The entire increase in the limits for SGSs (in absolute terms) has been added to the 'General' sub-category.
- ✓ Credit Default Swaps (CDS): The aggregate limit for the notional amount of Credit Default Swaps sold by FPIs will be 5% of the outstanding stock of corporate bonds. This translates to an additional limit of ₹2,93,612 crore for FY 2025-26.
- ✓ Current Utilization: As of the announcement, FPIs had utilized 22.3% of their permitted limit in government bonds and 15.7% in corporate bonds, indicating that there is still significant room for further investment within the existing limits

Q. What is the new name of HIL Ltd after its rebranding?

- A) CK Build
- B) NuHIL
- C) BirlaNu
- D) HILBirla

Answer : C

- ✓ C.K. Birla Group firm HIL rebranded BirlaNu, to invest ₹1,300 crore for more growth
- ✓ Home and building products and services company HIL (formerly known as Hyderabad Industries) has been rebranded as BirlaNu as part of a strategic transformation course the C.K. Birla Group entity has set on under which it plans to invest at least ₹1,200 crore in next three years for accelerated growth.

REBRANDED IN NEWS 2024-25

- HIL Ltd Rebrands as BirlaNu Limited
- Zomato has rebranded itself as "Eternal" to reflect its broader business scope beyond food delivery.
- Fintech firm Slice is set to rebrand its name to Slice Small Finance Bank Ltd after its merger in North East Small Finance Bank.
- Shriram Housing Finance has rebranded itself as Truhome Finance.
- Max Life Insurance has rebranded as Axis Max Life Insurance.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced the rebranding of the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) to Bharat Connect.
- Emami rebrands 'Fair and Handsome' grooming product as 'Smart and Handsome'.
- Bank of Baroda 's wholly -owned subsidiary for cards, 'Bob financial solutions Ltd, has been rebranded as 'BOBCARD Ltd' with tagline 'Credit Reimagined

Q. Which central government scheme completed 10 years on 8th April 2025?

- A) Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana B) Ayushman Bharat Yojana
C) Atal Pension Yojana D) Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana

Answer : A

- ✓ The government of India's Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana completed 10 years on 8th April 2025.
- ✓ The Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) scheme and the Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd (MUDRA) were launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 8th April 2015.
- ✓ The aim of the scheme and MUDRA was to provide easy loan access to the small and micro business enterprises in the country, with special focus on the weaker section of the society.
- ✓ **MUDRA Loan**
- ✓ Under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana, loans are provided to non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises. These loans are called MUDRA loans.
- ✓ The loans are provided by the Reserve Bank of India-regulated Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks (RRBs), Small Finance Banks, Micro Financial Institutions (MFIs), and Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs).
- ✓ **Categories of MUDRA loan**
- ✓ There are four categories of loans designed to help business enterprises during their various growth stages.
- ✓ **Sishu Stage**
- ✓ Maximum loan up to Rs 50,000.
- ✓ The loan is designed for startups and new business ventures, for first-time entrepreneurs.
- ✓ **Kishore Stage**
- ✓ Loans of more than Rs 50,000 and up to Rs 5 lakhs.
- ✓ It is designed to support enterprises that want to expand their business.
- ✓ **Tarun Stage**
- ✓ Loans of more than Rs 5 lakhs and up to Rs 10 lakhs.
- ✓ It is designed to meet the higher funding needs of an established business enterprise
- ✓ **Tarun Plus**
- ✓ It was introduced recently.
- ✓ Loans of more than Rs 10 lakhs and up to Rs 20 lakhs.
- ✓ The loan is provided to those entrepreneurs who have successfully repaid previous loans under the 'Tarun' category.
- ✓ The category is designed to cater to the financial needs of micro-enterprises.
- ✓ Overdraft under PMJDY comes under Mudra Loan
- ✓ Overdrafts up to Rs 10,000 provided under the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) are also considered a MUDRA loan.
- ✓ **Achievements of MUDRA**
- ✓ Over 52 crore loans worth more than 32 lakh crore rupees have been sanctioned to date.
- ✓ Around half of the Mudra beneficiaries belong to SC, ST, and OBC Communities, and over 70% of the beneficiaries are women.

Q. What is the maximum loan provided under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana or MUDRA loan?

- A) Rs 10 Lakhs
B) Rs 20 Lakhs
C) Rs 30 Lakhs
D) Rs 50 Lakhs

Answer : B

Q. How many types of loans are provided under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana or MUDRA loan?

- A) 3
- B) 4
- C) 5
- D) 2

Answer : B

✓ **About MUDRA**

- ✓ The Micro Units Development & Refinance Agency Ltd (MUDRA) was set up as a company in 2015 under the Companies Act 2013.
- ✓ It is a subsidiary of the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).
- ✓ It is registered as an NBFC with the Reserve Bank of India.
- ✓ Headquarters: Mumbai
- ✓ **Function of MUDRA**
- ✓ It is responsible for monitoring the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana.
- ✓ It is responsible for developing and refinancing all Micro-enterprises sectors.
- ✓ It provides refinancing facilities to the micro-enterprise sector in the country.

Q. When will the fourth phase of the amalgamation of Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) come into effect?

- A) 1 July 2025
- B) 1 June 2025
- C) 1 August 2025
- D) 1 May 2025

Answer : D

- ✓ The Union Ministry of Finance has notified the amalgamation of 26 Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) in the country under phase 4 of the amalgamation of RRBs.
- ✓ After the amalgamation takes effect on 1 May 2025, there will be 28 RRBs in 26 states and 2 Union Territories covering 700 districts of the country.
- ✓ The central government started the process of amalgamation of RRBs in the country in 2025-06 to consolidate and rationalise the operation of RRBs in the country.
- ✓ In the fourth phase, 26 RRBs in 10 states and 1 Union Territory are to be amalgamated.

Q. Which committee recommended the amalgamation of Regional Rural Banks (RRB)?

- A) Nachiket Mor Committee
- B) HR Khan Committee
- C) V S Vyas committee
- D) B Venkatappaiah Committee

Answer : C

✓ **Amalgamation of RRBs**

- ✓ Amalgamation means the combination of two or more companies to create a new company.
- ✓ The process of amalgamation of the RRBs was started by the government of India in 2005-06 based on the recommendation of the Dr V S Vyas committee (2004) on "Flow of Credit to Agriculture and Related Activities from the Banking System".
- ✓ The committee was set up by the RBI to examine the relevance of RRBs in the rural credit system and the alternatives for making it viable.
- ✓ **Phases of RRB amalgamation**
- ✓ First phase focus- RRBs promoted by sponsor banks within a state were amalgamated.
- ✓ From 2005-06 to 2009-2010
- ✓ RRB reduced from 196 to 82
- ✓ Second Phase focus- RRBs were amalgamated across the Sponsor banks within a State.
- ✓ From 2012-2013 to 2014-2015
- ✓ RRB reduced from 82 to 56
- ✓ Third Phase focus- principle of 'One state - One RRB', in smaller states and reduction in number of RRBs in larger states aiming at reduction in total number of RRBs.

- ✓ From 2018-19 to 2020-2021
- ✓ RRB reduced from 56 to 43.
- ✓ Fourth Phase focus - Continuation of the Third Phase.
- ✓ RRB to be reduced from 43 to 28.
- ✓ RRBs will be amalgamated in 10 States - Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Karnataka, West Bengal, Odisha, and one Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✓ RRBs to be amalgamated during the 4th Phase
- ✓ Following is the list of RRBs to be amalgamated, their new name, and sponsoring banks.
- ✓ **Andhra Pradesh**
- ✓ Chaitanya Godavari Grameena Bank, Andhra Pragathi Grameena Bank, Saptagiri Grameena Bank and Andhra Pradesh Grameena Vikas Bank sponsored by the Union Bank of India, Canara Bank, Indian Bank and State Bank of India to be amalgamated into Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank.
- ✓ Head Office of Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank- Amravati
- ✓ Sponsor Bank of Andhra Pradesh Grameena Bank- Union Bank of India
- ✓ Bihar
- ✓ Dakshin Bihar Gramin Bank and Uttar Bihar Gramin Bank, sponsored by the Punjab National Bank and Central Bank to be amalgamated into Bihar Gramin Bank.
- ✓ Head Office of Bihar Gramin Bank - Patna
- ✓ Sponsor Bank of Bihar Gramin Bank- Punjab National Bank
- ✓ **Gujarat**
- ✓ Baroda Gujarat Gramin Bank and Saurashtra Gramin Bank, sponsored by the Bank of Baroda and the State Bank of India, are to be amalgamated into Gujarat Gramin Bank
- ✓ Head Office of Gujarat Gramin Bank- Vadodara
- ✓ Sponsor Bank of Gujarat Gramin Bank - Bank of Baroda
- ✓ **Karnataka**
- ✓ Karnataka Vikas Grameena Bank and Karnataka Gramin Bank, sponsored by the Canara Bank, are to be amalgamated into Karnataka Grameena Bank
- ✓ Head office of Karnataka Grameena Bank- Ballari
- ✓ Sponsor of Karnataka Grameena Bank- Canara Bank
- ✓ **Madhya Pradesh**
- ✓ Madhya Pradesh Gramin Bank and Madhyanchal Gramin Bank, sponsored by the Bank of India and the State Bank to be amalgamated into Madhya Pradesh Gramin Bank.
- ✓ Head office of Madhya Pradesh Gramin Bank- Indore
- ✓ Sponsor of Madhya Pradesh Gramin Bank - Bank of India
- ✓ **Maharashtra**
- ✓ Maharashtra Gramin Bank and Vidharbha Konkan Gramin Bank sponsored by Bank of Maharashtra and Bank of India to be amalgamated into Maharashtra Gramin Bank.
- ✓ Head office of Maharashtra Gramin Bank - Chhatrapati Sambhaji Nagar
- ✓ Sponsor of Maharashtra Gramin Bank - Bank of Maharashtra
- ✓ **Odisha**
- ✓ Odisha Gramya Bank and Utkal Grameen Bank sponsored by the Indian Overseas Bank and State Bank of India to be amalgamated into Odisha Grameen Bank.
- ✓ Head office of Odisha Grameen Bank- Bhubaneswar
- ✓ Sponsor of Odisha Grameen Bank- Indian Overseas Bank
- ✓ **Rajasthan**
- ✓ Rajasthan Marudhara Gramin Bank and Baroda Rajasthan Kshetriya Gramin Bank, sponsored by the State Bank of India and Bank of Baroda, are to be amalgamated into Rajasthan Gramin Bank.
- ✓ Head office of Rajasthan Gramin Bank - Jaipur
- ✓ Sponsor of Rajasthan Gramin Bank - State Bank of India
- ✓ **Uttar Pradesh**
- ✓ Baroda U.P. Bank, Aryavart Bank and Prathama U.P. Gramin Bank sponsored by the Bank of Baroda, Bank of India and Punjab National Bank to be amalgamated into Uttar Pradesh Gramin Bank.

- ✓ Head office of Uttar Pradesh Gramin Bank- Lucknow
- ✓ Sponsor of Uttar Pradesh Gramin Bank- Bank of Baroda
- ✓ **West Bengal**
- ✓ Bangiya Gramin Vikash, Paschim Banga Gramin Bank, and Uttarbanga Kshetriya Gramin Bank, sponsored by the Punjab National Bank, UCO Bank, and Central Bank of India, are to be amalgamated into West Bengal Gramin Bank.
- ✓ Head office of West Bengal Gramin Bank- Kolkata
- ✓ Sponsor of West Bengal Gramin Bank- Punjab National Bank
- ✓ **Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir**
- ✓ J & K Grameen Bank and Ellaquai Dehati Bank sponsored by the The Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd. and State Bank of India are to be amalgamated into Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank
- ✓ Head office of Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank - Jammu
- ✓ Sponsor of Jammu and Kashmir Grameen Bank - The Jammu and Kashmir Bank Ltd. It is a private sector bank

Q. What is the target for priority sector lending as percentage Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) or Credit Equivalent of Off-Balance Sheet Exposures (CEOBE) applicable to Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) in India?

- A) 60%
- B) 40%
- C) 75%
- D) 65%

Answer : C

- ✓ **About Regional Rural Banks (RRB)**
- ✓ Regional Rural Banks (RRB) were set up on the recommendation of the Narasimham Committee on Rural Credit 1975.
- ✓ Five RRBs were set up in India on 2 October 1975. The first, Prathama Bank, was set up in Moradabad (U.P.), sponsored by Syndicate Bank.
- ✓ The power to set up the RRB is vested with the government of India under the Regional Rural Banks Act 1976.
- ✓ RRB is owned by the central government, the state government, and a sponsoring bank.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India is the regulator of RRBs.
- ✓ Jammu and Kashmir is the only private bank to sponsor an RRB.
- ✓ Purpose: To bridge rural credit gaps and strengthen institutional lending in rural India.
- ✓ Regulated by: Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- ✓ Supervised by: National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)
- ✓ Ownership Structure:
- ✓ Government of India – 50%
- ✓ State Government – 15%
- ✓ Sponsor Bank – 35%.
- ✓ **Key Requirements**
- ✓ Must maintain a Capital to Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) of 9%, as per RBI norms.
- ✓ Must allocate 75% of ANBC (Adjusted Net Bank Credit) or CEOBE (Credit Equivalent of Off-Balance Sheet Exposure) whichever is higher to Priority Sector Lending (PSL).
- ✓ Under the RRB act 1976 the authorized capital of the RRB was Rs 5 crores.
- ✓ Changes made by RRB amendment act 2015
- ✓ The authorised capital of the RRB has been raised from Rs 5 crore to Rs 2000 crores .
- ✓ The minimum issued capital of the RRB has been raised from Rs 25 lakhs to Rs 1 crore.
- ✓ It provides that the combined shareholding of the Central government and the sponsoring banks shall not be less than 51% in any case.
- ✓ There is no RRB in the state of Sikkim and Goa.
- ✓ 11 Public sector banks and one private sector bank Jammu and Kashmir bank are the sponsors of the RRBs.

- ✓ Punjab and Sindh Bank is the only public sector bank which has not sponsored any RRB.

Q. What is the authorised capital of each Regional Rural Bank (RRB) as per the recent amendments in Regional Rural Bank (Amendment) Bill 2014?

- A) 500
B) 1000
C) 1500
D) 2000

Answer : D

- ✓ This amendment bill increases the authorised capital of each Regional Rural Bank (RRB) from Rs 5 crore to Rs 2000 crore divided into Rs 200 crore of fully paid share of Rs 10 each.
- ✓ As per the parent Act the Rs 5 crore share capital of RRBs is split into 5 lakh shares of Rs 100 each

Q. Which bank is the only public sector bank that has not sponsored any Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)?

- A) Punjab and Sindh Bank
B) Canara Bank
C) Indian Bank
D) Union Bank of India

Answer : A

Q. Which of the following states of India have not any regional rural bank?

- A) Sikkim and Goa
B) Bihar and Rajasthan
C) Sikkim and Assam
D) Manipur and Nagaland

Answer : A

- ✓ The services of RRBs are not available in the states of Goa and Sikkim. Madhya Pradesh has second highest number of branches while Nagaland has the least number of branches.

Q. What percentage of stake does the Government of India hold in Regional Rural Banks (RRBs)?

- A) 15% B) 35%
- C) 50% D) 55%

Answer : C

- ✓ The Government of India holds a 50% stake in Regional Rural Banks (RRBs). The remaining equity is held by sponsor banks (35%) and state governments (15%).

Q. The RBI in its April 2025 monetary policy has reduced the policy repo rate by —?

- A) 0.25 % B) 0.50 %
C) 0.35 % D) 0.20 %

Answer : A

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has cut its policy repo rate by 25 basis points (0.25%) and reduced the growth rate forecast for India's real gross domestic product (GDP) for the 2025-26 financial year to 6.5 percent from the earlier forecast of 6.7 %.
- ✓ RBI also announced a change in its monetary policy stance from neutral to accommodative.
- ✓ The first bi-monthly monetary policy of the RBI for the 2025-26 financial year was announced by the RBI Governor, Sanjay Malhotra, in Mumbai on 9 April 2025.
- ✓ Accommodative Stance and Cut in Repo Rates
- ✓ The RBI Governor said that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has changed its stance from neutral to accommodative.

Q. What is the minimum number of meeting that the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) has to conduct every year as per the provisions of RBI Act?

- A) 3
B) 5
C) 4
D) 6

Answer : C

- ✓ As per the RBI Act, 1934, RBI has to conduct at least four meetings of the Monetary Policy Committee in a year

Q. The minutes of the Monetary Policy Committee meeting is published on which day by RBI after the meeting?

- A) 10
B) 8
C) 14
D) 16

Answer : C

- ✓ **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC):**
- ✓ The Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) is a committee constituted by the Central Government and led by the Governor of RBI.
- ✓ Monetary Policy Committee was formed with the mission of fixing the benchmark policy interest rate (repo rate) to restrain inflation within the particular target level. The RBI governor controls the monetary policy decisions with the support and advice of the internal team and the technical advisory committee.
- ✓ MPC was constituted under the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 as an initiative to bring more transparency and accountability in fixing the Monetary Policy of India.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 (RBI Act) has been amended by the Finance Act, 2016 to provide for a statutory and institutionalized framework for a MPC.
- ✓ Under Section 45ZB of the amended RBI Act, 1934, the central government is empowered to constitute a six-member MPC.
- ✓ The amended RBI Act, 1934 also provides for the inflation target ($4\% \pm 2\%$) to be set by the Government of India, in consultation with the Reserve Bank, once in every five years.
- ✓ **Composition:**
- ✓ MPC will have six members – the RBI Governor (Chairperson), the RBI Deputy Governor in charge of monetary policy, one official nominated by the RBI Board, and the remaining three members would represent the Government of India.
- ✓ The external members hold office for a period of four years.
- ✓ The quorum for a meeting shall be four Members, at least one of whom shall be the Governor and, in his absence, the Deputy Governor, who is the Member of the MPC.
- ✓ The MPC takes decisions based on a majority vote. In case of a tie, the RBI governor will have the second or casting vote.
- ✓ The decision of the MPC would be binding on the RBI.
- ✓ MPC conducts meetings at least 4 times a year and the monetary policy is published after every meeting with each member explaining his opinions.
- ✓ **Objectives of Monetary Policy:**
- ✓ To stabilize the business cycle.
- ✓ To provide reasonable price stability.
- ✓ To provide faster economic growth.
- ✓ Exchange Rate Stability.
- ✓ Instruments of Monetary Policy
- ✓ There are both direct and indirect instruments used for implementing monetary policy. Few include:
- ✓ Repo rate
- ✓ Reverse Repo rate

Q. What was the total installed capacity of renewable energy in India at the end of 31st March 2025?

- A) 220 GW
- B) 400 GW
- C) 310 GW
- D) 500 GW

Answer : A

- ✓ India's Renewable Energy Capacity crosses 220 GW in FY25.
- ✓ The total installed renewable energy capacity in the country has crossed 220 gigawatt (GW), to 220.10 GW in the financial year 2024-25. The latest data about the status of installed renewable energy was released by the Union Ministry of Renewable Energy on 10 April 2025.
- ✓ According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), India had the fourth-largest renewable energy capacity in the world in 2024 after China, the United States of America, and Brazil.
- ✓ What is Renewable Energy?
- ✓ Renewable energy refers to the energy derived from natural sources where the replenishment rate is higher than its consumption. Solar, wind, geothermal, ocean energy, hydel energy bioenergy are some of the major sources of renewable energy that are almost inexhaustible.
- ✓ The government of India has set a target of achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based capacity by 2030.

Q. What was the rank of India in the world for having the largest installed renewable energy capacity in 2024?

- A) 3rd
- B) 4th
- C) 2nd
- D) 1st

Answer : B

- ✓ According to the International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), India had the fourth-largest renewable energy capacity in the world in 2024 after China, the United States of America, and Brazil.
- ✓ Status of installed Renewable Energy in FY 25
- ✓ At the end of 31st March 2025, the total installed renewable energy in the country was 220.10 GW as compared to 198.75 GW in 2023-24.
- ✓ 29.52 GW capacity of renewable energy was added in 2024-25.
- ✓ **Solar Energy**
- ✓ Total installed capacity at the end of 31st March 2025 -105.65 GW
- ✓ Capacity addition in 2024-25- 23.83 GW
- ✓ Total installed ground-mounted solar capacity - 81.01 GW
- ✓ Total installed rooftop solar capacity - 17.02 GW
- ✓ Total installed solar components of hybrid projects-2.87 GW
- ✓ Total installed solar capacity from off-grid systems- 4.74 GW
- ✓ **Wind Energy**
- ✓ Total installed capacity at the end of 31st March 2025 -50.04 GW
- ✓ Capacity addition in 2024-25- 4.15 GW (3.25 GW in 2023-24)
- ✓ **Bioenergy**
- ✓ Total installed capacity at the end of 31st March 2025- 11.58 GW
- ✓ Contribution of off-grid and waste-to-energy projects - 0.53 GW
- ✓ Small Hydro Power
- ✓ Hydel power plants with a capacity of 25 MW or below are Small Hydro power plants.
- ✓ Total installed capacity at the end of 31st March 2025- 5.10 GW.

Q. The government of India has set a target to achieve 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based energy capacity by which year?

- A) 2025
B) 2030
C) 2035
D) 2040

Answer : B

- ✓ The government of India has set a target of achieving 500 GW of non-fossil fuel-based capacity by 2030.

Q. What type of transactions will continue to be capped at ₹1 lakh?

- A) Person-to-Person (P2P) B) Person-to-Merchant (P2M)
C) International transactions D) Mobile wallet transactions

Answer : A

- ✓ RBI Allows NPCI to Enhance UPI Transaction Limits for Person-to-Merchant Payments.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) permitted the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) to revise transaction limits for Unified Payments Interface (UPI) payments in Person-to-Merchant (P2M) categories in response to evolving user requirements.
- ✓ Currently, UPI transactions—both Person-to-Person (P2P) and P2M—are capped at ₹1 lakh, with some exceptions allowing higher limits of ₹2 lakh or ₹5 lakh for specific merchant categories
- ✓ While P2M limits are now flexible, P2P transactions will continue to be capped at ₹1 lakh. Banks may also set internal caps within the limits prescribed by NPCI.

Q. What is the current cap for Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions in India?

- A) ₹50,000
B) ₹1 lakh
C) ₹2 lakh
D) ₹5 lakh

Answer : B

- ✓ While P2M limits are now flexible, P2P transactions will continue to be capped at ₹1 lakh.

Q. What will the RBI issue to harmonize rules for loans against gold jewelry?

- A) New interest rates
B) Comprehensive regulations
C) Tax guidelines
D) Loan forgiveness programs

Answer : B

- ✓ Co- Lending to be extended to all forms of arrangements among lenders
- ✓ **Applicable for :-**
- ✓ Commercial Banks (excluding Small Finance Banks, Local Area Banks and Regional Rural Banks)
- ✓ All All-India Financial Institutions
- ✓ All Non-Banking Financial Companies (including Housing Finance Companies)
- ✓ RBI tightens compliance norms for gold loans
- ✓ **Applicable for :-**
- ✓ Commercial Banks (including Small Finance Banks, Local Area Banks & Regional Rural Banks, excluding Payments Banks).
- ✓ Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks (UCBs) & Rural Co-operative Banks (RCBs), i.e., State Co-operative Banks (StCBs) and Central Co-operative Banks (CCBs).
- ✓ All Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs), including Housing Finance Companies (HFCs).
- ✓ RBI issues revised draft norms for non-fund- based credit facilities
- ✓ **Applicable for :-**

- ✓ Commercial Banks (including Regional Rural Banks and Local Area Banks);
- ✓ Primary (Urban) Co-operative Banks (UCBs)/ State Co-operative Banks (StCBs)/ Central Co-operative Banks (CCBs);
- ✓ All India Financial Institutions (AIFIs);
- ✓ All Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) including Housing Finance Companies (HFCs).

Q. What is the purpose of making the Regulatory Sandbox framework 'theme neutral'?

- A) To eliminate all regulations B) To promote continuous innovation
C) To reduce competition D) To increase fees for users

Answer : B

- ✓ RBI made several other key announcements:
- ✓ Gold Loan Guidelines: The RBI plans to issue comprehensive regulations to harmonize rules for loans against gold jewelry across regulated entities. Draft guidelines will be released for public consultation.
- ✓ Regulatory Sandbox: The Regulatory Sandbox framework will be made 'theme neutral' and 'on tap' to promote continuous innovation in the fintech space. This change builds on the experience from five earlier cohorts.
- ✓ Securitization of Stressed Assets: A draft framework will be issued to allow the market-based securitization of stressed assets, supplementing the existing ARC route under the SARFAESI Act.
- ✓ Co-Lending Framework: RBI will also issue a generic regulatory framework for all co-lending arrangements among regulated entities (REs). Currently, the guidelines apply only to bank-NBFC partnerships for priority sector lending.

Q. Consider the following statements:

1. An Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC) is a specialized financial institution that buys the Non Performing Assets (NPAs) from banks and financial institutions

2. The SARFAESI Act, 2002 provides a unified mechanism to tackle NPAs in the farm sector. Which of the above statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ RBI to enable securitisation of stressed assets through a market based mechanism, in addition to the existing ARC route under the SARFAESI Act 2002
- ✓ **Applicable for :-**
- ✓ All Scheduled Commercial Banks (excluding Regional Rural Banks)
- ✓ All India Financial Institutions (NABARD, NHB, EXIM Bank, SIDBI, and NaBFID)
- ✓ Small Finance Banks (as permitted under Operating Guidelines for Small Finance Banks dated October 6, 2016 and as amended from time to time); and,
- ✓ All Non-Banking Finance Companies (NBFCs) including Housing Finance Companies (HFCs).
- ✓ An Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC) is a specialized financial institution that buys the Non Performing Assets (NPAs) from banks and financial institutions so that they can clean up their balance sheets. Hence, statement 1 is correct.
- ✓ The SARFAESI Act, 2002 provides the legal basis for the setting up of ARCs in India. At present, there is neither a unified mechanism to tackle NPAs in the farm sector nor a single law that deals with enforcement of mortgages created on agricultural land. Hence, statement 2 is not correct.

Q. Which brand has announced a strategic retail partnership with Flipkart, one of India's top e-commerce marketplaces?

- A) Alcatel
- B) Hermès
- C) Louis Vuitton
- D) Axa

Answer : A

- ✓ French tech brand Alcatel has announced a strategic retail partnership with Flipkart, one of India's top e-commerce marketplaces.
- ✓ The collaboration will see the launch of Alcatel's new range of "Make in India" smartphones across Flipkart's main platform and its quick commerce arm, FK Minutes

Q. Piramal Finance Limited has partnered with which bank to improve credit accessibility for middle and low-income borrowers, especially in rural and semi-urban regions, focusing on home loans and loans against property?

- A) HDFC Bank
- B) ICICI Bank
- C) Yes Bank
- D) Axis Bank

Answer : B

- ✓ Piramal Finance and ICICI Bank join hands for co-lending partnership.
- ✓ Piramal Finance Limited has partnered with ICICI Bank to improve credit accessibility for middle and low-income borrowers, especially in rural and semi-urban regions, focusing on home loans and loans against property.
- ✓ This collaboration strengthens Piramal Finance's position in India's semi-urban regions, reinforcing its commitment to providing easy and affordable credit solutions to borrowers.
- ✓ Through this partnership, Piramal Finance combines its innovative 'High Tech + High Touch' approach with the financial and banking expertise of ICICI Bank.
- ✓ Piramal Finance's strong presence across 510+ branches in 13,000 pin codes, serving 4.5 million customers in 26 states, will further bolster outreach and accessibility

ICICI BANK IN NEWS 2024-25

- Piramal Finance and ICICI Bank join hands for co-lending partnership
- ICICI Bank and Times Internet have launched a super-premium credit card, 'Times Black,' crafted from historic Times of India printing plates.
- ICICI Bank and MakeMyTrip (MMT) have launched a co-branded credit card for travel enthusiasts
- ICICI Bank has crossed the Rs 9 lakh crore market capitalization mark for the first time
- ICICI Bank partners with PFRDA to launch NPS Vatsalya, a pension account for minors
- Tata Power Solar Systems Ltd (TPSSL) has signed an agreement with ICICI Bank to provide financing for solar units to residential and corporate customers.
- Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI) BANK
- Founded : 1994
- HQ : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- MD & CEO : Sandeep Bakhshi
- Tagline : Hum Hai Na Khayal Apka

Q. Who has unveiled its seventh-generation artificial intelligence chip named Ironwood?

- A) Amazon
- B) Microsoft
- C) Google
- D) Apple

Answer : C

- ✓ Google launches new Ironwood chip to speed AI applications.

- Q.** What is the expected growth rate of the Indian economy in 2025-26 (FY26), according to the recent Asian Development Bank report?

B) 6.8%

D) 6.7%

- ✓ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has revised downwards India's GDP growth forecast for the financial year 2025-26 (FY26) to 6.7 per cent from the earlier 7 per cent in its April 2025 latest outlook report.
- ✓ According to the Asian Development Outlook (ADO) April 2025, the Indian GDP is projected to grow by 6.7% in FY2025, driven by higher domestic demand, rising rural incomes, and moderating inflation
- ✓ The growth for the financial year 2026-27 has been projected at 6.8 per cent in the report.

B) Rs1,200 crore

D) Rs1,600 crore

- ✓ The Union Cabinet has approved the 'Modernisation of Command Area Development and Water Management (M-CADWM)' as a sub-scheme of the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (PMKSY).
- ✓ This initiative, with an initial outlay of ₹1,600 crore, is set to run from 2025-2026 and is designed to significantly enhance the irrigation infrastructure in India
- ✓ The projects will be made sustainable by irrigation management transfer (IMT) to the water user society (WUS) for management of irrigation assets.
- ✓ WUS will be given handholding support for linking them with existing Economic Entities like FPO or PACS for five years

B) Rs 11919 crore

D) Rs 33919 crore

- ✓ Govt. notifies ₹22,919-crore incentive scheme for electronics components
- ✓ The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology announced a 6 year long ₹22,919 crore scheme to boost the manufacturing of electronics components. The scheme aims to enhance domestic capability in producing "passive" components by offering a mix of capex- and turnover-linked incentives.
- ✓ **Incentives Structure**

- ✓ Incentives range from 1–10% for incremental investments and turnover, based on the year and type of component.
- ✓ Sub-assemblies like camera and display modules will receive 4–5% turnover-linked incentives, which will gradually decrease after the second year.
- ✓ Firms producing electro-mechanicals, multi-layer printed circuit boards, lithium-ion cells, and device enclosures will get 6–8% incentives initially, reducing to 3–5% by the scheme's end.
- ✓ Capital goods manufacturers and bare component producers benefit from a 25% capex incentive, requiring a minimum additional investment of ₹10 crore.
- ✓ Employment-linked incentives are set at 1% of turnover, deducted if employment targets are not met.
- ✓ **Objectives and Goals**
- ✓ The scheme aims to increase the domestic value added in electronics manufacturing, which is currently at 18%, compared to China's 38%.
- ✓ The government targets doubling this percentage by 2030.
- ✓ By facilitating incentives, the scheme addresses the economic disadvantages of local manufacturing.

Q. Which one of the following has penalized Flipkart Rs 1.06 crore for violating e-commerce norms related to online insurance distribution?

A) RBI	B) CCI
C) IRDAI	D) SEBI

Answer : C

- ✓ IRDA fined Flipkart Rs 1.06 crore for this insurance related violation.
- ✓ IRDAI has penalized Flipkart Rs 1.06 crore for violating e-commerce norms related to online insurance distribution.
- ✓ Flipkart was found redirecting customers to an insurance intermediary instead of the insurer's site and for continuing to solicit insurance even after its registration expired.

A) Rs 20
B) Rs 21
C) Rs 22
D) Rs 23

- ✓ RBI to hike ATM transaction fee from Rs 21 to Rs 23 starting May 2025.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India announced that starting May 1, 2025, customers will be charged a fee of Rs 23 per transaction for ATM banking services.
- ✓ Earlier the amount was set at Rs 21 per transaction.
- ✓ Customers will continue to receive five free transactions from their bank's ATMs monthly and limited free transactions at other banks' ATMs. The revised fees are subject to GST.
- ✓ RBI and the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) had approved a Rs 2 increase in the ATM interchange fee for cash withdrawals.
- ✓ National Financial Switch Steering Committee approved a rise in the ATM interchange fee for domestic financial transactions to Rs 19 and non-financial transactions to Rs 7.

A) Rs 17 B) Rs 21
C) Rs 19 D) Rs 20

- ✓ NPCI has also proposed increasing the ATM interchange fee from ₹17 to ₹19 for cash transactions and from ₹6 to ₹7 for non-cash transactions.

- Reserve Bank of India raised the aggregate limit available to Standalone Primary Dealers (SPDs) under the Standing Liquidity Facility at the prevailing repo rate, from Rs 10,000 crore to Rs 15,000 crore, effective from April 2, 2025.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to hike ATM transaction fee from Rs 21 to Rs 23.
- The Employees Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has announced to increase in the auto-settlement of advance claims (ASAC) limit, raising it five times from Rs 1 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.
- Reserve Bank of India increases the small value loan ceiling to Rs 3 crore for Urban Co-operative Banks.
- Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has increased the disclosure threshold for Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) from ₹25,000 crore to ₹50,000 crore.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) increased the collateral-free agricultural loan limit from ₹1.6 lakh to ₹2 lakh.
- Reserve Bank of India has decided to enhance the limit for tax payments via UPI from ₹1 lakh to ₹5 lakh per transaction.
- The Finance Minister in Budget Speech 2025-26 has announced to increase the loan limit under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme from ₹3 lakh to ₹5 lakh.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has indeed enhanced the Priority Sector Lending (PSL) limit for e-NWRs (electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipts) from ₹50 lakh to ₹75 lakh.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has indeed increased the per-transaction limit for UPI123Pay from Rs. 5,000 to Rs. 10,000.

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) increased the UPI Lite transaction limit to ₹1,000 from ₹500 and the total wallet limit to ₹5,000 from ₹2,000.
- The government has increased the loan limit under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh, introducing a new 'Tarun Plus' category aimed at supporting emerging entrepreneurs.
- The Credit Guarantee Fund for Micro Units (CGFMU) provides guarantee coverage for loans under the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) up to ₹20 lakh.
- RBI has defined "bulk deposit" as a single rupee term deposit of Rs 3 crore and above for Scheduled Commercial Banks (excluding RRBs) and Small Finance Banks (SFBs).
- For Regional Rural Banks (RRBs) and Local Area Banks (LABs), a "bulk deposit" now means a single rupee term deposit of Rs 1 crore and above.

Q. Union Cabinet has approved a production-linked incentive scheme (PLI scheme) for passive or non-semiconductor electronics components with an outlay of Rs?

- A) Rs 31,171 crore B) Rs 10,822 crore
C) Rs 17,271 crore D) Rs 22,919 crore

Answer : D

- ✓ The Union Cabinet has approved a Rs 22,919 crore incentive scheme for the manufacture of electronic components over six years.
- ✓ This initiative aims to enhance India's role in global value chains and increase domestic value addition.
- ✓ Objectives and Expectations
- ✓ Job Creation : The scheme is expected to generate approximately 91,600 direct jobs.
- ✓ Production and Investment: It aims to produce Rs 4.56 lakh crore and attract an incremental investment of Rs 59,350 crore.
- ✓ Target Components: Includes display modules, camera modules, and PCB assemblies among others, used in smartphones, laptops, and home appliances.
- ✓ Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme: Introduced in 2020, aimed to boost domestic manufacturing in mobile phones, electronic components, and semiconductor packaging.
- ✓ Incentives: 3% to 6% on incremental sales (over base year) for eligible companies.
- ✓ Duration: 5 years.
- ✓ Increased Budget: Allocation for electronics manufacturing rose from ₹5,747 crore (2024-25) to ₹8,885 crore (2025-26).
- ✓ The 14 Sectors in Focus for the PLI Scheme.

Q. AU Small Finance Bank has raised Rs 770 crore via issuance of Tier-II bonds at a coupon of 9.20%. What is the maturity period of these bonds?

- A) 5 years B) 7 years
C) 8 years D) 10 years

Answer : D

- ✓ AU Small Finance Bank raises Rs 770 Crore via Tier II Bonds Issue
- ✓ Jaipur based AU Small Finance Bank has raised Rs 770 crore through the allotment of Unsecured, Rated, Listed, Redeemable, Subordinated, Non-Convertible Lower Tier II Bonds.
- ✓ The bonds, issued in the nature of Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs), will be categorised as Tier II capital.
- ✓ The bank allotted 77,000 NCDs, each with a face value of Rs 1,00,000, through a private placement via the Electronic Bidding Platform (EBP).
- ✓ The bonds carry an interest rate of 9.20 per cent per annum and have a tenure of 10 years, maturing on March 28, 2035.

STAKE IN NEWS 2025

- Renault group of France and Nissan of Japan have signed a framework agreement by which Renault group would control 100% equity in Renault Nissan Automotive India Pvt Ltd by acquiring 51% stake owned by Nissan.
- Federal Bank is set to increase its stake in Ageas Federal Life Insurance Co Ltd to 30% by acquiring an additional 4% stake from Ageas Insurance International for up to Rs 105 crore.
- The Centre has decided to increase its stake in Vodafone Idea from 22.60 per cent to 48.99 per cent by converting debt worth ₹36,950 crore into equity.
- Singapore based private equity firm Temasek will acquire nearly 10% stake in Haldiram snacks for about Rs.8,600 crore
- Life Insurance Corp of India (LIC) is preparing to acquire a 40-49% stake in ManipalCigna Health Insurance.
- ONGC Ntpc green has completed acquisition of 100% equity stake in Ayana Renewable power
- Reliance Strategic Business Ventures Limited (RSBVL), a subsidiary of Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), has acquired a 100% stake in Nauyaan Tradings Private Limited (NTPL) for ₹1 lakh.
- Bain Capital is acquiring an 18% stake in Manappuram Finance for ₹4,385 crore.
- Ahmedabad-based Torrent Group has acquired a 67% majority stake in the Indian Premier League (IPL) franchise Gujarat Titans (GT) from Irelia Company, which is owned by private equity fund CVC.
- German insurance giant Allianz is selling its 26% stake in its life and non-life joint ventures with Bajaj Finserv, Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company (BAGIC) and Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company (BALIC), for a total consideration of approximately Rs. 24,600 crore (EUR 2.6 billion).
- The Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved Tata Sons' acquisition of an additional 10% stake in Tata Play, formerly known as Tata Sky, increasing Tata Sons' total stake to 70%.
- State Bank of India (SBI) has decided to sell its entire 17.8 percent stake in Jio Payments Bank Limited.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved Zulia Investments, a Temasek Holdings unit, to raise its stake in AU Small Finance Bank (AU SFB) up to 7%.
- IRDAI has approved ICICI Prudential Mutual Fund's (MF) increase in its stake in Star Health and Allied Insurance to 9.95%.
- Paytm Cloud Technologies Limited (PCTL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Paytm, is acquiring a 25% stake in Seven Technology LLC, the parent company of Brazilian embedded finance startup Dinie, for \$1 million.
- Reliance Industries Limited (RIL), has acquired a 49% stake in the Oval Invincibles cricket team. Surrey County Cricket Club will retain a 51% majority stake.
- Hindustan Unilever acquires 90.5% stake in beauty brand Minimalist at Rs 2,955 crore valuation.
- Resilient Innovations, the parent company of BharatPe, is scouting for investors to sell up to 25 per cent of its 49 per cent stake in Unity Small Finance Bank (Unity SFB)
- Bharti Global, the investment arm of Bharti Enterprises, has successfully acquired a 24.5% stake in UK's BT Group.
- LIC pares stake in NMDC from 7.6% to 5.59% .
- The Life Insurance Corporation of India as an investment function reduced its shareholding in the State-owned iron ore miner NMDC from 7.61% to 5.59% in a little over 14 months.
- Coca-Cola has agreed to sell a 40% equity stake in Hindustan Coca-Cola Beverages (HCCB).
- Reserve Bank has approved the open offer of Burman family -- the promoters of FMCG major Dabur to acquire an additional 26% stake in NBFC firm Religare Enterprises Ltd (REL).
- RBI has given its nod to Canara Bank to divest its shareholding in Canara Robeco Asset Management Company Ltd and Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company by 13% and 14.5% respectively through Initial Public Offer (IPO).
- Canara HSBC Life Insurance Company is a joint venture company with a 51% stake owned by Canara Bank and a 26% stake held by the HSBC Insurance (Asia Pacific) Holdings and remaining 23% stake by Punjab National Bank.
- Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) increased its stake in Bank of Maharashtra from 4.05% to 7.10%.

Q. Who has become the world's most valuable steelmaker?

- A) Nucor Corp
- B) JSW Steel
- C) ArcelorMittal
- D) Nippon Steel Corp

Answer : B

- ✓ JSW Steel has become the world's most valuable steelmaker after the Sajjan Jindal-led company crossed a market capitalisation of over \$30 billion.
- ✓ JSW Steel overtook US-based Nucor Corp, which had a market capitalisation of \$29.92 billion.
- ✓ Other major steelmakers, including Europe's ArcelorMittal, Japan's Nippon Steel Corp, and China's Baoshan Iron, have market capitalisations ranging from \$21 billion to \$27 billion
- ✓ Tata Steel, India's second most valuable steel company, has a market capitalisation of nearly \$23 billion
- ✓ The top five steel-producing countries globally are China, India, Japan, the United States, and Russia

Q. Which bank has secured a \$1 billion dollar-denominated syndicated loan, marking the largest such loan this year from India?

- A) State Bank of India
- B) Punjab National Bank
- C) Kotak Mahindra Bank
- D) Indian Overseas Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ State Bank of India raised \$1 billion in the largest dollar-denominated syndicated loan this year from the nation, giving a boost to the lagging foreign-currency debt market.
- ✓ The borrower opted not to exercise a greenshoe option to increase the five-year facility by as much as \$250 million, said people familiar with the matter, who asked not to be identified discussing private information.
- ✓ Foreign-currency loans taken out by Indian issuers have declined 30% to \$3.2 billion so far in 2025 from the year-earlier period, and are running at a four-year low.

Q. What is the minimum denomination for certificate of deposit?

- A) Rs 1 lakh
- B) Rs 2 lakh
- C) Rs 3 lakh
- D) Rs 5 lakh

Answer : D

- ✓ The issuance of Certificates of Deposit (CDs) by banks surged to an all-time high in March as lenders jostled to raise funds amid tight liquidity.
- ✓ Banks raised Rs 2.06 lakh crore through CDs during the month, 62% higher than the Rs 1.27 lakh crore raised in the same period of the previous fiscal, according to data from Primedatabase.
- ✓ On an annual basis, CD issuances also hit a record high, with banks raising Rs 13.05 lakh crore in FY2025 — nearly 37% more than the Rs 9.57 lakh crore raised in the previous financial year.
- ✓ Among the banks, Punjab National Bank raised the most funds as it issued CDs worth Rs 2.16 lakh crore in the current financial year. Bank of Baroda raised Rs 1.55 lakh crore via CDs, while HDFC Bank raised Rs 1.46 lakh crore in the current financial year.
- ✓ About Certificate of Deposit
- ✓ Certificate of Deposit” or “CD” is a negotiable, unsecured money market instrument issued by a bank as a Usance Promissory Note against funds deposited at the bank for a maturity period upto one year
- ✓ Eligible issuers
- ✓ Certificate of Deposits (CDs) may be issued by:-
 - ✓ i. Scheduled Commercial Banks;
 - ✓ ii. Regional Rural Banks; and
 - ✓ iii. Small Finance Banks.

- ✓ Indonesia is yet to join the bank.
- ✓ Headquarters and Regional offices
- ✓ Headquarters: Shanghai, China
- ✓ President: Dilma Rousseff of Brazil

Q. What is the present name of the BRICS Development Bank?

- A) World Development Bank B) New Development Bank
C) Euro - Asia Development Bank D) Asia - Africa Development Bank

Answer : B

Q. Which insurance company is preparing to acquire a 40-49% stake in ManipalCigna Health Insurance?

- A) Life Insurance Corp of India B) Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance
C) ICICI Prudential Life Insurance D) HDFC Life Insurance

Answer : A

- ✓ LIC set to buy 40-49% stake in ManipalCigna; primary and secondary deal values company at Rs 3,500 crore.
- ✓ Currently, the company is jointly owned by Pai's Manipal Education & Medical Group (51%) and US-based Cigna Corporation (49%).
- ✓ LIC planning to acquire a 40-49% stake in the Ranjan Pai-led company.

Q. What is the primary purpose of the BAANKNET portal launched by the government?

- A) Loan Disbursement Management B) Online Banking Services
C) E-auctions for Asset Sales D) Digital Payment Processing

Answer : C

- ✓ The BAANKNET portal is designed to enhance the transparency and effectiveness of e-auctions for bank-owned assets, particularly focusing on the disposal of Non-Performing Assets (NPAs).
- ✓ About BAANKNET Portal:
- ✓ An advanced, integrated e-auction portal for Public Sector Banks and financial institutions to auction properties for recovery of NPA loans.
- ✓ Ministry: Launched under the Ministry of Finance, Department of Financial Services.
- ✓ Aim:
- ✓ To ensure transparent, efficient, and secure e-auctions.
- ✓ To enhance stakeholder trust and maximize value realization from asset sales.

Q. What is the interest rate set by RBI for the Government of India Floating Rate Bond 2033 (GOI FRB 2033) for the period from March 22, 2024, to September 21, 2024?

- A) 8.34% B) 7.50%
C) 9.00% D) 7.85%

Answer : A

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set the interest rate for the Government of India Floating Rate Bond 2033 (GOI FRB 2033) at 8.34% per annum for the six-month period from March 22, 2024, to September 21, 2024.
- ✓ This rate is determined using a floating rate mechanism based on the Weighted Average Yield (WAY) of the last three auctions of 182-day Treasury Bills, with a fixed spread of 1.22%.
- ✓ What is Floating Rate Bond?
- ✓ The Government of India has launched the Floating Rate Bond 2020 scheme from July 01, 2020.

- ✓ The tenure of this bond will be 7 years.
- ✓ The interest rate on floating bonds will change every 6 months on January 1 and July 1.
- ✓ The minimum amount to invest in bonds will be Rs 1000 (digital mode) and maximum Rs 20 thousand in cash

Q. RBI said the limit for Ways and Means Advances (WMA) for the first half of the financial year 2025-26 will be how many rupees?

- A) Rs 1,50,000 crore B) Rs 1,00,000 crore
C) Rs 2,50,000 crore D) Rs 3,00,000 crore

Answer : A

- ✓ RBI says limit for Ways and Means Advances for first half of FY26 will be Rs 1.5 lakh crore.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) stated yesterday that it has been decided, in consultation with the Government of India, that the limit for Ways and Means Advances (WMA) for the first half of the financial year 2025-26 (April to September 2025) will be Rs 1,50,000 crore.
- ✓ The may trigger fresh floatation of market loans when the Government of India utilises 75 per cent of the WMA limit.
- ✓ RBI, in consultation with the Government of India, retains the flexibility to revise the limit at any time taking into consideration the prevailing circumstances.
- ✓ The interest rate on WMA will be Repo Rate and for Overdraft it will be Two percent above the Repo Rate.

Q. Which bank has launched 'mDigiNext mobile app' for corporate customers?

- A) Kotak Mahindra Bank
B) Bank of Baroda
C) Indian Overseas Bank
D) Punjab National Bank

Answer : B

- ✓ Bank of Baroda (BoB) has launched 'mDigiNext mobile app' to exclusively cater to the cash management needs of its corporate customers

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS):

1. Under the scheme, individuals and institutions can deposit their idle gold with banks and earn interest on it.
2. Upon maturity, depositors have the option to redeem their gold in its original form, such as jewellery, bars or coins.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ The Government of India has discontinued Medium-Term and Long-Term Government Deposits (MLTGD) under the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) from March 26, 2025.
- ✓ What is the Gold Monetisation Scheme?
- ✓ A scheme to mobilise idle gold held by individuals and institutions, launched to integrate gold into the formal financial system.
- ✓ Launch Year: November 2015, as a revamped version of the Gold Deposit Scheme (1999).
- ✓ Implemented by: Jointly by Ministry of Finance, RBI, and scheduled commercial banks.

- ✓ Objective: To reduce gold imports and curb Current Account Deficit (CAD) by monetising household and institutional gold.
- ✓ Categories under the Scheme:
- ✓ Short-Term Bank Deposit (STBD):
- ✓ Tenure: 1 to 3 years
- ✓ Interest: Decided and paid by banks
- ✓ Medium-Term Government Deposit (MTGD):
- ✓ Tenure: 5 to 7 years
- ✓ Interest: Fixed by GoI in consultation with RBI (2.25%)
- ✓ Long-Term Government Deposit (LTGD):
- ✓ Tenure: 12 to 15 years
- ✓ Interest: Fixed by GoI (2.5%)
- ✓ Minimum Deposit: 10 grams of gold (bars, coins, jewellery excluding stones/metals). Only gold items without embedded gems or other metals are accepted to ensure purity.
- ✓ No Upper Limit for Deposit: Individuals and institutions can deposit any quantity of gold without restrictions.
- ✓ Government's Recent Decision on GMS (Effective March 26, 2025)
- ✓ Medium- & Long-Term Deposits Discontinued: Only short-term deposits (1-3 years) will continue, based on bank policies.
- ✓ Short-Term Bank Deposits to Continue at Banks' Discretion: Banks can choose whether to offer these deposits, subject to RBI guidelines.
- ✓ No Fresh Deposits or Renewals Accepted: Existing accounts remain active, but no new deposits or rollovers permitted.
- ✓ Existing Deposits to Mature as per RBI Guidelines: Previously made deposits will continue until maturity without premature withdrawal penalties.

Q. RBI has imposed a monetary penalty of ₹75.00 lakh on which bank for non-compliance with certain directions issued by RBI on 'Know Your Customer'?

A) HDFC Bank	B) ICICI Bank
C) Yes Bank	D) Axis Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ RBI Imposes penalty of Rs 75 lakh on HDFC Bank for violating customer KYC directions
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India found HDFC Bank violated Know Your Customer (KYC) norms as laid down by RBI's Master Direction - Know Your Customer (KYC) Direction, 2016.
- ✓ The RBI's inspection found HDFC Bank allotted multiple customer identification code to certain customers instead of a Unique Customer Identification Code (UCIC) for each customer and 1 other violation.
- ✓ This penalty has been imposed in exercise of powers conferred on RBI under the provisions of Section 47A(1)(c) read with Section 46(4)(i) of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949,"

RBI IMPOSED PENALTY IN NEWS 2025

- RBI imposed a monetary penalty of ₹75.00 lakh on HDFC Bank Limited (the bank) for non-compliance with certain directions issued by RBI on 'Know Your Customer'.
- RBI imposed a penalty of Rs. 68.20 lakh on Punjab & Sind Bank for failing to comply with directions on 'Creation of a Central Repository of Large Common Exposures Across Banks' and 'Financial Inclusion – Access to Banking Services – Basic Savings Bank Deposit Account (BSBDA)'.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed a monetary penalty of ₹36.30 lakh on IDBI Bank for failing to undertake due diligence while processing inward remittances from a foreign currency account, violating Section 10(4) of FEMA, 1999.

Answer : A

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs 68.20 lakh on public sector lender Punjab & Sind Bank for non-compliance with certain directions issued by RBI on “Creation of a Central Repository of Large Common Exposures Across Banks”, known as Central Repository of Information on Large Credits (CRILC) Revision in Reporting and “Financial Inclusion – Access to Banking Services Basic Savings Bank Deposit Account (BSBDA)”.
- ✓ The charges are i) The bank did not report certain borrowers with non-fund based exposure of Rs 5 crore and above to CRILC; and ii) The bank allowed certain BSBDA holders to open Savings Bank Deposit Accounts.

Q. Which one of the following Acts is proposed to be amended by the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024?

- A) Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 B) State Bank of India Act, 1955
C) Banking Regulation Act, 1949 D) All of the above

Answer : D

- ✓ The Banking Laws Amendment Bill, 2024 was introduced in the Lok Sabha on August 9, 2024. The amendment bill amends Reserve bank of India Act, 1934, Banking Regulation ACT, 1949 and State Bank of India Act, 1970 and Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings Act, 1980
- ✓ The Bill, introduced by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, was passed via a voice vote, indicating broad support for the proposed changes.
- ✓ The key provisions of the Bill aim to improve governance in the banking sector and enhance customer convenience, especially regarding nomination processes and regulatory compliance.
- ✓ Key Provisions of the Bill:
- ✓ The Bill allows bank account holders to have up to four nominees for their accounts, enhancing the flexibility of account management.
- ✓ Locker holders will be allowed only successive nominations, ensuring smooth transfer of locker contents to the next nominee.
- ✓ The provision also allows for successive or simultaneous nominations for depositors, making the process more adaptable and secure for family members or heirs.
- ✓ The Bill proposes a change in the definition of “substantial interest” for directorships in cooperative banks, increasing the threshold from ₹5 lakh to ₹2 crore.
- ✓ The Bill also seeks to extend the tenure of directors (excluding the chairman and whole-time directors) in cooperative banks from 8 years to 10 years, aligning it with the Constitution (97th Amendment) Act, 2011.
- ✓ The Bill allows a director of a Central Cooperative Bank to also serve on the board of a State Cooperative Bank, facilitating smoother inter-bank cooperation and governance

Q. What is the new threshold for substantial interest in shareholding for directorships?

- A) Increased from Rs 50,000 to Rs 1 crore
B) Increased from Rs 5 lakh to Rs 2 crore
C) Reduced from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 50,000
D) No change was made to shareholding thresholds

Answer : B

- ✓ Substantial Interest: Depending on current economic conditions, “substantial interest” for directorships is proposed to be increased from Rs. 5 lakh to Rs. 2 crore.

Q. What change does the bill propose for the tenure of directors in cooperative banks?

- A) Extends tenure from 8 years to 10 years
- B) Reduces tenure from 10 years to 5 years
- C) Extends tenure from 5 years to 8 years
- D) No change was proposed for the tenure of directors

Answer : A

- ✓ Tenure of Directors: The tenure of Directors in Cooperative banks will extend from eight years to ten years in accordance to the provisions mentioned in Constitutional Act, 2011.

Q. Which country has become the world's top milk producer?

- A) China
- B) India
- C) United States
- D) Brazil

Answer : B

- ✓ India has emerged as the world's largest milk producer, currently producing 239 million metric tons (MMT) of milk.
- ✓ The country contributes over 24% of the global milk production, a position it has maintained through significant growth in its dairy sector.
- ✓ India's target is to increase its milk production to 300 MMT in the next five years.
- ✓ This remarkable growth has been largely driven by initiatives like the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM), which has been instrumental in improving both the quality and quantity of milk production.
- ✓ Top 5 milk producing states in India 2024.
 1. Uttar Pradesh
 2. Rajasthan
 3. Madhya Pradesh
 4. Gujarat
 5. Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ The top 5 milk-producing countries globally are India, the United States, Pakistan, China, and Brazil.

Q. Which company acquired a 100% stake in Nauyaan Tradings Private Limited (NTPL)?

- A) Tata Group
- B) Adani Group
- C) Reliance industries
- D) Bharti Airtel

Answer : C

- ✓ Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), led by Mukesh Ambani, acquired a 100% stake in Nauyaan Tradings Private Limited (NTPL) through its subsidiary Reliance Strategic Business Ventures Limited (RSBVL).
- ✓ This acquisition, valued at ₹1 lakh, is part of RIL's strategy to expand its shipyard operations and enhance its presence in key sectors such as naval, defence, and energy.
- ✓ The deal also involves further plans to acquire a 74% stake in Nauyaan Shipyard Private Limited (NSPL), strengthening Reliance's footprint in the shipbuilding industry.

Q. Who has been appointed as the private secretary to Prime Minister Narendra Modi?

- A) Nidhi Tewari
- B) Hemant Karkare
- C) K. Annamalai
- D) Sanjukta Parashar

Answer : A

- ✓ IFS officer Nidhi Tewari has been appointed private secretary to Prime Minister Narendra Modi,

Q. Who has been appointed as a Full-Time Member of NITI Aayog?

- A) Rajiv Gauba
- B) Amitabh Kant
- C) Narendra Modi
- D) P.K. Sinha

Answer : A

- ✓ Rajiv Gauba, the former Cabinet Secretary of India, has been appointed as a Full-Time Member of NITI Aayog, a position he assumed with immediate effect.

Q. Power finance corporation (PFC) has been authorised to raise up to Rs 10,000 crore via Zero coupon Bond (ZCBs). What is the maturity period of these bonds?

- A) 121 Months
- B) 115 months
- C) 124 months
- D) 133 months

Answer : A

Q. Which of the following best describes a zero-coupon bond?

- A) A bond that pays interest periodically.
- B) A bond issued at a discount and redeemed at face value.
- C) A bond with a high coupon rate.
- D) A bond issued by a corporation

Answer : B

Q. What is the primary source of profit for an investor holding a zero-coupon bond?

- A) Periodic interest payments.
- B) The difference between the purchase price and the face value.
- C) Capital gains from selling the bond in the secondary market.
- D) Reinvestment of coupon payments.

Answer : B

- ✓ Finance Ministry notifies 10-year Zero Coupon Bond of Power Finance Corporation.
- ✓ The Union finance ministry has notified Zero coupon Bond (ZCB) for power finance corporation.
- ✓ The company can raise up to Rs 10,000 crore.
- ✓ Key Highlights
- ✓ Power finance corporation (PFC) has been authorised to raise up to Rs 10,000 crore via Zero coupon Bond (ZCBs).
- ✓ The bond will be issued at 50,454 with face value of Rs1 lakh at maturity.
- ✓ Maturity period : 121 months (10 years and 1 months)
- ✓ What is a Zero coupon Bond (ZCB) ?
- ✓ No Periodic interest payments (unlike regular bonds).
- ✓ Issued at a discount, redeemed at full face value upon maturity.
- ✓ Investors earn a return from the difference between purchase price and maturity value.
- ✓ Treasury bills (T-Bills) are Zero coupon securities.

Q. Which bank has partnered with J.P. Morgan to offer real-time U.S. dollar payment capabilities to commercial clients in the country?

- A) Axis Bank
B) ICICI Bank
C) HDFC Bank
D) Yes Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ Axis Bank launches 24/7 global USD clearing through Kinexys by J.P. Morgan.
- ✓ Axis Bank has become the first Indian bank to launch 24/7 near-real-time programmable USD clearing capabilities using J.P. Morgan's Kinexys Digital Payments platform.
- ✓ This collaboration will enable Axis Bank's commercial clients to make cross-border payments anytime, streamlining payments and unlocking liquidity through blockchain technology, boosting the bank's position in the international banking sector.

Q. The Reserve Bank of India has increased the overall limit available to standalone primary dealers (SPDs) under the standing liquidity facility from Rs 10,000 crore to how many rupees at the current repo rate?

- A) Rs 15,000 crore
B) Rs 25,000 crore
C) Rs 20,000 crore
D) Rs 30,000 crore

Answer : A

- ✓ RBI raises liquidity limit for standalone primary dealers to Rs 15,000 cr.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India has raised the aggregate limit available to Standalone Primary Dealers (SPDs) under the Standing Liquidity Facility at the prevailing repo rate, from Rs 10,000 crore to Rs 15,000 crore, effective from April 2, 2025.
- ✓ SPDs were permitted to participate in all overnight liquidity management operations, excluding the Marginal Standing Facility.
- ✓ SPDs could participate in other operations, such as long-term Variable Rate Repo (VRR) operations and daily VRRs, on a case-by-case basis.

Q. Which bank has earned Rs 331 crore from ATM cash withdrawals in 2023-24?

- A) State Bank of India
B) Punjab National Bank
C) HDFC Bank
D) ICICI Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ State Bank of India earned Rs 331 crore from ATM cash withdrawals in 2023-24, while other state-owned banks collectively lost Rs 925 crore.
- ✓ SBI holds a dominant 31% share of the ATM cash withdrawal market and operates the largest ATM network in India, with over 65,000 ATMs, accounting for a 30% market share.
- ✓ Bank of Baroda incurred the highest loss on ATM cash withdrawals for the fiscal year 2023-24, amounting to Rs 212 crore, followed by Union Bank with a loss of Rs 203 crore. Indian Bank also faced a loss of Rs 189 crore from ATM cash withdrawals

Q. Which bank has initiated the Pradhan Mantri Vidyalaxmi (PM-Vidyalaxmi) Scheme to offer financial support to meritorious students pursuing higher education?

- A) Kotak Mahindra Bank
B) Indian Overseas Bank
C) ICICI Bank
D) Bank of Baroda

Answer : D

- ✓ Bank of Baroda has officially launched the Pradhan Mantri Vidyalaxmi (PM-Vidyalaxmi) Scheme, an initiative by the central government designed to provide financial support to meritorious students pursuing higher education.
- ✓ Students seeking financial assistance can now digitally apply for an education loan under the PM-Vidyalaxmi Scheme through Bank of Baroda via the PM-Vidyalaxmi portal.
- ✓ This initiative simplifies the loan application process and eliminates the need for a guarantor or collateral, making higher education more accessible to deserving students.
- ✓ Key Features of the PM-Vidyalaxmi Scheme
- ✓ Collateral-Free and Guarantor-Free Loans: Students admitted to the top 860 identified Quality Higher Educational Institutions (QHEIs) in India are eligible for collateral-free loans.
- ✓ Loan Amount: Loans of up to ₹7.5 lakh will receive a 75% credit guarantee from the Government of India, encouraging banks to expand coverage.
- ✓ Interest Subvention: To make loans more affordable, students from low-income families may receive partial or full interest subvention under the scheme

Q. According to the Hurun Global Rich List 2025, which country has the maximum number of billionaires in the world?

A) United States	B) China
C) India	D) Saudi Arabia

Answer : A

- ✓ According to the Hurun Global Rich List 2025, the Chinese city of Shanghai has dethroned Mumbai to emerge as the billionaire's capital of Asia.
- ✓ Roshini Nadar of HCL Technologies has become the first Indian to be included among the top 10 wealthiest women in the world.
- ✓ India has retained its status as the country having the third-highest number of billionaires in the world after the United States of America and China.
- ✓ Mukesh Ambani remains the richest man in Asia despite dropping out of the world's top 10 richest people.
- ✓ The total number of billionaires in the world was 3442, an increase of 163.
- ✓ For the first time in the last 10 years, the United States of America (USA) has overtaken China in having the largest number of billionaires in the world.
- ✓ The USA has 870 billionaires, followed by China with 823.
- ✓ India has the third-largest number of billionaires in the world, with 284, an increase of 13 as compared to last year.
- ✓ The combined wealth of Indian billionaires of Rs 98 trillion is about one-third of India's gross domestic product (GDP).
- ✓ Mumbai slips to third position
- ✓ Mumbai, which emerged as Asia's billionaire capital last year by dethroning China's capital city, Beijing, slipped to third position this year.
- ✓ Shanghai, with 92 billionaires, has emerged as Asia's billionaire capital, followed by Beijing(91) and Mumbai, with 90 billionaires.
- ✓ Mumbai added 11 billionaires to its list this year.

Q. According to the Hurun Global Rich List 2025, which city has become the world's billionaire capital?

A) New York	B) London
C) Shanghai	D) Mumbai

Answer : A

- ✓ Billionaire Capital of the World

- ✓ New York City, USA, has emerged as the billionaires' capital of the world, with 129 billionaires living in the city.
- ✓ London, United Kingdom, retained its second spot with 97 billionaires,
- ✓ Shanghai was in third position with 92 billionaires,
- ✓ Beijing at fourth with 91 billionaires and
- ✓ Mumbai was in fifth place with 90 billionaires.
- ✓ New Delhi was ranked 9th in the world with 63 billionaires, Bengaluru at 261st rank with 25 billionaires

Q. Who is the first Indian to be included in the Hurun Global Rich List 2025 top 10 wealthiest women of the world?

A) Falguni Nayar	B) Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw
C) Vineeta Singh	D) Roshini Nadar

Answer : D

- ✓ Roshini Nadar 5th richest woman in the world
- ✓ Chairperson of HCL Technologies, Roshini Nadar, became the first Indian woman to be included in the top 10 richest women's list.
- ✓ She is also the richest woman and the third richest person in India.
- ✓ The main reason for her wealth is due to the transfer of her father Shiv Nadar's 47% stake in HCL Technologies to her.
- ✓ American Alice Walton, owner of Walmart, was the richest woman in the world.

Q. Who is the richest Indian as per the Hurun Global Rich List 2025?

A) Gautam Adani	B) Mukesh Ambani
C) Roshni Nadar	D) Dilip Shanghvi

Answer : B

- ✓ The richest Indian with their wealth
- 1. Mukesh Ambani, Reliance Industries Limited – Rs 8.6 trillion
- 2. Gautam Adani, Adani Group – Rs 8.4 trillion
- 3. Roshni Nadar, HCL Technologies – Rs 3.5 trillion
- 4. Dilip Shanghvi, Sun Pharma – Rs 2.5 trillion
- 5. Azim Premji, Wipro – Rs 2.2 trillion
- ✓ Top 5 richest people in the world
- 1. Elon Musk (USA), owner of Tesla, SpaceX- \$ 420 billion. The first person to have a wealth of more than \$ 400 billion.
- 2. Jeff Bezos (USA), owner of Amazon - \$ 266 billion
- 3. Mark Zuckerberg (USA), owner of Meta (Facebook)- \$242 billion
- 4. Larry Ellison (USA), owner of Oracle - \$203 billion
- 5. Warren Buffett (USA), Berkshire Hathaway- \$167 billion

Q. What is the maximum transaction amount included under the BHIM-UPI Incentive Scheme?

A) ₹5,000	B) ₹1,000
C) ₹2,000	D) ₹10,000

Answer : C

- ✓ The Union Cabinet has approved a Rs 1,500 crore incentive for promoting low-value BHIM-UPI peer-to-peer merchant (P2M) transactions for 2024-25.

- ✓ The scheme is being rolled out to promote the BHIM-UPI platform to achieve target volumes of 200 billion in FY25.
- ✓ This is the first time the Centre has defined small and large merchants in the context of outlining BHIM-UPI incentives.
- ✓ The Centre has set an incentive rate of 0.15 per cent for a transaction value of up to Rs 2,000 made to small merchants, while large merchants in the same value bracket will receive no incentive.
- ✓ For transactions exceeding Rs 2,000, there will be no incentive for anyone.
- ✓ Bharat Interface for Money (BHIM) is India's digital payment application (app) that works through UPI, a system that powers multiple bank accounts into a single mobile application.
- ✓ Developed by National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI).
- ✓ Allows real time fund transfer.
- ✓ Launched in December, 2016

Q. Which organization partnered with DigiLocker to reduce unclaimed assets in the Indian securities market?

A) RBI	B) NSE
C) BSE	D) SEBI

Answer : D

- ✓ SEBI Partners with DigiLocker to Reduce Unclaimed Assets and Strengthen Investor Protection.
- ✓ The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has partnered with DigiLocker to streamline access to investors' securities holdings and reduce unclaimed assets in the Indian securities market.
- ✓ This initiative enables investors to store and retrieve their demat holdings, mutual fund statements, and Consolidated Account Statements (CAS) through DigiLocker, ensuring seamless access to financial information.
- ✓ About DigiLocker:
- ✓ It is a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Electronics & IT (MeitY) under the Digital India programme in 2015
- ✓ It is a government approved application and is ideally maintained with strict security protocols framed by officials.
- ✓ It operates as an app to store users' digital records. The app can be used when applying for a passport, reviewing marksheets, or proving one's identity during travel.

Q. With reference to National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD), consider the following statements:

1. The total funding now stands at Rs. 2790 crore for the 15th Finance Commission cycle, covering 2021-22 to 2025-26.
2. It focuses towards strengthening of infrastructure for quality milk testing equipment as well as primary chilling facilities.

Select the correct statements using the code given below:

A) 1 only	B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2	D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Government of India has approved the Revised National Programme for Dairy Development (NPDD).
- ✓ This initiative aims to modernise the dairy sector with budget increase.
- ✓ The total funding now stands at Rs. 2790 crore for the 15th Finance Commission cycle, covering 2021-22 to 2025-26.

- ✓ The NPDD focuses on modernising dairy infrastructure. It aims to improve milk procurement and processing capabilities
- ✓ The Revised NPDD aims to establish 10,000 new Dairy Cooperative Societies
- ✓ The NPDD aligns with the goals of White Revolution 2.0. The initiative will enhance rural livelihoods and strengthen the dairy industry.

Q. What is the total outlay of Rashtriya Gokul Mission for the period 2021–22 to 2025–26?

- A) ₹2,800 crore B) ₹3,400 crore
C) ₹5,300 crore D) ₹1,500 crore

Answer : B

Q. Which agency implements the Rashtriya Gokul Mission?

- A) Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change
B) National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)
C) Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare
D) Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)

Answer : B

- ✓ Union Cabinet approved the Revised Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM) to boost growth in livestock sector.
- ✓ The Union Cabinet has approved a revised outlay of ₹3,400 crore for the Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM).
- ✓ Additional ₹1,000 crore has been allocated for the period 2021–22 to 2025–26, with new initiatives for cattle development.
- ✓ About Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM):
- ✓ What is Rashtriya Gokul Mission?
- ✓ It is a flagship scheme for development and conservation of indigenous bovine breeds in India.
- ✓ The mission aims to enhance milk production and productivity in a sustainable manner.
- ✓ Launched In: The scheme was launched in December 2014.
- ✓ Ministry: Implemented by the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying
- ✓ Funding Pattern:
- ✓ The scheme is implemented on a 100% grant-in-aid basis, except for certain components:
- ✓ ₹5,000 subsidy per IVF pregnancy.
- ✓ 50% subsidy for sex-sorted semen cost.
- ✓ 50% subsidy up to ₹2 crore for establishing breed multiplication farms.
- ✓ Aim of Rashtriya Gokul Mission:
- ✓ Boost bovine productivity and increase sustainable milk production using modern technology.
- ✓ Promote the use of high genetic merit bulls for breeding improvement.
- ✓ Expand Artificial Insemination (AI) services at farmers' doorsteps.
- ✓ Preserve and promote indigenous cattle and buffalo breeds through scientific methods.

Q. Which bank will be the exclusive banking partner of Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH)?

- A) State Bank of India
B) Punjab National Bank
C) Kotak Mahindra Bank
D) City Union Bank

Answer : D

- ✓ City Union Bank (CUB) has officially partnered with Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) as its exclusive banking partner

- ✓ This strategic collaboration aims to provide SRH fans, players, and staff with customised financial solutions, exclusive offers, and enhanced digital banking services.
- ✓ The partnership also marks a significant step in connecting sports with financial innovation, strengthening CUB's presence among sports enthusiasts in India

BANKING PARTNERS SPORTS IN NEWS 2025

- IndusInd Bank has announced its partnership with the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI) as its official Banking Partner.
- City Union Bank has officially partnered with Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) as its exclusive banking partner.
- City Union Bank has announced a strategic partnership with Chennai Super Kings (CSK) to introduce an exclusive co-branded credit card.
- Equitas Small Finance Bank Strengthens Ties with Chennai Super Kings & Gujarat Titans.
- Airtel Payments Bank has announced its partnership with the Karnataka Bulldozers for the Celebrity Cricket League (CCL) 2025.
- State Bank of India (SBI) has been announced as a Co-Presenting Sponsor for the live broadcast of the TATA Women's Premier League (WPL) 2025.
- BCCI announced SBI Life as the official partner for the BCCI Domestic and International Season 2023-26.

Q. SEBI has introduced a new asset class called 'Specialized Investment Fund' (SIF). What is the minimum investment in SIF?

- A) Rs 10 lakh
B) Rs 15 lakh
C) Rs 20 lakh
D) Rs 30 lakh

Answer : A

- ✓ SEBI has introduced a comprehensive regulatory framework for Specialized Investment Funds (SIFs), aimed at bridging the gap between Mutual Funds (MFs) and Portfolio Management Services (PMS).
- ✓ This move is designed to provide investors with greater portfolio flexibility while ensuring a level of investor protection.
- ✓ Under the framework, investors must invest at least Rs 10 lakh across all SIF strategies.
- ✓ The framework shall be effective from April 01, 2025.

Q. DPIIT has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with which bank to strengthen India's startup ecosystem?

- A) Axis Bank
B) Yes Bank
C) Kotak Mahindra Bank
D) Indian Overseas Bank

Answer : B

- ✓ DPIIT inks pact with Yes Bank to strengthen India's startup ecosystem.
- ✓ The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with YES BANK with an aim to foster innovation and provide crucial support to product startups, innovators, and entrepreneurs across the country.
- ✓ The partnership will leverage DPIITs Startup India initiative and YES BANKs financial expertise to facilitate market linkages, funding access, mentorship, and infrastructure support for early-stage ventures.

Q. NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) has partnered with which country's payments company HitPay to increase the acceptance of Unified Payments Interface (UPI)?

- A) Japan
B) Malaysia
C) Maldives
D) Singapore

Answer : D

- ✓ NPCI teams up with HitPay for UPI payments in Singapore.
- ✓ NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) has joined forces with Singapore-based payments firm HitPay to expand Unified Payments Interface (UPI) acceptance in Singapore.
- ✓ This collaboration will provide Indian travellers to make QR code-based payments at various venues across Singapore.
- ✓ This is the second major partnership by NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) in Singapore after launching the UPI-PayNow linkage that allows Indians to receive remittances directly in bank accounts in India and Singapore
- ✓ The aim is to roll out UPI acceptance “progressively” to over 12,000 merchants in Singapore
- ✓ In January this year, NIPL collaborated with Magnati, a Middle Eastern payment solutions provider, to extend QR-based UPI merchant payments in the UAE

Q. How much stake will Bain Capital buy in Mannapuram Finance for Rs 4,385 crore?

- A) 20%
B) 10%
C) 15%
D) 18%

Answer : D

- ✓ Bain Capital to acquire 18% stake in Manappuram Finance for ₹4,385 crore
- ✓ The transaction will trigger an open offer for an additional 26% stake. Existing promoters will maintain a 28.9% stake.
- ✓ Manappuram Finance aims to fuel growth and expand with Bain Capital's support.

Q. Which bank has launched ACE feature on the mobile banking app to empower investors with smart investments in mutual funds?

- A) Bank of Baroda
B) Kotak Mahindra Bank
C) Bank of Maharashtra
D) IDFC FIRST Bank

Answer : D

- ✓ IDFC FIRST Bank launches ACE feature on the mobile banking app to empower investors with smart investments in mutual funds.
- ✓ IDFC FIRST Bank has unveiled Ace Feature on its premium Mobile Banking App, that provides relevant insights and tools to allow investors make an informed Mutual Fund investment decision.
- ✓ This feature aims to empower an individual with ‘do-it-yourself’ investing, digitally.
- ✓ The ACE Feature on the IDFC FIRST Bank app provides rich and useful details on more than 2500 Mutual Funds in India.
- ✓ Investors can browse through various fund categories (like Equity, Debt, Tax-Saving, Hybrid, and Index funds) and choose the right need-based fund to build a diversified portfolio.

Q. Which company has launched of ‘Choti SIP’, allowing investors to start a Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) with a minimum monthly contribution of ₹250?

- A) Nippon Life India Asset
B) UTI Asset Management
C) ICICI Prudential Life Insurance
D) Kotak Mutual Fund

Answer : D

- ✓ Kotak Mutual Fund Introduces ₹250 'Choti SIP' for First Time Investors.
- ✓ Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company Ltd (KMAMC) has announced the launch of 'Choti SIP', allowing investors to start a Systematic Investment Plan (SIP) with a minimum monthly contribution of ₹250.
- ✓ The facility is applicable across all eligible schemes of Kotak Mutual Fund.
- ✓ Eligibility Criteria
- ✓ The Choti SIP is specifically for first-time mutual fund investors.
- ✓ To qualify, the investor must not have previously invested in any mutual fund scheme, whether through SIP or lump sum, across the industry.

Q. Which committee recommended the establishment of Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) ?

- A) Malhotra Committee B) Sodhani Committee
C) Ghosh Committee D) Kalia Committee

Answer : A

- ✓ IRDAI appoints 5 new members to Insurance Advisory Committee
- ✓ Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has announced the appointment of five new members to the reconstituted Insurance Advisory Committee.
- ✓ According to a release by the IRDAI, this move comes under the powers conferred by Section 25 of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority Act, 1999, and as per Regulation 3A of the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (Insurance Advisory Committee) Regulations, 2000.
- ✓ The new members include MR Kumar, former chairman of Life Insurance Corporation of India and currently non-executive chairman of state-owned Bank of India; Dinesh Kumar Khara, former chairman of State Bank of India; Visakha Mule, CEO of Aditya Birla Capital; Nilesh Shah, MD of Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company; Kotak Ellis G Vaidyan, former CMD, GIC Re and independent director on the boards of Air India and Tata AIA Life Insurance.
- ✓ The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has a 10-member body, comprising a Chairman, five whole-time members, and four part-time members, all appointed by the Government of India.
- ✓ Total Members: 10
- ✓ Chairman: 1
- ✓ Whole-time Members: 5
- ✓ Part-time Members: 4
- ✓ The Malhotra Committee, set up in 1993, recommended the establishment of the IRDAI to promote competition and regulate the insurance sector

Q. SIDBI Venture Capital Limited has been selected as the fund manager/investment manager for a venture capital fund of how many crores for the Indian space sector?

- A) Rs 1,000 crore B) Rs 2,000 crore
C) Rs 3,000 crore D) Rs 5,000 crore

Answer : A

- ✓ SIDBI VC to manage Rs 1,000 crore venture capital fund for space sector.
- ✓ SIDBI Venture Capital Limited has been selected as the fund manager for Rs 1,000 crore venture capital fund announced by the government to support private sector firms in the space technology domain.
- ✓ The fund will deploy the amount earmarked for it over a period of five years, with a planned deployment of Rs 150 crore in the 2025-26 financial year followed by Rs 250 crore each in the next three financial years and Rs 100 crore in 2029-30.

- Q.** When will NPCI start delinking UPI IDs linked with Mobile Number Revocation List (MNRL) and Digital Intelligence Platform (DIP)?
- A) April 1, 2025 B) May 1, 2025
C) July 1, 2025 D) August 1, 2025

- ✓ The NPCI will start delinking UPI IDs linked to the mobile number revocation list (MNRL) and the digital intelligence platform (DIP) from April 1, 2025, potentially disrupting digital payments for affected users.
- ✓ To avoid issues, ensure your bank records are updated with your current mobile number.
- ✓ The National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) has released new guidelines for Numeric UPI IDs, revising its previous circular.
- ✓ The purpose is to enhance user convenience and facilitate smoother UPI transactions.
- ✓ All UPI member banks, payment service providers (PSPs), and third-party apps (TPAPs) have to comply with these rules by March 31, 2025.
- ✓ The rules mandate that banks and PSPs utilise the mobile number revocation list (MNRL) and the digital intelligence platform (DIP).

- Q.** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of Rs 36.28 lakh on which bank for not complying with the Liberalised Remittance Scheme?
- A) Citibank N.A.
B) DBS Bank
C) Standard Chartered Bank
D) Deutsche Bank

- ✓ RBI imposed a monetary penalty on 36.28 lakh on Citi Bank N.A. in exercise of powers vested in RBI under the provisions of Section 11(3) of FEMA 1999 or contravention of the directions issued by the Reserve Bank of India related to reporting of transactions undertaken under the Liberalized Remittance scheme

- Q.** Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of ₹36.3 lakh on which bank for failing to conduct due diligence while processing inward remittances from a foreign currency account?
- A) IDBI Bank B) Indian Overseas Bank
- C) Kotak Mahindra Bank D) Canara Bank

✓ RBI has imposed a monetary penalty of Rs.36.30 lakh on IDBI Bank in exercise powers vested in the Reserve Bank under the provisions of Section 11(3) of FEMA, 1999, for not undertaking due diligence while processing the inward remittances from a Foreign Currency Account opened by a constituent, resulting in contravention of Section 10 (4) of FEMA, 1999.

- Q.** Reliance Strategic Business Ventures Limited acquired how much stake in Nauyan Tradings Private Limited for ₹ 1 lakh?
- A) 51% B) 74%
- C) 48% D) 100%

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- ✓ Reliance Strategic Business Ventures Ltd acquired 100% stake in Nauyaan Tradings Pvt Ltd for ₹1 lakh.
- ✓ Reliance Industries in a regulatory filing its subsidiary Reliance Strategic Business Ventures (RSBVL) has acquired a 100% stake in Nauyaan Tradings Private Limited (NTPL) for ₹1 lakh
- ✓ This acquisition facilitates the purchase of a 74% equity stake in Nauyaan Shipyard Pvt Ltd for ₹382.73 crore, intending to utilize leased land for manufacturing and storage activities

A)1 April 2025

C) 1 July 2025

Answer : A

New classification of MSME

Type	INVESTMENT		TURNOVER	
	Current	Revised	Current	Revised
MicroEnterprise	Rs 1cr	Rs 2.5cr	Rs 5cr	Rs 10cr
Small Enterprise	Rs 10cr	Rs 25cr	Rs 50cr	Rs 100cr
Medium Enterprise	Rs 50cr	Rs 125cr	Rs 250cr	Rs 500cr

Source: Budget 2025-2026, Speech of Nirmala Sitharama, Union Minister of Finance February 1, 2025.

Q. The Government of India has urged public sector banks (PSBs) to provide loans up to how many rupees to MSMEs?

- A) ₹20 Crore B) ₹25 Crore
C) ₹15 Crore D) ₹10 Crore

Answer : D

- ✓ Loan Threshold for MSMEs Under the Digital Footprint Model Raised to ₹10 Crore.
- ✓ The government has urged PSBs to lend up to ₹10 crore to MSMEs.
- ✓ This will streamline credit flow and boost credit accessibility for MSMEs.
- ✓ This is a notable shift away from small-size loans. For instance, the current loan limit is ₹25 lakh to ₹5 crore.
- ✓ State Bank of India (SBI) has historically lent the most to MSMEs. As per various news reports, it lends nearly ₹5 crore to MSMEs annually.
- ✓ However, this is sharply different from MSME lending by other banks.
- ✓ On average, other PSBs process ₹25 lakh to ₹2 crore loans for small and medium enterprises.

Q. Which bank has launched its Embassy Fixed Deposit scheme, tailored for diplomats and non-diplomatic staff?

- A) HDFC Bank
B) ICICI Bank
C) Yes Bank
D) Axis Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ HDFC Bank has introduced a specialized fixed deposit scheme known as the Diplomat or Embassy Fixed Deposit.
- ✓ This product is tailored exclusively for a distinct clientele comprising diplomats, non-diplomatic staff, and diplomatic missions.
- ✓ These fixed deposits are Foreign Currency (FCY) Term Deposits and are available only in the United States Dollar (USD) currency.
- ✓ The primary requirement for opening an Embassy Deposit is a minimum deposit amount of USD 5,000 or its equivalent.
- ✓ Following the initial deposit, any additional amounts must be in increments of USD 1,000.
- ✓ There is no mention of the maximum deposit amount that individuals can invest in Embassy

Q. According to a recent report of the International Monetary Fund (IMF), in which year will the Indian economy overtake Japan to become the world's fourth largest economy?

- A) 2025
B) 2026
C) 2027
D) 2028

Answer : A

- ✓ IMF: India to overtake Japan in 2025 and Germany in 2027.
- ✓ According to the recently released data by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Indian economy is likely to overtake Japan in 2025 and Germany in 2027 to become the world's third largest economy after the United States of America and China.
- ✓ The positive report of the IMF comes after a World Bank report which suggested that India needs to grow at an average annual growth rate of 7.8 percent to achieve the target of Viksit Bharat or a developed country by 2047.
- ✓ The following are the main points of the IMF Data.
- ✓ The real gross domestic product (GDP) of India has doubled from \$2.1 trillion in 2015 to \$4.3 trillion in 2025.

- ✓ Surprisingly Japan whose real GDP was 4.4 trillion in 2015 remained at 4.4 trillion in 2025, showing a growth rate of 0 percent.
- ✓ IMF estimates that with the current growth rate India is expected to surpass Japan in 2025 and Germany in 2027.
- ✓ India is currently the fifth-largest economy in the world after the United States of America, China, Germany, and Japan.

Q. With reference to India's Remittances Survey 2023-24, consider the following statements:

1. The highest contribution of remittances to India came from the United States.
2. At the national level, Kerala ranks first in terms of remittance inflows.
3. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries contributed more than one-third of the remittance inflow into India.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

A) 1 and 2 only	B) 1 and 3 only
C) 2 and 3 only	D) 1, 2, and 3

Answer : B

- ✓ Insights from the Sixth round of India's Remittances Survey 2023-24 by RBI shows that the US, UK, Singapore, Canada and Australia together accounted for more than half of remittances into India.
- ✓ About India's Remittances:
- ✓ India has consistently received the highest remittance over the years, with the money doubling from \$55.6 billion in 2010-11 to \$118.7 billion in 2023-24.
- ✓ The highest contribution came from the United States, accounting for 27.7 percent of the total remittances.
- ✓ UAE maintained its position as the second largest source of India's remittances, with its share increasing from 18 percent in 2020-21 to 19.2 per cent in 2023-24.
- ✓ Share of inward remittances from advanced economies, including the US and the UK, has risen, surpassing that of Gulf economies in 2023-24.
- ✓ The US and the UK together contributed to nearly 40 percent of total remittances coming to India through banks in FY24.
- ✓ The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) -the UAE, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Oman, and Bahrain - contributed 38 percent of the remittances.
- ✓ At the national level, Kerala ranks second in terms of remittance inflows, following Maharashtra, which accounted for 20.5 percent of total remittances in 2023-24.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu stands third with 10.4 per cent, followed by Telangana (8.1 percent) and Karnataka (7.7 per cent).

Q. Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed a loan agreement with which organisation for \$150 million to boost access to finance for MSMEs in India ?

A) Shriram Finance Limited	B) Bajaj Finance Limited
C) Muthoot Finance Limited	D) Aditya Birla Finance Limited

Answer : A

- ✓ ADB and Shriram Finance Sign Deal to Boost MSME and EV Financing in India.
- ✓ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and Shriram Finance Limited have signed a loan agreement for \$150 million to boost access to finance for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs) in India with a focus on business loans and for financing electric vehicles (EVs) and low-emission commercial vehicles for business purposes.
- ✓ The loan will particularly benefit women-owned MSMEs and those in lagging states.

ADB IN NEWS 2024-25

- ADB and Shriram Finance Limited have signed a loan agreement for \$150 million to boost access to finance for micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises in India.
- ADB Launches “Frontier Seed” to Catalyze Private Sector Growth and Ocean Impact in the Pacific
- ADB has approved a \$200-million loan to enhance the development of climate-and disaster-resilient sewerage and drainage infrastructure in Kolkata, aiming to improve the city's livability.
- ADB Masato Kanda has assumed office as the 11th President of ADB. Kanda has succeeded Masatsugu Asakawa.
- ADB has signed a USD 500 million (about Rs 4,250 crore) loan to support green and sustainable infrastructure projects aligned with the country's climate commitments.
- ADB have signed a \$42 million loan to provide coastal and riverbank protection to increase resilience of local communities and natural ecosystems in the state of Maharashtra.
- ADB has approved a USD 788.8-million (about Rs 6,620 crore) results-based loan to Andhra Pradesh for the development of Amaravati as a green and smart capital city that offers world-class infrastructure.
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) have collaborated to address the substantial funding gap in India's infrastructure sector
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) on Wednesday approved a \$500 million loan to support India's economic growth by promoting environmentally sustainable infrastructure.
- Asian Development Bank (ADB) lowered India's GDP growth forecast for FY25 to 6.5% from 7% and for FY26 to 7% from 7.2%.
- ADB, Mastercard Launch Innovative Partnership to Finance MSMEs in Asia and the Pacific.
- ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (ADB)
 - Founded : 19 December 1966
 - HQ : Mandaluyong, Metro Manila, Philippines
 - 11th President : Masato Kanda (Japan)
 - Vice President : Ashok Lavasa (Indian)
- Director of ADB for India : Mio Oka (Japan)
- Executive Director : Vikas Sheel
 - Member Countries : 69 (Israel)
- Japan is the largest contributor in the subscribed capital of the country.
- Asian Development Outlook, reports published by ADB.

Q. The revised priority sector lending (PSL) target for urban cooperative banks (UCBs) is what percentage of adjusted net bank credit (ANBC) or credit equivalent off-balance sheet exposure (CEOBE)?

- A) 75% B) 40%
C) 60% D) 55%

Answer : C

- ✓ Total PSL target : 60% of Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) or Credit Equivalent of Off-Balance Sheet Exposures (CEOBSE).
- ✓ RBI revises Priority Sector Lending Guidelines effective from 1st April 2025.
- ✓ The guidelines have been issued in exercise of powers conferred by Sections 21 and 35A read with Section 56 of Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- ✓ Revised Guidelines
- ✓ Enhancement of several loan limits:-
- ✓ Education : upto ₹25 lakh for individuals (including vocational courses)
- ✓ Social Infrastructure: upto ₹8 crore per borrower for setting up schools, drinking water facilities etc
- ✓ Other: Housing Loan Limits, Agriculture Loans etc
- ✓ Focused on 'Renewable Energy':

- ✓ Upto ₹35 crore for renewable energy-based power generators and for renewable energy based public utilities such as street lighting systems, remote village electrification.
- ✓ The limit is ₹10 lakh for individual households.
- ✓ Revision of PSL target for Primary (Urban) Co-operative Bank (UCBs)
- ✓ Total Priority Sector: 60%
- ✓ Micro Enterprises: 7.5%
- ✓ Advances to Weaker Sections: 12%.
- ✓ Expansion of the category of 'Weaker Sections':-
- ✓ It now includes Transgenders along with earlier categories of:-
- ✓ Small and Marginal Farmers, Distressed farmers indebted to non-institutional lenders, Artisans, Individual members of SHGs or Joint Liability Groups,
- ✓ Scheduled Castes & Scheduled Tribes, Persons with disabilities, Minority communities notified by Government of India
- ✓ Individual women beneficiaries up to ₹2 lakh (This limit is not applicable to UCBs)

Q. Which entity has extended the suspension of derivatives trading in seven agricultural commodities, including wheat and moong, until March 31, 2026?

A) FICCI	B) FSSAI
C) SEBI	D) FCI

Answer : C

- ✓ SEBI extends suspension of trading in 7 commodity derivatives until Mar 2026.
- ✓ Markets regulator SEBI has extended the suspension of derivatives trading in seven agricultural commodities, including wheat and moong, for a year till March 2026 in a bid to rein in prices.
- ✓ The other agricultural commodities suspended by Sebi are paddy (non-basmati), chana, crude palm oil, mustard seeds and its derivatives and soybean and its derivatives.

Q. Who has been appointed as the new Finance Secretary to succeed Tuhin Kanta Pandey?

A) Rajiv Mehrishi	B) Ajay Seth
C) Vikram Misri	D) Deepti Umashankar

Answer : B

- ✓ Ajay Seth has been appointed as the new Finance Secretary.
- ✓ The Government of India has appointed senior Ajay Seth as the next Finance Secretary.
- ✓ He will succeed Tuhin Kanta Pandey, who took over as the 11th Chairperson of the capital market regulator Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
- ✓ Ajay Seth is currently the Secretary, Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance, Government of India.
- ✓ Earlier in February this year, Ajay Seth was also given the additional charge of the post of Secretary, Department of Revenue, Union Ministry of Finance.
- ✓ Currently, Ajay Seth is India's Alternate Governor on the Asian Development Banks(ADB) Board of Governors.
- ✓ Finance Secretary also puts his signature on the one rupee currency notes.

NEWLY FAMOUS SECRETARY 2024 -25

- ✓ Nidhi Tewari : private secretary to PM
- ✓ Ajay Seth : Finance Secretary
- ✓ Arunish Chawla : Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary
- ✓ Govind Mohan : Home Secretary
- ✓ Rajesh Kumar Singh : Defence Secretary
- ✓ Vikram Misri : Foreign secretary

- ✓ Deepti Umashankar : Secretary to the President.
- ✓ Manoj Govil : Expenditure Secretary
- ✓ T V Somanathan : Cabinet Secretary
- ✓ Pramod Kumar Mishra : Principal Secretary to Prime Minister
- ✓ Ajay Seth : Economic Affairs Secretary
- ✓ Tarun Kapoor : Advisor to Prime Minister

Q. India and which other country have renewed their bilateral swap arrangements to the extent of \$75 billion in 2025?

A) Maldives	B) Singapore
C) Japan	D) Sri Lanka

Answer : C

- ✓ Japan and India renew Bilateral Swap Arrangement for up to \$75 billion.
- ✓ Japan and India have renewed the Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA), effective from February 28, 2025, for up to \$75 billion.
- ✓ The Bank of Japan, acting as an agent for the Minister of Finance of Japan, and the Reserve Bank of India signed the second Amendment and Restatement Agreement of the BSA.
- ✓ The BSA is a arrangement in which both authorities can swap their local currencies in exchange for the US dollar.
- ✓ The size of the BSA remains unchanged—that is, up to \$75 billion

CURRENCY SWAP AGREEMENT IN NEWS 2024-25

- Japan and India have renewed the Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA) for up to \$75 billion.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will conduct its largest-ever \$10-billion dollar/rupee buy-sell swap auction, aiming to address the persistent liquidity deficit in the banking system.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a Currency Swap Agreement with the Maldives Monetary Authority (MMA) under the SAARC Currency Swap Framework 2024-27.
- India will extend financial support to the Maldives, providing \$400 million under the US Dollar/Euro Swap Window.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI), has decided to put in place a revised framework for currency swap arrangements for SAARC (South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation) countries for the period 2024 to 2027.
- The RBI can offer a swap arrangement within the overall corpus of USD 2 billion.

Q. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has extended its partnership with DNB Bank ASA for another five years. DNB Bank ASA is situated in which country?

A) Sweden	B) Norway
C) Switzerland	D) Finland

Answer : B

- ✓ TCS renews pact with Norway's DNB Bank ASA by five years.
- ✓ Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has extended its partnership with Norway's largest financial services group, DNB Bank ASA, for another five years.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Bond Central, recently seen in the news:

1. It allows investors to compare corporate bond prices with government securities.
2. It was launched by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Markets regulator Sebi recently launched a centralized database portal for corporate bonds, Bond Central.
- ✓ About Bond Central:
- ✓ It is a centralized database portal for corporate bonds in India.
- ✓ It was launched by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) in a bid to create a single, authentic source of information on such securities.
- ✓ It has been developed by the Online Bond Platform Providers Association (OBPP Association) in collaboration with Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs) comprising stock exchanges and depositories.
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ Listings: A unified view of corporate bonds across exchanges and issuers, ensuring transparency and comparison.
- ✓ Price Comparison: Investors can compare corporate bond prices with Government Securities (G-Secs) and other fixed-income indices for better decision-making.
- ✓ Investor-Centric Information: Access to detailed risk assessments, corporate bond documents, and disclosures, enabling investors to evaluate opportunities effectively.
- ✓ Enhanced Transparency: The platform standardizes corporate bond-related data, reducing information asymmetry and thereby improving trust in the market.

Q. Unified Payments Interface (UPI) transactions surpassed ____ in January for the first time with the total value exceeding Rs 23.48 lakh crore.

A) 22.82 billion

B) 19.61 billion

C) 24.12 billion

D) 16.99 billion

Answer : D

- ✓ UPI transactions in January surpass 16.99 billion, highest recorded in any month.
- ✓ UPI transactions in January surpassed 16.99 billion and the value exceeded ₹23.48 lakh crore, marking the highest number recorded in any month
- ✓ Unified Payments Interface (UPI) remains the cornerstone of India's digital payment ecosystem, contributing to 80% of the retail payments across the country
- ✓ The total transaction volume exceeded 131 billion and the value exceeded ₹200 lakh crore for the 2023-24.
- ✓ As of January, 2025, over 80 UPI Apps, 641 banks are currently live on UPI ecosystem

Q. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a monetary penalty of ₹66.6 lakh on which bank for violations related to Know Your Customer (KYC) norms, reporting of unhedged foreign currency exposures, and interest rate rules on deposits?

A) Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation

B) Standard Chartered Bank

C) Citi Bank

D) Deutsche Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ RBI imposes penalty on HSBC, IIFL Samasta Finance for violating norms.

Q. Which bank has partnered with Chennai Super Kings (CSK) to launch a co-branded credit card?

- A) Federal Bank
- B) Kotak Mahindra Bank
- C) HDFC Bank
- D) City Union Bank

Answer : D

- ✓ City Union Bank Ltd, an old private sector bank, has partnered with Chennai Super Kings (CSK) to launch a co-branded credit card.
- ✓ The CUB-CSK Co-Branded Credit Card will be available in three variants – MasterCard, Platinum, and Signature Powered by MasterCard and RuPay, the card promises global acceptance, top-notch security, and contactless payment options.

Q. Which central public sector enterprise (CPSE) has become the 25th Navratna?

- A) Bharat Coking Coal Limited
- B) Bharat Dynamics Limited
- C) Central Warehousing Corporation
- D) Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd (IRCTC)

Answer : D

- ✓ IRCTC & IRFC becomes 25th and 26th CPSE Navratnas.
- ✓ The government of India has upgraded IRCTC (Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd.) and IRFC (Indian Railway Finance Corporation) to Navratna status. Both the IRFC and IRCTC were earlier Schedule 'A' Miniratna CPSE.
- ✓ IRCTC becomes the 25th central public sector enterprise (CPSE) to be accorded the status of Navratna while IRFC becomes the 26th CPSE to be accorded the Navratna status .
- ✓ The Department of Public Enterprises under the Union Ministry of Finance in a social media post on 3rd March 2025 gave this information.
- ✓ The government of India grants Maharatna, Navratna, and Mini-Ratna status to its profit-making CPSEs to make them more efficient and competitive.
- ✓ Seventh Railway CPSE to get Navratna Status
- ✓ The Union Ministry of Railways has 12 CPSEs. Out of the 12, seven CPSEs - Concor, RVNL, IRCON, RITES, RailTel, IRFC and IRCTC have been given Navratna status.
- ✓ The first Railway CPSE to get the Navratna status was Concor in 2014.
- ✓ All the railway CPSEs are profit-making enterprises
- ✓ About IRFC
- ✓ The Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) was set up on 12th December 1986.
- ✓ It mobilises funds from domestic as well as overseas capital Markets for Railways.
- ✓ It is registered as Systemically Important Non-Deposit taking Non Banking Financial Company (NBFC – ND-SI) and Infrastructure Finance Company (NBFC- IFC) with Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ✓ CMD and CEO: Manoj Kumar Dubey
- ✓ Headquarters: New Delhi
- ✓ About IRCTC
- ✓ Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation Ltd. (IRCTC) was set up on 27th September 1999.
- ✓ Its core functions are: Catering & Hospitality: Internet Ticketing booking of Railways, Travel & Tourism and Packaged Drinking Water (Rail Neer).
- ✓ Chairman and Managing Director (CMD): Sanjay Kumar Jain
- ✓ Headquarters: New Delhi

Q. Which public sector company has been accorded the 26th Navratna central public sector enterprise (CPSE) status?

- A) Cochin Shipyard Limited (CSL)
- B) Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE)
- C) Cotton Corporation Of India Limited (CCIL)
- D) Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC)

Answer : D

- ✓ Benefits of being a Navratna Company
 - ✓ A Navratna CPSE enjoys substantial managerial and financial autonomy.
 - ✓ Some of the benefits are as follows:
 - ✓ No need for central government approval for investments up to Rs 1,000 crore or 15% of their net worth in a single project.
 - ✓ No need for central government approval for entering into technology joint ventures or strategic alliances with other companies.
 - ✓ They can establish financial joint ventures and wholly owned subsidiaries in India or abroad under certain terms and conditions
 - ✓ Eligibility Criteria to be a Navratna CPSE
 - ✓ A CPSE has to satisfy the following conditions to get the Navratna status:
 - ✓ The CPSEs already have Schedule A Miniratna status,
 - ✓ A Memorandum of Understanding rating of 'excellent' or 'very good' in three of the last five years,
 - ✓ At least a composite score of 60 or above in the identified six performance indicators.
 - ✓ List of Navratna CPSEs
 - ✓ Following is the list of the 26 CPSE that have been accorded Navratna Status.
1. Bharat Electronics Limited
 2. Container Corporation of India Limited
 3. Engineers India Limited
 4. Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited
 5. National Aluminium Company Limited
 6. National Buildings Construction Corporation Limited
 7. Neyveli Lignite Corporation Limited
 8. NMDC Limited
 9. Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited
 10. Shipping Corporation of India Limited
 11. Rail Vikas Nigam Limited
 12. ONGC Videsh Ltd
 13. Rashtriya Chemicals & Fertilizers Limited
 14. IRCON
 15. RITES
 16. National Fertilizers Limited
 17. Central Warehousing Corporation
 18. Housing & Urban Development Corporation Limited
 19. Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited
 20. Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited
 21. Railtel Corporation of India Limited
 22. Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) Ltd.
 23. NHPC Limited
 24. SJVN Limited
 25. IRCTC
 26. IRFC

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Dragon Copilot:

1. It is the new healthcare AI tool which is being offered as part of Microsoft Cloud for Healthcare.
2. It harnesses the natural language voice dictation and ambient listening technology.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Microsoft has introduced a new voice-activated AI assistant called Dragon Copilot.
- ✓ About Dragon Copilot:
- ✓ It is the new healthcare AI tool which is being offered as part of Microsoft Cloud for Healthcare.
- ✓ It is designed to help doctors and healthcare professionals transcribe clinical notes and draft paperwork as well as quickly search for information from medical sources.

Q. The Competition Commission of India has approved the proposed acquisition of up to what percent stake in Orient Cement Limited by Ambuja Cements Limited?

- A) 49.7% B) 72.8%
C) 51.9% D) 67.2%

Answer : B

- ✓ CCI approves the proposed acquisition of up to 72.8% shareholding of Orient Cement Limited by Ambuja Cements Limited.
- ✓ The Competition Commission of India has approved the proposed acquisition of up to 72.8% stake in CK Birla group firm Orient Cement by Ambuja Cements.
- ✓ The proposed transaction is a two-stage acquisition process, initiated through two share purchase agreements (SPAs) on October 22, 2024, will see Ambuja Cements initially acquiring a 46.80% stake in Orient Cement.
- ✓ This includes a 37.90% stake from the current promoter group and an additional 8.90% from certain public shareholders

Q. When the RBI buys securities in the market, what happens?

- A) It raises interest rates and contracts the money supply.
B) It lowers interest rates and adds liquidity to the market.
C) It reduces the money supply and makes loans more expensive.
D) It lowers interest rates but does not affect liquidity.

Answer : B

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently announced its plan to infuse Rs 1.9 lakh crore into the banking system through open market purchases of government securities and USD/INR swaps.
- ✓ The RBI said it would go for open market operation (OMO) auctions to purchase government securities worth ₹1 trillion in two tranches of ₹50,000 crore each on March 12 and March 18.
- ✓ Additionally, a USD/INR buy-sell swap auction for \$10 billion with a tenor of 36 months is scheduled for March 24.
- ✓ About Open Market Operations (OMO):
- ✓ OMOs refer to a central bank selling or purchasing securities in the open market.
- ✓ It is a monetary policy tool to rein in inflation and money supply in the system.

- ✓ 85,698 High Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs) in India
- ✓ The report identifies a High Net-Worth Individual (HNWIs) as an individual with assets of more than USD10 million.
- ✓ In 2024, India, with 85,698 HNWI's, was fourth in the world behind the United States of America (905,413), China (471,634), and Japan (122,119).
- ✓ 40 percent of the global HNWI's reside in America, 20 percent in China, and around 5 percent in Japan.
- ✓ India has around 3.7 percent of the world's HNWI's.

Q. What was the position of India in the world on the criteria of the combined wealth of billionaires as per the Wealth Report 2025?

A) 2nd	B) 3rd
C) 5th	D) 4th

Answer : B

- ✓ Billionaire Population in India rises to 191.
- ✓ In 2024, the number of billionaires in the country was 191 an increase of 26 as compared to 2023.
- ✓ In 2019, there were only 7 billionaires in the country.
- ✓ On the criteria of the combined wealth of billionaires, India ranks third after the United States of America and Mainland China.
- ✓ The combined wealth of 191 billionaires in India was estimated at \$950 billion.
- ✓ The combined wealth of the United States of America billionaires was estimated at \$ 5.7 trillion, and Mainland China \$1.34 trillion.

Q. What is the share of SBI in Jio payment bank?

A) 17.8 %	B) 12.6%
C) 15.7%	D) 10.6%

Answer : A

- ✓ The Jio Financial Service Limited board has approved the purchase of 7.9 cores of shares of the Jio Payment bank from the State Bank of India for Rs 104.54 crore. At present, the State Bank of India holds 17.8 % shares in the Jio Payment Bank.
- ✓ SBI approves sale of its stake in Jio Payment Bank .
- ✓ Jio Payment Bank is a joint venture of Jio Financial Service Limited and SBI, and it started its operation in April 2018.
- ✓ Jio Financial Services Limited holds 82.17% of the paid-up equity share capital of Jio Payments Bank Limited, while SBI holds 17.8 % of the shares.
- ✓ Payment Banks in India
- ✓ Payment Banks were set up in India on the recommendation of the Nachiket Mor committee on "Comprehensive Financial Services for Small Businesses and Low-Income Households."
- ✓ Airtel Payment Bank was the first to start operations in 2017, and at present, there are five payment banks- Airtel Payments Bank, Fino Payments Bank, India Post Payments Bank, NSDL Payments Bank, and Jio Payments Bank- in India.
- ✓ All the payment banks are private banks and licensed by the RBI under the Banking Regulation Act 1949.
- ✓ The maximum deposit allowed is Rs 2 lakh.
- ✓ The Payment Banks cannot provide loans or credit cards to the account holders.
- ✓ They have to follow the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) and Statutory Liquidity Ratio (SLR) as applicable on the commercial banks.
- ✓ The minimum paid-up equity capital requirement for the payments bank is Rs. 100 crore.

Q. Which bank has launched Project HAKK (Hawai Anubhavi Kalyan Kendra) to provide support and services to Indian Air Force (IAF) pensioners, veterans and their families?

- A) Yes Bank
B) HDFC Bank
C) Axis Bank
D) ICICI Bank

Answer : B

- ✓ HDFC Bank Partners With IAF And CSC Academy To Launch Project HAKK
- ✓ HDFC Bank, India's leading private sector bank, signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Indian Air Force acting through the office of the Assistant Chief of Air Staff – Accounts & Air Veterans and CSC Academy.
- ✓ The day marked the launch of Project HAKK (Hawai Anubhavi Kalyan Kendra) – Serving those who have served.
- ✓ Project HAKK is designed to
- ✓ provide support and services to defence pensioners, veterans and their families

Q. Who has been conferred with the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India award?

- A) Sreelakshmi Suresh
B) Nikhil Kamath
C) Nitin Kamath
D) Trishneet Arora

Answer : C

- ✓ The founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of online stock broking company Zerodha Limited, Nitin Kamath, has been conferred with the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India award.
- ✓ Nitin Kamath will represent India at the EY World Entrepreneur Of The Year Awards to be held in Monte Carlo in June 2025.
- ✓ The winners of the 26th edition of the annual EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India in various categories were announced by the Indian subsidiary of the British consultancy firm EY on 5th March 2025.
- ✓ About Nitin Kamath
- ✓ Nitin Kamath is the founder of India's largest stockbroking firm, Zerodha Limited.
- ✓ Zerodha, established in 2010, pioneered the discount brokerage model in the country through a high volume, low margin model.
- ✓ Zerodha also launched India's first Growth Liquid ETF in January 2024.

Q. Who has become the first Indian bank to execute an aircraft financing transaction through its International Banking Unit (IBU) at GIFT City IFSC?

- A) Axis Bank
B) HDFC Bank
C) Yes Bank
D) ICICI Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ Axis Bank becomes first Indian bank to execute aircraft financing via GIFT City IFSC.
- ✓ Axis Bank has become the first Indian bank to execute an aircraft financing transaction through its International Banking Unit at GIFT City IFSC.
- ✓ This landmark transaction involves a long-term USD loan to finance the purchase of 34 training aircraft for Air India's pilot training institute in Amravati, Maharashtra

GIFT CITY IN NEWS 2024-25

- GIFT City partners with Zaggie to launch prepaid citizen card and visitor management system.
- Axis Bank has become the first Indian bank to execute an aircraft financing transaction through its International Banking Unit at GIFT City IFSC

- Bank of Maharashtra has received RBI approval to open its first international branch at GIFT City IFSC in Gujarat.
- HDFC Bank has become the first domestic bank to execute a gold forward deal from GIFT City, Gujarat.
- Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) has recently received the ISO 27001 certification.
- University of San Diego (USD) is planning to establish a campus in GIFT City, Gujarat, India. This will be the first American university to have a campus in GIFT City.
- Singapore is actively exploring the possibility of establishing a "data embassy" in India's Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).
- Queen's University Belfast (QUB) will become the first UK university to open a campus in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) in India.
- After Australia, two United Kingdom universities Queen's University Belfast and Coventry University plan international campuses in Gujarat's GIFT City.
- Australia's Deakin University and the University of Wollongong are the two international universities being opened in the GIFT City.
- Deakin University in Australia was the first international university to open a campus in India, in Gujarat's GIFT City.
- About the GIFT City
- The Gujarat Financial Tech (GIFT) City is a multi-service special economic zone situated between Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar in Gujarat.
- The Gujarat Government has developed GIFT City.
- India's first and only International Financial Service Center is in GIFT City.
- GIFT City has been developed as a Smart City and aims to be a Global Financial hub like Singapore in Asia.
- India's first international stock exchange, India International Exchange (IFSC) Limited (India INX), has been set up in GIFT City.
- Chairman of GIFT City: Hasmukh Adhia

Q. Who has been appointed as the brand ambassador of Federal Bank?

- A) Deepika Padukone B) Priyanka Chopra
C) Kriti Sanon D) Vidya Balan

Answer : D

- ✓ Federal Bank has appointed actor Vidya Balan its first-ever brand ambassador.
- ✓ Federal Bank Limited
- ✓ Founded : 1913
- ✓ Founder : K. P. Hormis
- ✓ Headquarters : Aluva, Kochi, Kerala
- ✓ MD & CEO : KVS Manian

FEDERAL BANK IN NEWS 2025

- Federal Bank signs pact to acquire additional 4 pc stake in Ageas Federal Life Insurance.
- Federal Bank has appointed actor Vidya Balan its first-ever brand ambassador
- Federal Bank has launched an "Annuity Deposit" scheme, offering customers a stable income stream over a long tenure (5-20 years)
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed a penalty of Rs35.60 lakh on Federal Bank Ltd and Karur Vysya Bank Ltd for non-compliance with the directions issued by the banking regulator. The highest penalty of Rs27.30 lakh has been imposed on Federal Bank. Karur Vysya Bank was fined Rs8.30 lakh.
- Federal bank partners with Ecofy to tackle green financing for MSMEs
- Reserve Bank of India has approved Krishnan Venkat Subramanian as Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer of Federal Bank
- About Federal Bank

- The private sector Federal Bank was established as Travancore Federal Bank Limited on 23 April 1931.
- The bank was renamed as Federal Bank Limited in December 1949.
- The Bank became a scheduled commercial bank in July 1970.
- Headquarters: Aluva, Kochi, Kerala
- MD & CEO : KV Subramanian
- Tagline: Your Perfect Banking Partner

Q. Reserve Bank of India has approved a one-year extension for Sumant Kathpalia as CEO of which bank, extending his term until March 23, 2026?

- A) Federal Bank
B) Bank of Baroda
C) IndusInd Bank
D) Indian Overseas Bank

Answer : C

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has granted only a one-year extension to Sumant Kathpalia, managing director (MD) and chief executive officer (CEO), IndusInd Bank.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India, vide its letter dated March 6, 2025, has conveyed its approval for re-appointment of Sumant Kathpalia as MD & CEO of the bank for a further period of one year with effect from March 24, 2025 till March 23, 2026.”
- ✓ The RBI has set a 15-year limit for the tenure of MD & CEO in private sector banks , with a 3-year cooling-off period before reappointment is possible.
- ✓ The maximum tenure for the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Public Sector Banks (PSBs) in India is 10 years, including any initial term, subject to the superannuation age of 60 years.
- ✓ IndusInd Bank
- ✓ Founded : 1994
- ✓ Founder : S.P. Hinduja
- ✓ Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra,
- ✓ MD & CEO : Sumant Kathpalia
- ✓ Tagline : We Make You Feel Richer

Q. Which bank has partnered with SIDBI to strengthen MSME financing?

- A) Federal Bank B) ICICI Bank
C) Axis Bank D) HDFC Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ Federal Bank has entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) to provide enhanced financial support to micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- ✓ This partnership aims to improve the MSME ecosystem by offering a variety of financing services, such as project finance, machinery loans, working capital support, and loans against property
- ✓ Federal Bank Limited
- ✓ Founded : 1913
- ✓ Founder : K. P. Hormis
- ✓ Headquarters : Aluva, Kochi, Kerala
- ✓ MD & CEO : KVS Manian
- ✓ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI)
- ✓ Founded : 1990
- ✓ Headquarters : Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
- ✓ Chairman & MD (CMD) : Manoj Mittal.
- ✓ The SIDBI was established on April 2, 1990, by Government of India, as a wholly owned subsidiary of IDBI Bank.

Q. Which bank has launched a collateral free digital SME (small and medium enterprise) loan product 'SBI Asmita' for women entrepreneurs to help them expand their business?

- A) State Bank of India
B) Punjab National Bank
C) Kotak Mahindra Bank
D) Indian Overseas Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a collateral free digital SME (small and medium enterprise) loan product 'SBI Asmita' for women entrepreneurs to help them expand their business.
- ✓ It also launched a 'Nari Shakti' platinum debit card to cater to the needs of women across various segments.
- ✓ The newly launched 'Nari Shakti' platinum debit card (made from 100% recycled plastic) is a RuPay-powered card designed exclusively for women.

Q. The government of India has allowed the free import of Urad pulse till –?

- A) 31st March 2026
B) 31st March 2027
C) 31st March 2028
D) 31st March 2030

Answer : A

- ✓ Government extends the free import of Urad till 31st March 2026.
- ✓ The government of India has extended the free import of Urad pulses till 31st March 2026 to control the price of the essential pulses in the country.
- ✓ The government of India has also imposed a 10% import duty on the lentil (masur) and extended the duty-free import of yellow peas till 31st May 2025.
- ✓ The notification regarding the free import of Urad was issued by the Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- ✓ The notification regarding the duty-free import of yellow peas and 10 % import duty on lentils was issued by the Revenue Department, Union Ministry of Finance.
- ✓ India is the largest producer, consumer, and importer of pulses in the world.
- ✓ Free import of Urad till 31st March 2026
- ✓ India is the largest producer and consumer of Urad pulses in the world, but the demand for Urad is more than the domestic production.
- ✓ To bridge the gap between demand and supply, the government of India allowed the free import of Urad till 31st March 2025.
- ✓ It has now been extended by one year to 31st March 2026.
- ✓ Free import means that there is no quantitative restriction on the import of Urad, and no custom duty will be imposed on the import.

Q. Which state is the largest producer of Urad pulse in India?

- A) Andhra Pradesh
B) Madhya Pradesh
C) Uttar Pradesh
D) Rajasthan

Answer : B

- ✓ Statistics regarding Urad Import
- ✓ In 2023-24, the total import of Urad was USD 663.21 million.
- ✓ Myanmar was the major supplier of Urad in 2023-24, with the total import being USD 646.6 million.
- ✓ During the April November 2024 period, the total import of Urad was USD 663.21 million, with imports from Myanmar being USD 549 million.
- ✓ Source of import
- ✓ Myanmar is the largest source of import of Urad, followed by Singapore, Thailand, and Brazil.
- ✓ Production of Urad in India

Q. The world's strongest insurance brand company 'PZU' is the company of which country?

A) China

B) Poland

B) Peru

D) Switzerland

Answer : B

- ✓ LIC has been ranked as the third strongest insurance brand globally, highlighting its financial stability, customer trust, and market influence.
- ✓ Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has been ranked the third strongest insurance brand globally, with a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 88 out of 100, according to the Brand Finance Insurance 100 (2025) report.
- ✓ Poland-based PZU topped the rankings with a BSI score of 94.4, followed by China Life Insurance in second place with 93.5.
- ✓ LIC also holds the 12th position in brand value among global insurers, while SBI Life ranks 76th, making them the only two Indian insurers in the top 100

Q. Which airline has become the world's second largest airline in terms of seat capacity?

A) Air India

B) Indigo

C) Jet Airways

D) AirAsia India

Answer : B

- ✓ IndiGo Airlines achieved the milestone of becoming the world's second-fastest-growing airline in terms of seat capacity, with a 10.1% year-on-year growth, reaching a total of 134.9 million seats in 2024.
- ✓ This growth placed IndiGo just behind Qatar Airways, which registered a slightly higher growth of 10.4%.

Q. Which company introduced the Gemma 3 AI model?

A) Microsoft

B) Apple

C) Amazon

D) Google

Answer : D

- ✓ Google has unveiled Gemma 3, the latest addition to its family of lightweight open AI models.
- ✓ Gemma 3 is designed to run efficiently on devices such as smartphones, laptops, and other computing platforms, offering low-latency processing capabilities and multi-modal processing with text-only output

Q. What is minimum quantity of gold that can be subscribed under the Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme?

A) 1 gm

B) 5 gm

C) 10 gm

D) 25 gm

Answer : A

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) the redemption price for the final redemption of Sovereign Gold Bonds (SGBs) due on March 17, 2025 would be ₹8,624 per unit of SGB.
- ✓ The redemption price of SGB shall be based on the simple average of closing price of gold of 999 purity of the week, preceding the date of redemption, as published by the India Bullion and Jewellers Association Limited (IBJA).
- ✓ The SGBs 2016-17 Series IV issued on March 17, 2017 as per the Union Government's Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme are repayable on the expiration of eight years from the date of issue of the Gold Bonds.
- ✓ About Sovereign Gold Bond (SGB) Scheme:
- ✓ SGBs were introduced by the Government of India in 2015 under the Gold Monetization Scheme.

- ✓ SGBs are government securities issued by the RBI on behalf of the Government of India.
- ✓ They are substitutes for holding physical gold.
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ SGBs are denominated in grams of gold with a basic unit of 1 gram.
- ✓ Investors have to pay the issue price in cash, and the bonds will be redeemed in cash on maturity.
- ✓ Investors have to pay the issue price in cash, and the bonds will be redeemed in cash on maturity.
- ✓ Eligible Subscribers: The Bonds will be restricted for sale to resident Indian entities, including individuals (in his capacity as an individual, or on behalf of minor child, or jointly with any other individual), HUFs, Trusts, Universities and Charitable Institutions.
- ✓ Tenor: The tenor of the Bond will be for a period of 8 years with an exit option in 5th, 6th and 7th year, to be exercised on the interest payment dates.
- ✓ Investment Limit:
- ✓ Minimum: 1 gram of gold.
- ✓ Maximum: 4 Kg for individuals, 4 Kg for HUF and 20 Kg for trusts.
- ✓ Interest: 2.5% per annum, paid on a half-yearly basis.
- ✓ The interest on Gold Bonds shall be taxable as per the provisions of the Income Tax Act, 1961.
- ✓ SGBs can be used as collateral for loans.

Q. What is the maximum quantity of gold that can be issued to individual/HUF?

- A) 500 gm
- B) 4 kg
- C) 10 kg
- D) 20 kg

Answer : B

Q. What is the maximum quantity of gold that can be issued to trust?

- A) 500 gm
- B) 4 kg
- C) 10 kg
- D) 20 kg

Answer : D

Q. What is the tenor of Sovereign Gold Bond?

- A) 5 years
- B) 7 years
- C) 8 years
- D) 10 years

Answer : C

Q. The Central government wants National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)-backed payments application BHIM to capture how much per cent market share on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) by 2028?

- A) 3%
- B) 4%
- C) 5%
- D) 7%

Answer : C

- ✓ Government seeks 5% UPI market share for Bhim by 2028.
- ✓ The central government wants the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)-backed payment application Bhim to grab a 5% market share on Unified Payments Interface (UPI) by 2028.
- ✓ Currently, the app has around 0.2% market share on UPI, which settles more than 16 billion transactions monthly.
- ✓ According to data from NPCI,
- ✓ PhonePe and Google Pay, together have more than 85% market share on UPI, followed by fintech platforms like Paytm, Navi, SuperMoney and Cred.

- ✓ BHIM 3.0: It is an upgraded version of BHIM.
- ✓ BHIM Unified Payment Interface (UPI) was launched in 2016 to provide a simple, fast, and secure method for cashless payments using UPI technology.

Q. IRDAI has selected 3 of its insurers as Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) for 2024-25. Identify which of the given insurer is not among them?

- A) Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Co. Ltd B) General Insurance Corporation of India
C) The New India Assurance Co. Ltd D) Life Insurance Corporation of India

Answer : A

- ✓ Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has once again designated Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC), The New India Assurance Company, and General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re) as Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs) for the year 2024-25.
- ✓ These insurers are considered critical to the stability of the Indian financial system due to their size, market importance, and interconnection with the domestic and global economy.
- ✓ D-SII Insurers for 2024-25
 1. LIC (Life Insurance Corporation of India)
 2. The New India Assurance Company
 3. GIC Re (General Insurance Corporation of India)

Q. Who has set to become India's first private reinsurer?

- A) Valueattics Reinsurance B) TeamIndus
C) Data Pattern D) MTAR Technologies Limited

Answer : A

- ✓ Valueattics Reinsurance set to become India's first private reinsurer
- ✓ Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI), the regulator approved the first reinsurance licence to a private player, Valueattics Reinsurance, backed by Prem Watsa and Kamesh Goyal.
- ✓ Valueattics Reinsurance is owned by Oben Ventures LLP, promoted by Goyal, and FAL Corporation, backed by Watsa with Fairfax Financial Holdings.
- ✓ The company will start with paidup capital of ~210 crore.
- ✓ At present, there are 13 foreign reinsurance branches (FRBs) set up by global reinsurance companies.
- ✓ Currently public sector general insurance corporation (GIC Re) is the only reinsurance company operating in India

Q. Which one of the following will set up a dedicated 'on Tap' cohort on climate change risks and sustainable finance under its regulatory sandbox initiative?

- A) RBI B) SEBI
C) IRDAI D) NABARD

Answer : A

- ✓ RBI to set up 'On Tap' cohort on climate change risks.
- ✓ RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra recently outlined plans for a dedicated 'on Tap' cohort within the RBI's Regulatory Sandbox.
- ✓ This initiative aims to encourage innovation in the financial sector related to climate change and sustainability.
- ✓ The RBI's Regulatory Sandbox allows fintech companies to test new products in a controlled environment.

- ✓ This initiative has facilitated various innovations.
- ✓ The new 'on Tap' cohort will specifically focus on climate change risks and sustainable finance.

Q. Which Central Bank of the world has won the 2025 Digital Transformation Award of London's Central Banking?

- A) Swiss National Bank B) Reserve Bank of India
C) National Bank of Belgium D) Central Bank of Brazil

Answer : B

- ✓ RBI honoured with Central Banking 'Digital Transformation Award'.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has bagged the 2025 Digital Transformation Award of the Central Banking Award announced by London-based Central Banking.
- ✓ The 12th annual Central Banking Award was announced in London on 13th March 2025 by Central Banking.
- ✓ Central Banking is a company that covers the Central Banks of the world and provides comprehensive coverage of the world's economic situation.
- ✓ RBI's Sarthi and Pravaah digital initiatives recognised by Central Banking
- ✓ The Central Banking recognised the Pravaah and Sarthi digital initiatives of the RBI for the 2025 Digital Transformation Award.
- ✓ The award credits former RBI Governor Shaktikanta Das for transforming the paper-based RBI work culture into a digital-based work culture, to standardize and streamline workflows, cut costs, and raise transparency.
- ✓ Saarthi Initiative
- ✓ Saarthi went live in January 2023 to digitise RBI's internal workflow.
- ✓ It helped RBI's staff to store and share documents securely, improving record management and increasing the options for data analysis through reports and dashboards.
- ✓ Pravaah Initiative
- ✓ After the successful adoption of the Saarthi initiative, the RBI launched the Parvaah initiative.
- ✓ The Parvaah system went live in May 2024. The Parvaah focused on providing a digital forum for external users to submit regulatory applications to the RBI. The regulatory documents are processed through the Pravaah portal and then plugged into the Sarthi database. Through the Saarthi the concerned department/staff of the RBI can process the documents. The whole system is equipped with a centralised cyber security system and digital tracking.

Q. RBI signed an agreement with the central bank of which country?

- A) Sri Lanka
B) Maldives
C) Mauritius
D) China

Answer : C

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Bank of Mauritius recently signed an MoU to promote the use of the Indian Rupee (INR) and the Mauritian Rupee (MUR) for cross-border transactions.
- ✓ The agreement aims to enable exporters and importers to invoice and pay in their domestic currencies, reducing dependency on hard currencies like the US Dollar.
- ✓ RBI permits settlement of trade transactions with Maldives in local currencies.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India announced that bilateral trade transactions with Maldives can now be settled in Indian Rupees (INR) and Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR) in addition to the ACU mechanism.

Q. What is the primary purpose of the Sarthi system launched by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)?

- A) To regulate Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs)
- B) To digitize RBI's internal workflows.
- C) To monitor foreign exchange transactions
- D) To provide a secure platform for interbank transactions

Answer : B

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India was recently selected for the UK's Digital Transformation Award 2025 for its tech innovations Sarthi and Pravaah systems.
- ✓ About Sarthi Initiative:
- ✓ The Sarthi system, named after the Hindi word for 'charioteer', was launched in January 2023 to digitise all of RBI's internal workflows.
- ✓ It enables employees to securely store and share documents, improving record management and enhancing data analysis through reports and dashboards.
- ✓ The online Sarthi Pathshala ('school') helps users become familiar with the system, and the Pathshala was rolled out alongside extensive in-person training.
- ✓ Additionally, Sarthi mitras ('friends') are people in each RBI office who know the system well and can help colleagues with any issues.

Q. Which bank is launching a dedicated unit to handle project financing for AI, fintech, and e-commerce?

- A) State Bank of India
- B) HDFC Bank
- C) ICICI Bank
- D) Axis Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ State Bank of India (SBI) is setting up a specialized unit to handle project financing for emerging sectors such as artificial intelligence (AI), e-commerce, and fintech.
- ✓ This initiative is part of SBI's broader strategy to diversify its project finance portfolio beyond traditional infrastructure projects.
- ✓ The bank plans to complete the setup of this unit within a year, recruit specialized professionals, and appoint an external consultant for its successful execution.
- ✓ The unit will be named the "Center of Excellence for Project Financing" and will provide financing solutions to new-age industries.

Q. Which organization launched the "Frontier Seed" program to enhance private sector growth in the Pacific region?

- A) World Bank
- B) United Nations
- C) IMF
- D) Asian Development Bank

Answer : D

- ✓ The "Frontier Seed" program was launched by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to promote private sector growth and economic resilience in the Pacific region.
- ✓ The initiative focuses on strengthening local capital markets and supporting sustainable business ventures.
- ✓ ADB's initial commitment of \$4 million, along with support from international partners, aims to foster economic growth, attract investment, and create jobs

A) HDFC Bank
B) IndusInd Bank
C) ICICI Bank
D) Axis Bank

- ✓ IndusInd Bank has become the official banking partner of the Professional Golf Tour of India (PGTI).
- ✓ This collaboration aims to enhance the banking experience for Ultra High Net Worth Individuals (UHNIs) and High Net Worth Individuals (HNIs) through the PIONEER banking program.

A) 1 April, 2025

B) 1 July, 2025

C) 1 August, 2025

D) 1 September, 2025

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) eased risk-weight norms for bank lending to NBFCs, reducing it from 125% to 100%, effective 1 April, 2025.
- ✓ This move should lower capital adequacy ratio requirements of banks for such lending, freeing up more funds for NBFCs.
- ✓ The measure follows a 25-basis-point (bps) repo rate cut on 7 February and is expected to ease investor concerns about systemic growth.

A) 25% B) 20%

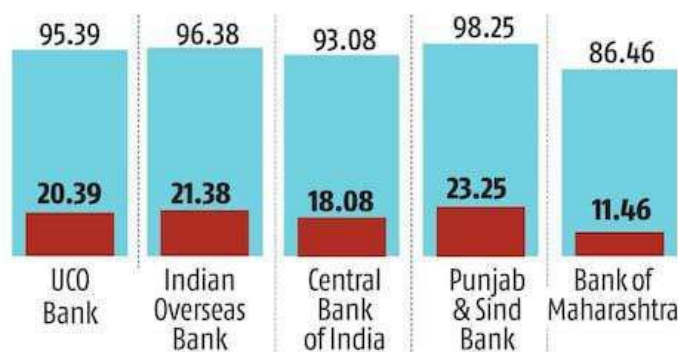
C) 30% D) 35%

- ✓ The central government is planning ahead with a strategic plan to divest 20% stake in at least five public sector banks (PSBs).
- ✓ The empanelment fees are set at ₹1 lakh for merchant bankers and ₹50,000 for legal advisors.
- ✓ According to the government's disinvestment strategy, five public-sector lenders, including Bank of Maharashtra (86.46 per cent), Indian Overseas Bank (96.38 per cent), UCO Bank (95.39 per cent), Central Bank of India (93.08 per cent), and Punjab and Sind Bank (98.25 per cent) are required to reduce their government stakes to below 75 per cent.
- ✓ This is to be compliant with the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) Minimum Public Shareholding (MPS) norms.
- ✓ Under Sebi regulations, all listed firms must maintain a minimum public shareholding of 25 per cent, with a special forbearance granted to state-owned banks, allowing them time until August 2026 to comply with this requirement.
- ✓ Under Sebi regulations, all listed firms must maintain a minimum public shareholding of 25 per cent, with a special forbearance granted to state-owned banks, allowing them time until August 2026 to comply with this requirement.
- ✓ The government currently owns 82.4 per cent share in GIC Re, 85.44 per cent in New India Assurance Company Ltd, and 96.5 per cent in Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).
- ✓ LIC has been given time till May 16, 2027 by Sebi to achieve 10 per cent public shareholding.

STATUS CHECK

■ Government shareholding
■ Needs to be sold for MPS

(in %)



Source: Banks

Q. Which bank has the highest government share?

- A) Indian Overseas Bank B) Central Bank of India
C) UCO Bank D) Punjab & Sind Bank

Answer : D

- ✓ Punjab & Sind Bank has the highest government stake, with the government holding 98.25% of its shares.

Q. Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has signed an MoU with which entity for “Partnership for financing MSMEs,”?

- A) Tata Consultancy Services B) HCL Technologies
C) Tata Capital Limited D) Tech Mahindra

Answer : C

- ✓ SIDBI signs MoU with Tata Capital Limited to strengthen financing avenues for MSMEs.
- ✓ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) and Tata Capital Limited (TCL) signed an MoU for “Partnership for financing MSMEs,”
- ✓ The partnership aims to strengthen the MSME ecosystem by providing funding for machinery and equipment financing, working capital, business loans, and loan against property.

Q. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed the depositors of New India Cooperative Bank Limited to withdraw how many rupees per depositor?

- A) Rs 50,000
B) Rs 10,000
C) Rs 25,000
D) Rs 75,000

Answer : C

- ✓ New India Cooperative Bank Depositors Allowed To Withdraw Rs 25,000.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed depositors of New India Cooperative Bank Ltd to withdraw Rs 25,000 per depositor from 27 February 2025.
- ✓ With above relaxation more than 50 per cent of the total depositors will be able to withdraw their entire balances and the remaining depositors can draw up to ₹25,000 from their deposit accounts
- ✓ The depositors may use the branch as well as the ATM channel of the bank for this withdrawal. However, the aggregate amount that can be withdrawn will be ₹25,000 per depositor or the balance available in their account whichever is lower.

Q. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the small value loan limit per borrower for Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs) to how many crore rupees?

- A) ₹3 Crore B) ₹5 Crore
C) ₹6 Crore D) ₹7 Crore

Answer : A

- ✓ RBI raises UCBs' small-value loans per borrower cap to Rs 3 crore.
- ✓ According to RBI norms, UCBs are required to have at least 50 per cent of their aggregate loans and advances consisting of small value loans by March 31, 2026.
- ✓ To provide greater flexibility to urban cooperative banks (UCBs) without compromising on regulatory objectives, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Monday raised the ceiling these banks have on small-value loans per borrower and increased the limit for a UCB's aggregate exposure to the real estate sector.
- ✓ According to RBI norms, UCBs are required to have at least 50 per cent of their aggregate loans and advances consisting of small value loans by March 31, 2026. Earlier, RBI defined small loans as loans of value not more than ₹25 lakh or 0.2 per cent of UCBs Tier-I capital, whichever is higher, subject to a maximum of ₹1 crore per borrower.
- ✓ Now, RBI has revised the definition of small value loans as loans of value not more than ₹ 25 lakh or 0.4 per cent of their Tier-I capital of UCBs, whichever is higher, subject to a ceiling of ₹3 crore per borrower.
- ✓ "Boards of UCBs, however, shall periodically review the portfolio behaviour and quality under different loan-size categories and where necessary, may consider fixing lower ceilings",
- ✓ RBI has also revised prudential limits on housing loans for UCBs, with Tier-I UCBs allowed to offer loans of up to ₹60 lakh per dwelling unit; Tier-II UCBs up to ₹1.40 crore per dwelling unit; Tier-III UCBs up to ₹2 crore per dwelling unit; and Tier-IV UCBs up to ₹3 crore per dwelling unit.
- ✓ **KEY CHANGES**
 - UCBs required to have at least 50% of aggregate loans and advances consisting small value loans by March 31, 2026.
 - RBI revised the definition of small value loans
 - Revised prudential limits on housing loans for UCBs as follow:
 - ✓ Tier-I: Up to ₹60 lakh per dwelling unit
 - ✓ Tier-II: Up to ₹1.40 cr per dwelling unit
 - ✓ Tier-III: Up to ₹2 cr per dwelling unit
 - ✓ Tier-IV: Up to ₹ 3 cr per dwelling unit

Q. Which entity has partnered with Zaggie to introduce a citizen card and visitor management systems?

- A) Stripe
B) Intuit
C) Wise
D) GIFT City

Answer : D

- ✓ GIFT City partners with Zaggle to launch prepaid citizen card and visitor management system
- ✓ Gujarat International Finance Tec-City Company Limited (GIFT City) in Gujarat has tied up with Zaggle to introduce a co-branded Prepaid Citizen Card and Visitor Management System (VMS).
- ✓ Zaggle, a Hyderabad-based business-to-business software-as-a-service company, will provide comprehensive services for the citizen card, from identification to backend banking integration, and to manage the implementation of the Visitor Management System.

Q. Who launched the Financial Literacy Week?

- A) SBI
B) RBI
C) NITI Aayog
D) SEBI

Answer : B

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched the Financial Literacy Week 2025 from February 24 to February 28, focusing on the theme "Financial Literacy – Women's Prosperity."
- ✓ This initiative aims to enhance financial awareness and empowerment among women, aligning with broader national objectives like Atmanirbhar Bharat and Viksit Bharat 2047 Vision.

Q. What is the theme of Financial Literacy Week (FLW) 2025 launched by Reserve Bank of India?

- A) Credit Discipline and Credit from Formal Institutions
- B) Go Digital, Go Secure
- C) Good Financial Behaviour, Your Saviour
- D) Financial Literacy: Women's Prosperity

Answer : D

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) launched the 10th Financial Literacy Week (FLW) 2025 with the theme "Financial Literacy: Women's Prosperity."
- ✓ The event will be observed from February 24 to 28, 2025.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has been conducting Financial Literacy Week (FLW) every year since 2016

Q. Which bank has been awarded the BSI's ISO 22301:2019 Business Continuity Management System Certification?

- A) Kotak Mahindra Bank
- B) Punjab National Bank
- C) Bank of Baroda
- D) State Bank of India

Answer : C

- ✓ Bank of Baroda receives BSI's ISO 22301:2019 Business Continuity Management System Certification.
- ✓ Bank of Baroda (Bank), one of India's leading public sector banks, has been awarded the ISO 22301:2019 Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) certification from the British Standards Institution (BSI) reaffirming that the bank's operational resilience, business continuity planning and risk management capabilities are consistent with global best practices
- ✓ The ISO 22301:2019 BCMS accreditation recognises the bank's ability to maintain robust business continuity practices, ensure uninterrupted services even during unforeseen disruptions and effectively manage risk.
- ✓ ISO 22301:2019 is an international benchmark for business continuity management, focusing on minimizing operational disruptions and ensuring swift recovery in times of crisis.

Q. According to the Union Ministry of Finance, what was the total loan sanctioned under the Kisan Credit Card as of 31st December 2024?

- A) Rs 11.05 lakh crore
- B) Rs 10.05 lakh crore
- C) Rs 12.05 lakh crore
- D) Rs 15.05 lakh crore

Answer : B

- ✓ According to the Union Ministry of Finance the total loan sanctioned under the operative Kisan Credit Card (KCC) accounts in the country has crossed the Rs 10 lakh crore figure.
- ✓ According to the Ministry the total KCC loan in March 2014 was Rs 4.26 lakh crore which has more than doubled to Rs 10.05 lakh crore as of 31st December 2024.
- ✓ Around 7.72 crore farmers in the country have benefited from the KCC loans.
- ✓ Union Budget 2025-26 and KCC

- ✓ In her 2025-26 Union Budget speech, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an increase in the short term loan provided under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme through Kisan Credit Card from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.
- ✓ About Kisan Credit Card
- ✓ The Kisan Credit Card (KCC) is a type of revolving credit facility introduced by the government to provide loans at cheaper rates to the farmers through banks.
- ✓ R.V. Gupta Committee
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India set up a “High Level Committee on Agricultural Credit through Commercial Banks” in 1997, headed by R.V.Gupta.
- ✓ Based on the recommendation of the Gupta committee, the Kisan Credit Card scheme was introduced for the farmers.
- ✓ National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) prepared the KCC model, which was officially launched by banks in 1998.
- ✓ Objective of the KCC
- ✓ The objectives of the KCC are as follows:
 - ✓ Provide timely and adequate loans to the farmers through the banking system,
 - ✓ Loans to be provided through a single window system.
 - ✓ A simplified and flexible procedure is adopted to meet the credit needs of the farmers for cultivation.
- ✓ Loans under KCC
- ✓ Loans are provided to the farmers to meet their working capital requirement as well as for their investment needs.
- ✓ Who can issue KCC in India?
- ✓ According to the RBI, the Kisan Credit Card Scheme will be issued by
 - ✓ Scheduled Commercial Banks,
 - ✓ Regional Rural Banks (RRBs),
 - ✓ Small Finance Banks and
 - ✓ Cooperatives.
- ✓ Modified Interest Subvention Scheme
- ✓ Under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme, short-term loans are provided to farmers for agricultural or allied activities through KCC at 7 % interest rates by the banks
- ✓ The maximum loan amount will be Rs 3 lakhs for cultivation.
- ✓ The loan limit for allied activities(fisheries, beekeeping, animal husbandry, etc) is Rs 2 lakh.
- ✓ The farmers will get a rebate of 3% on the loan, and if the farmer repays the loan within one year, then he will get an additional rebate of 3%. Thus he will get a loan effectively at 4%.

Q. The Union Budget 2025-26 has proposed to increase the loans provided through KCC to farmers under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme to ?

A) Rs 4 lakhs	B) Rs 3 lakhs
C) Rs 5 lakhs	D) Rs 7 lakhs

Answer : C

- ✓ In her 2025-26 Union Budget speech, Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an increase in the short term loan provided under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme through Kisan Credit Card from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh.

Q. The Kisan Credit Card was introduced in India on the recommendation of which committee?

A) RV Gupta committee	B) K. Santhanam Committee
C) Abhijit Sen Committee	D) Abid Hussain Committee

Answer : A

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India set up a “High Level Committee on Agricultural Credit through Commercial Banks” in 1997, headed by R.V.Gupta.

Q. What is the term of the newly appointed 11th Chairman of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), Tuhin Kanta Pandey?

- A) 2 years
- B) 3 years
- C) 4 years
- D) 5 years

Answer : B

- ✓ Tuhin Kanta Pandey appointed 11th Chief of SEBI.
- ✓ The Appointment Committee of the Union Cabinet has approved the appointment of Tuhin Kanta Pandey as the 11th Chairman of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
- ✓ Tuhin Kanta Pandey, currently the Finance and Revenue Secretary in the Union Ministry of Finance, will succeed Madhabi Puri Buch as the Chairman of SEBI.
- ✓ Madhab Puri Buch, the first woman appointed as the Chairman of SEBI, whose term ends on 28 February 2025.
- ✓ Madhabi Puri Buch assumed the office of the SEBI Chairman on 1st March 2022 for a three-year term.
- ✓ Tuhin Kanta has been appointed for three years from the date he assumes his office.
- ✓ Legal provision
- ✓ According to the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Terms and Conditions of Service of Chairman and Members) Rules) 1992 the :
- ✓ Maximum term of the Chairman and the whole-time member of SEBI shall not be more than 5 years;
- ✓ No person shall hold the office after attaining the age of sixty-five years;
- ✓ The government will specify the tenure of the Chairman or the whole-time member while appointing them;
- ✓ The Chairman and the whole time members are eligible for reappointment.
- ✓ About SEBI
- ✓ Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) was set up by an order of the government of India on 12 April 1988.
- ✓ It was made a statutory body in 1992, under the provisions of the Securities and Exchange Board of India Act, 1992, that came into force on January 30, 1992.
- ✓ SEBI is the regulator of the Capital market and the Commodities market in india
- ✓ Headquarters: Mumbai
- ✓ 11th Chairman : Tuhin Kanta Pandey

Q. Which post was held by Tuhin Kanta Pandey before he was appointed the Chairman of Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)?

- A) Foreign Secretary
- B) Finance and Revenue Secretary
- C) Cabinet Secretary
- D) Defence Secretary

Answer : B

- ✓ Tuhin Kanta Pandey, currently the Finance and Revenue Secretary in the Union Ministry of Finance, will succeed Madhabi Puri Buch as the Chairman of SEBI.

Q. Who has been appointed as the 11th chairperson of the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) for a three-year term?

- A) Arvind Virmani
- B) V. K. Paul
- C) V. K. Saraswat
- D) Tuhin Kanta Pandey

Answer : D

- Q.** SEBI has mandated mutual funds (MFs) to deploy the corpus collected during the new fund offering (NFO) period within how many days?

B) 20 Days

D) 25 Days

- ✓ SEBI asks MFs to deploy NFO flows within 30 days.
- ✓ The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) asset management companies (AMC) should deploy the funds garnered from investors in a new fund offering (NFO) within 30 days from the date of allotment of units.
- ✓ The move aims to encourage AMCs to collect only as much funds via NFOs as can be deployed in a reasonable time, and to discourage any mis-selling of NFOs of the mutual fund schemes.
- ✓ The new rule will come into effect from April 1, 2025.

B) Masato Kanda

D) Seiichiro Murakami

- ✓ Masato Kanda of Japan has assumed office as the 11th President of the Asian Development Bank (ADB).
- ✓ Masato Kanda succeeds fellow Japanese Masatsugu Asakawa.
- ✓ About the Asian Development Bank
- ✓ The Asian Development Bank is a regional multilateral development bank that focuses on the Asia-Pacific region.
- ✓ The Bank provides loans to the countries in the Asia Pacific region for development and climate finance. It also provides grants to low-income countries and technical support for various projects.
- ✓ It also invests in companies to promote social and economic development.
- ✓ Founded: December 19 1966, with 31 countries, including India, as its founding members.
- ✓ Members: 69, 49 of whom are from the Asia Pacific region and 20 from outside the region.
- ✓ Headquarters: Mandaluyong City, Philippines.
- ✓ 11th President : Masato Kanda (Japan)

B) \$ 300 million

D) \$ 500 million

- ✓ ADB Approves \$200 million loan to improve Kolkata infrastructure.
- ✓ The Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) has approved a \$200 million loan to the Kolkata Municipal Corporation Sustainability, Hygiene and Resilience (Sector) Project.

Q. Which bank has tied up with World Trade Center (WTC) Mumbai to enhance credit access for small businesses and boost India's exports ecosystem?

- A) Axis Bank
B) Yes Bank
C) HDFC Bank
D) ICICI Bank

Answer : B

- ✓ YES BANK in partnership with World Trade Center, Mumbai, Host Export Conclave 2025.
- ✓ YES BANK, India's sixth-largest private sector bank, in collaboration with the World Trade Center (WTC) Mumbai, the Indian chapter of the World
- ✓ Trade Centers Association, hosted the Export Conclave 2025 at YES BANK House.
- ✓ This initiative reflects YES BANK's commitment to fueling India's MSME sector, which contributes nearly one-third of the country's GDP and 45% of total exports.

Q. Which country maximum funds were raised by companies through Initial Public Offering (IPO) in 2024?

- A) Japan
B) India
C) Indonesia
D) Singapore

Answer : B

- ✓ As per the recently released Indus Valley Report 2025, India has emerged as the global leader in the Initial Public Offering (IPO) in 2024.
- ✓ The Indian companies raised \$19.5 billion through IPO in 2024, accounting for 23% of the IPO worldwide.
- ✓ The Indus Valley Report 2025 was released by the Mumbai based Blume Ventures Advisors Private Limited.
- ✓ Highlights of the Report
- ✓ In 2024 there were 268 IPOs in the country. Out of the 268 IPOs, 90 were listed on the Main board while 178 were listed on the small and medium enterprises (SME) segment of the stock exchanges.
- ✓ \$19.5 billion was raised through IPO which was 23% of the global money raised through IPOs in 2024.
- ✓ In 2024, India's largest ever IPO was issued by Hyundai Motors
- ✓ (India) Private limited.
- ✓ Rs 27,870-crore or \$3.31 billion IPO of Hyundai Motors was the second largest IPO in the world in 2024.
- ✓ The largest IPO of 2024 of \$ 5.1 billion was issued by Lineage company of the United States of America.

Q. Which company issued India's largest and world's second largest Initial Public Offering (IPO) in 2024?

- A) Hyundai Motors
B) Tata Motors
C) Mahindra & Mahindra
D) Maruti Suzuki

Answer : A

- ✓ In 2024, India's largest ever IPO was issued by Hyundai Motors (India) Private limited.
- ✓ What is a Public Issue and IPO ?
- ✓ Public Issue
- ✓ Public Issue refers to the fund raised by the companies by selling its securities like shares, debentures, bonds etc to the general public.
- ✓ The company has to follow the rules and regulation of the capital market regulator Securities Exchange Board of India (SEBI).
- ✓ The Public issue can be either Initial Public Offering (IPO) or Further on Public Offering (FPO).

Q. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has raised the Priority Sector Lending (PSL) limit for electronic Negotiable Warehouse Receipts (eNWRs) from ₹75 lakh to ____.

- A) ₹75 lakh
B) ₹80 lakh
C) ₹90 lakh
D) ₹95 lakh

Answer : C

- ✓ Credit Guarantee Scheme of ₹1,000 crores for pledge financing against e-NWRs(electronic-Negotiable Warehouse Receipts) intends to enhance the adoption of electronic warehouse receipts in agricultural markets.
- ✓ e KUN Program: e Kisan Upaj Nidhi (e KUN) program gives low interest loans through e NWRs to deter farmers from distress selling under the Digital India Mission.
- ✓ Role of NeRL with Expansion of Warehouses
- ✓ The NeRL Effect
- ✓ The National e Repository Limited expects more warehouses to register under WDRA with 88% market share.
- ✓ Warehouses Registration
- ✓ There are around 1 lakh warehouses in India, of which 40,000 are public.
- ✓ 5,000 warehouses were registered by WDRA but only 2,500 of them are connected to e NWR issuance through NeRL or its competitor, Countrywide Commodity Repository.
- ✓ RBI Support & Financing Ramp Up
- ✓ PSL Limits
- ✓ RBI has increased the PSL limits for e NWRs from ₹75 lakh to ₹90 lakh.
- ✓ NeRL has requested a further increase of ₹2 crore for Farmer Producer Organisations (FPOs) and ₹4 crore for traders.
- ✓ Loan Facilitation & Growth
- ✓ Loans worth ₹10,000 crore were facilitated by banks via e NWRs.
- ✓ Low NPAs suggest secure lending under the system.
- ✓ Expected lending through NeRL e-NWRs is projected to increase by 33% this fiscal to ₹4,000 crore (₹3,000 crore last year).
- ✓ Getaways
- ✓ The government envisages that the lending via e NWR pledge finance will touch ₹1 lakh crore within 10 years.

Q. What is the purpose of the ₹1,000 crores allocation for the Credit Guarantee scheme for e-NWRs?

- A) To provide subsidies for fertilizers
- B) To Improve agriculture financing and credit access for farmers
- C) To construct new warehouse across India
- D) To promote organic farming

Answer : B

- ✓ Credit Guarantee Scheme of ₹1,000 crores for pledge financing against e-NWRs(electronic-Negotiable Warehouse Receipts) intends to enhance the adoption of electronic warehouse receipts in agricultural markets

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the MITRA Platform:

1. It assists investors in tracking and reclaiming inactive or unclaimed mutual fund folios.
2. It is an initiative of the Reserve Bank of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) introduced a new digital platform called MITRA.
- ✓ Mutual Fund Investment Tracing and Retrieval Assistant (MITRA) will assist investors in tracking and reclaiming inactive or unclaimed mutual fund folios.
- ✓ Objective: The objective of the platform is to encourage investors to search for forgotten MF investments and update KYC as per the current norms.
- ✓ The platform addresses a growing concern wherein investors, over time, lose track of their mutual fund investments lack of updated contact information, or unawareness of investments made in their name.
- ✓ It is developed by the Registrar and Transfer Agent (RTAs) to provide investors with a searchable database of inactive and unclaimed mutual fund folios at an industry-level which will empower the investors.
- ✓ SEBI has also revised the mandate of the Unit Holder Protection Committee (UHPC) under Mutual Funds rules.
- ✓ The UHPC will now be responsible for reviewing inactive folios along with unclaimed dividends and redemptions, ensuring proactive steps are taken to reduce such cases.

Q. Consider the following statements about the RBI's Dollar-Rupee (USD/INR) swap auction:

1. This is being done in order to increase rupee liquidity in the market.
2. The tenor for swap is five years.

Which of the above statements is/are correct?

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to inject Rupee liquidity for longer duration through long-term USD-INR Buy/Sell swap auction of \$10 billion for a tenor of three years.
- ✓ This will be the second swap auction by the RBI in a month with it infusing \$5.1 billion through a six-month swap on January 31.
- ✓ About the Dollar/Rupee Swap Auction
- ✓ A dollar/rupee swap auction involves the RBI exchanging dollars for rupees and vice versa. It allows the central bank to provide liquidity in rupees while managing foreign exchange reserves. This specific auction is notable for its three-year duration, which indicates a long-term strategy to stabilise liquidity.

Q. Who set up the Dinesh Khara Committee, recently seen in the news?

A) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)

B) Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI)

C) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

D) None of the above.

Answer : B

- ✓ The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) recently set up a seven-member committee headed by former chairman of SBI Dinesh Khara to examine proposed amendments to the Insurance Act, 1938, and suggest a framework for its implementation.
- ✓ About Dinesh Khara Committee:

- ✓ It is a high-powered seven-member committee set up by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority (IRDAI).
- ✓ Purpose: To review proposed amendments to the Insurance Act of 1938 and recommend a regulatory framework for their implementation.
- ✓ The committee is formed as the Union government prepares to introduce the Insurance Amendment Bill to Parliament.
- ✓ The proposed amendments include increasing the foreign direct investment (FDI) cap in the insurance sector from 74% to 100%, reducing paid-up capital requirements, introducing a composite licence system, and streamlining regulatory processes.

Q. Bima-ASBA (Bima Applications Supported by Blocked Amount) was in news recently, it was introduced by which of the following organizations/institutes?

A) RBI	B) SEBI
C) NPCI	D) IRDAI

Answer : D

- ✓ IRDAI Introduces Bima-ASBA for UPI-Based Insurance Payments.
- ✓ Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has introduced Bima-ASBA (Bima Applications Supported by Blocked Amount) to simplify premium payments for life and health insurance policies. This initiative, effective from March 1, 2025, allows policyholders to authorize a one-time UPI mandate (OTM) to block funds in their bank accounts for premium payments.
- ✓ The Bima-ASBA system works through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI), allowing policyholders to set up a one-time mandate (OTM) for their premium payments. Instead of directly debiting the amount, the insurer only blocks the funds in the bank account.
- ✓ All life and health insurers must offer the Bima-ASBA facility by March 1, 2025.
- ✓ The Bima-ASBA facility is free of charge.
- ✓ Funds Blocked for a Maximum of 14 Days

Q. State Bank of India (SBI) has set a target to achieve net-zero emissions by which year?

A) 2040	B) 2047
C) 2055	D) 2070

Answer : C

- ✓ The State Bank of India (SBI) is targeting to be Net-Zero in emissions by 2055, the year the bank celebrates the centenary year.
- ✓ SBI Chairman Challa Sreenivasulu Setty announcement came at the 'SBI Green Marathon Season 5' event which he flagged off here with more than 10,000 runners-cum 'Green India' ambassadors participating in the 5km, 10km, and 21 km categories.
- ✓ Since its inception in 2018, SBI Green Marathon has grown into a symbol of the bank's solid dedication towards India's 'Mission LiFE' 'Lifestyle for Environment', underscoring its long-standing commitment to a sustainable future

SBI IN NEWS 2024-25

- State Bank of India (SBI) has set a target to achieve net-zero emissions by 2055.
- SBI Singapore's YONO-UPI integration with PayNow will allow for more transactions from Singapore to India.
- YONO is an abbreviation for "You Only Need One" .
- PayNow is a payment system in Singapore.
- RBI has superseded the board of directors of New India Cooperative Bank, and appointed Shreekant, a former chief general manager of State Bank of India (SBI), as the 'Administrator' to oversee the bank's operations.

- SBI Mutual Fund, in collaboration with State Bank of India (SBI), has introduced the JanNivesh SIP scheme, allowing micro systematic investment plans (SIPs) starting from ₹250.
- State Bank of India has a network of 22,542 branches across the country as of March 2024.
- SBI has 65,000 ATMs and 85,000 business correspondents.
- SBI plans to increase the threshold of the instant loan scheme for MSMEs from Rs 5 crore.
- State Bank of India (SBI) has raised ₹5,000 crore through its first Basel III compliant Additional Tier 1 bond issuance for the current financial year at a coupon rate of 7.98%.
- The tenor of these bonds is perpetual with call option after 10 years.
- State Bank of India (SBI) was recognised as the Best Bank in India for 2024 by Global Finance Magazine of the US at its 31st Annual Best Bank Awards event, Washington USA.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) retained the State Bank of India, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs).
- SBI has been shifted from bucket 3 to bucket 4, and HDFC Bank from bucket 1 to bucket 2. ICICI Bank continues to maintain its previous categorization of bucket 1.
- State Bank of India (SBI) raised ₹50,000 crore through domestic bonds in the financial year 2024-2025.
- This was done through a combination of AT1 bonds, tier 2 bonds, and long-term infrastructure bonds.
- AT1 bonds: ₹5,000 crore
- Tier 2 bonds: ₹15,000 crore
- Long-term infrastructure bonds: ₹30,000 crore.
- All the bonds had a tenor of 15 years, except for the AT1 bonds, which were perpetual.
- The AT1 and tier 2 bonds had a call option after 10 years or any anniversary date thereafter.
- State Bank of India (SBI) has launched a nation-wide drive to re-activate inoperative accounts, including Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY) accounts, in a bid to improve the proportion of current account, savings account (CASA) deposits in domestic deposits.
- State Bank of India recently launched two new deposit schemes namely, Har Ghar Lakhpati and SBI Patrons, designed to provide customers with greater financial flexibility and enhanced value.
- About Har Ghar Lakhpati Scheme:
- It is a pre-calculated recurring deposit scheme designed to help customers to accumulate Rs 1 lakh or multiples thereof.
- The minimum tenure of recurring deposits is 12 months (one year), and the maximum is 120 months (10 years).
- About SBI Patrons Scheme:
- This is a specialized fixed deposit scheme tailored for senior citizens aged 80 years and above.
- State Bank of India (SBI) Chairman C.S. Setty heads a committee to recommend a new list of accounts for transfer to the National Asset Reconstruction Company Limited (NARCL).
- State Bank of India (SBI) has begun offering collateral-free study loans of up to ₹50 lakh for students heading out to top foreign universities.
- Rama Mohan Rao Amara has been appointed as the Managing Director of State Bank of India (SBI) for a term of three years
- SBI introduces vehicle loan product for Uber's fleet partners.
- SBI is set to raise up to \$1.25 billion, the largest dollar loan in India, for corporate needs in GIFT City.
- Adani Group has committed a 51% stake in the Navi Mumbai International Airport (NMIAL) to the State Bank of India (SBI), securing a funding facility of INR 12,770 crore for the airport's construction.
- SBI is planning to sell its 24 per cent stake in YES Bank, worth Rs 18,420 crore (\$2.2 billion) by the end of March 2025.
- STATE BANK OF INDIA (SBI)
- Founded : 1 July 1955
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Chairman : Challa Sreenivasulu Setty
- Imperial Bank of India was previous name of SBI
- The presidency Banks of Bengal, Bombay and Madras with merged in 1921 to Imperial Bank of India.
- Tagline of State Bank of India
- 1. Pure Banking Nothing Else

2. With you all the way
 3. A bank of the common man
 4. The banker to every Indian
 5. The Nation banks on us.
- It is one of the largest and oldest banks in India.

Q. Which bank has launched India's first salary account with cyber fraud protection for PSU employees?

A) HDFC Bank	B) Yes Bank
C) ICICI Bank	D) Axis Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ HDFC Bank launches India's first salary account with cyber fraud protection for PSU employees
- ✓ HDFC Bank's Speciale suite offers 'Anmol Savings Account' with features such as cyber fraud protection, family zero-balance accounts, comprehensive insurance, exclusive debit card benefits and more.
- ✓ Under its Speciale suite, senior citizens receive cyber fraud protection of up to Rs. 1.5 lakh, while professionals get coverage ranging from Rs. 25,000 to Rs. 50,000. Another variant, Speciale Gold Women, includes a cancer cover of up to Rs. 5 lakh.

HDFC BANK IN NEWS 2024-25

- HDFC Bank launches India's first salary account with cyber fraud protection for PSU employees .
- RBI has given its approval to HDFC Bank group to acquire “aggregate holding” of up to 9.50 per cent of the share capital or voting rights in Kotak Mahindra Bank, AU Small Finance Bank and Capital Small Finance Bank.
- DPIIT signs MoU with HDFC Bank to strengthen startup ecosystem and foster innovation.
- HDFC Bank market cap crosses ₹14 lakh crore for the first time as stock hits fresh high.
- HDFC Bank is India's third most-valuable listed company after IT major Tata Consultancy Services (TCS), which has a market cap of ₹15.60 lakh crore and Reliance Industries (RIL) with a market cap of ₹17.50 lakh crore
- HDFC Bank has become the first domestic bank to execute a gold forward deal from GIFT City, Gujarat.
- The deal was executed by HDFC BANK GIFT City IBU in collaboration with Hindustan Platinum Pvt.
- HDFC Bank will sell about ₹10,000-crore worth stake in the proposed initial public offering (IPO) of its NBFC arm HDB Financial Services (HDBFS).
- Morgan Stanley and Citigroup recently purchased 43.75 lakh shares of HDFC Bank for over ₹755 crore through open market transactions.
- UBS Group has acquired 30.72 lakh shares of HDFC Bank for over Rs 543 crore through an open market transaction.
- HDFC Bank's Parivartan initiative aims to increase the income of five lakh marginal farmers by 2025
- HDFC Bank inaugurates first branch in Singapore.
- HDFC Bank has revised its Marginal Cost of Lending Rate (MCLR) effective September 7, 2024. The updated MCLR rates now range between 9.10% and 9.45% per annum.
- International Finance Corporation (IFC) has provided \$500 million loan to HDFC Bank for extending microloans to “underserved women” in rural and semi-urban India.
- Atanu Chakraborty's re-appointment as part-time Chairman of HDFC Bank for three years, effective from May 5, 2024, to May 4, 2027, has been approved by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- HDFC becomes first private bank to open branch in Lakshadweep.
- HDFC Bank's 'Vigil Aunty' shares how she helps people 'Stay Safe, Stay Vigil' at Cyber Security Summit.
- HDFC BANK
- Founded : 1994

- Founder : Hasmukhbhai Parekh
- HQ : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- MD & CEO : Sashidhar Jagdishan
- Tagline : We understand your world

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the RBI's Digital Payments Index:

1. It is constructed to measure the extent of digitisation of payments across the country.
2. It has been constructed with March 2020 as the base year.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) digital payments index (DPI) rose to 465.33 as of September 2024, compared to 445.5 in March 2024, reflecting the rapid adoption of digital payments in the country.
- ✓ It has been constructed by the RBI to measure the extent of digitisation of payments across the country.
- ✓ It is based on multiple parameters and reflects the expansion of various digital payment modes accurately.
- ✓ It is a first-of-its kind index to measure the spread of digital payments across the country.
- ✓ It was first launched in January 2021.
- ✓ The DPI index indicates the extent of digitisation of payments across the country.
- ✓ Base Year: It has been constructed with March 2018 as the base period, i.e., the DPI score for March 2018 is set at 100.
- ✓ The DPI index comprises five broad parameters that enable the measurement of deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different time periods. The parameters include:
 - ✓ Payment enablers (25 percent weightage in the index)
 - ✓ Demand-side and supply-side payment infrastructure factors (10 per cent each)
 - ✓ Payment performance (45 per cent)
 - ✓ Consumer centricity (5 percent)
- ✓ Each of the parameters has sub-parameters, which, in turn, consist of various measurable indicators.
- ✓ Payment performance is the highest weighted parameter in the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) Digital Payments Index (DPI), with a weight of 45%.

Q. What is the maximum amount that banks can charge from customers per transaction after free ATM transaction are over?

- A) Rs 19 B) Rs 20
C) Rs 22 D) Rs 21

Answer : C

- ✓ RBI considering hiking ATM cash transaction, interchange fees.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is reportedly considering increasing the maximum fee that banks can charge for cash transactions beyond the free monthly limit, as well as raising the ATM interchange fee.
- ✓ This move comes after recommendations from the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and an RBI-formed committee.
- ✓ NPCI, after consulting with industry players, has suggested raising the maximum fee for cash transactions from ₹21 to ₹22 per transaction once customers exceed their free monthly limit.
- ✓ The NPCI has also proposed increasing the ATM interchange fee from ₹17 to ₹19 for cash transactions and from ₹6 to ₹7 for non-cash transactions.
- ✓ The RBI and NPCI have not yet responded to queries about these changes.

- Bank of Baroda 's wholly -owned subsidiary for cards, 'Bob financial solutions Ltd, has been rebranded as 'BOBCARD ltd' with tagline 'Credit Reimagined
- Indiabulls Housing Finance has rebranded itself as Sammaan Capital Ltd.
- Kotak General Insurance has re-branded itself as Zurich Kotak General Insurance.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID), recently seen in the news:

1. It is a specialized Development Finance Institution in India aimed at supporting the country's infrastructure sector.
2. It is regulated and supervised by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
3. The authorized share capital of the NaBFID is Rs one lakh crore.
4. The initial paid-up capital of NaBFID is Rs 20,000 crore.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1, 2 and 3 only B) 2, 3 and 4 only
C) 3 and 4 only D) 1, 2, 3 and 4

Answer : D

- ✓ The Finance Minister recently said the National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) will set up a partial credit enhancement facility for corporate bonds in the infrastructure sector.
- ✓ About National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID):
- ✓ It is a specialized Development Finance Institution in India aimed at supporting the country's infrastructure sector, which can significantly gain from an enabling credit flow by means of attractive instruments and channelized investment.
- ✓ NaBFID was set up in 2021, by an Act of the Parliament (The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development Act, 2021),
- ✓ Objectives: Addressing the gaps in long-term non-recourse finance for infrastructure development, strengthening the development of bonds and derivatives markets in India, and sustainably boosting the country's economy.
- ✓ Regulated by: It shall be regulated and supervised by RBI as an All-India Financial Institution (AIFI).
- ✓ The principal idea behind the setup of NaBFID is to provide a dedicated and specialized institution focused on addressing the long-term financing needs of the infrastructure sector in India.
- ✓ KV Kamath is the chairman of NaBFID.
- ✓ Rajkiran Rai named as new MD of NaBFID .
- ✓ NaBFID is a newly set up development financial institution (DFIs) in India.
- ✓ The authorized share capital of the NaBFID is Rs one lakh crore. The initial paid-up capital of NaBFID is Rs 20,000 crore.
- ✓ The headquarters of NaBFID is in Mumbai

Q. CreditAccess Grameen has secured approval for a \$50 million commitment from which organisation?

- A) International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
B) International Development Association (IDA)
C) International Finance Corporation (IFC)
D) Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)

Answer : C

- ✓ CreditAccess Grameen has secured approval for a \$50 million commitment from the International Finance Corporation (IFC).
- ✓ This transaction is a testament to CreditAccess Grameen's ongoing efforts to strengthen its asset liability management (ALM) position given flexible repayment structures and maintaining geographical diversification to hedge against market volatility.

IFC IN NEWS 2024-25

- CreditAccess Grameen has secured approval for a \$50 million commitment from the International Finance Corporation (IFC).
- IFC invests Rs 630 cr in NDR InvIT to bolster sustainable warehousing
- IFC to partner with Bajaj Finance to pump in \$400 mn for climate finance.
- IFC extends \$500 mn loan to Axis Bank to fund green projects in India
- International Finance Corporation(IFC) has provided \$ 500 million loan to HDFC Bank to provide loans to the women microfinance borrowers .
- International Finance Corporation, a subsidiary of World bank, will provide USD 100 million loan to the IIFL Home Finance Limited (IIFL HFL) .
- International Finance Corporation (IFC) has agreed to invest \$105 million (around Rs 871 crore) in the non-convertible debentures of Brookfield's Bikaner Solar Power project in Rajasthan.
- International Finance Corporation
- The International Finance Corporation was set up by the World Bank in 1956 to support the private sector of the developing countries who are members of the World Bank.
- The IFC invests in the private sector by investing in their capital instruments like shares or debt instruments like debentures.
- IFC is a part of the World Bank group, which also includes the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) and the International Development Association.
- The headquarters of IFC: Washington D.C. the United States of America
- Managing Director: Makhtar Diop.
- Members: 186 countries.

Q. Fintech firm Finvasia in collaboration with which bank has launched Jumpp Super App for Digital Finance?

- A) Yes Bank
B) HDFC Bank
C) Axis Bank
D) ICICI Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ Fintech firm Finvasia, in collaboration with YES Bank, has launched Jumpp, an AI-powered financial super app aimed at simplifying digital finance.
- ✓ Jumpp integrates banking, payments, savings, investing, and borrowing into a single platform.
- ✓ The app supports account aggregation, allowing users to consolidate financial accounts into one dashboard.

YES BANK IN NEWS 2024-25

- Fintech firm Finvasia, in collaboration with YES Bank, has launched Jumpp, an AI-powered financial super app aimed at simplifying digital finance.
- Yes Bank has partnered with Vegapay to launch a new platform called 'Credit Line on UPI'.
- SBI is planning to sell its 24 per cent stake in YES Bank, worth Rs 18,420 crore (\$2.2 billion) by the end of March 2025.
- YES BANK has entered into a co-lending partnership with Newtap Finance to provide personalised financing solutions to creditworthy individuals on CRED.
- RBI's approval for up to a 51% stake sale in Yes Bank opens an exit for SBI, LIC and others owning stakes in the private lender that survived a near-death experience four years ago.
- NPCI has approved Paytm's migration to new payment service provider (PSP) bank handles:

- The four banks that will act as PSPs are State Bank of India (SBI), Axis Bank, HDFC Bank, and YES Bank.
- YES BANK
- Founded : 2004
- Founder : Rana Kapoor and Ashok Kapoor
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Chairman : Sunil Mehta
- MD & CEO : Prashant Kumar
- YES BANK launches new logo, to roll out campaign 'Life Ko Banao Rich'.

Q. Which company secured the second position in the FutureBrand Index 2024, surpassing Apple?

- A) Microsoft
B) Reliance industries
C) Samsung
D) Netflix

Answer : B

- ✓ Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) secured the 2nd spot in the FutureBrand Index 2024, surpassing global giants such as Apple, Nike, and Disney.
- ✓ Samsung topped the rankings.
- ✓ Apple, Nike, ASML, and Danaher took up third to sixth spot.
- ✓ Reliance's rise from 13th place in 2023 to 2nd position in 2024 reflects its strong brand perception, diversification into key sectors like energy, telecommunications, and retail, and its growing global influence.

RIL IN NEWS 2024-25

- Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) ranked second in the 2024 FutureBrand Index, surpassing Apple and Nike.
- Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) acquired a 49% stake in the London-based Oval Invincibles cricket team.
- Reliance Consumer Products has opened a new Campa and beverages bottling plant in Guwahati with local partner Jericho.
- Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) launched "Campa" in the UAE.
- Reliance's Campa soft drink brand and JioStar are partnering as co-powered sponsors for the 2025 Indian Premier League (IPL).
- Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) has recently acquired the iconic FMCG brand "Velvette", .
- Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) launched a new sports drink, Spinner, co-created with cricket legend Muttiah Muralitharan.
- Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) acquired the packaged food brand SIL Foods.
- Reliance Industries is set to provide Rs. 100 crore in funding to the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR).
- Reliance Power plans to invest over Rs 10,000 crore in a solar plant and an integrated solar manufacturing facility in Andhra Pradesh.
- Reliance Industries acquired Karkinos Healthcare for Rs 375 crore to expand its healthcare services
- Reliance Industries and Walt Disney Company have finalized a \$8.5 billion merger of their Indian media assets.
- Reliance industries will be setting up 500 compressed bio gas plants with an investment of Rs.65,000 cr in Andhra Pradesh over the next four-five years
- Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) was the top-ranked Indian company in the 2024 Fortune Global 500 list. RIL was ranked 88th in the world, and was India's most profitable company in 2024.
- Reliance Industries Limited (RIL)
- Founded : 8 May 1973

- Founder : Dhirubhai Ambani
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra,
- CMD : Mukesh Ambani
- Owner : Mukesh Ambani (50.49%)
- Director : Nita Dalal Ambani
- Subsidiaries
- Jio Platforms (67.03%)
- Jio Payments Bank (70%).

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Grameen Credit Score:

1. It aims to formalize self help group (SHG) transactions within the central credit system of India.
2. It will help in promoting financial inclusion for self help group (SHGs) women entrepreneurs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Finance minister of India announced Grameen credit score scheme in the union budget 2025.
- ✓ It aims to formalize self help group (SHG) transactions within the central credit system of India. Thereby allowing leading financial institutions to better assess creditworthiness.
- ✓ The objective behind this scheme is to promote financial inclusion for self help group (SHGs) women entrepreneurs.
- ✓ This score, hence, represents a significant shift in analyzing the creditworthiness of millions of women involved in the SHGs across India's rural areas.
- ✓ The introduction of the Grameen credit score is expected to bring several positive changes:
- ✓ Enhanced financial access: It will open up new financial opportunities for rural women. Thus, enabling them to expand their businesses and improve their livelihoods. It will also introduce them with concepts like credit cards, creditworthiness, loan EMIs, loan repayment etc.
- ✓ Customized financial products: The initiative will be supplemented by customized credit cards for micro-enterprises, with limits of up to ₹5 lakh. This will propel grassroot level financial empowerment.

Q. The Indian government has extended the Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) Scheme till –?

- A) 31st March 2026
B) 31st March 2028
C) 31st March 2029
D) 31st March 2030

Answer : A

- ✓ Government extends PM AASHA scheme till 2025-26.
- ✓ Government of India has extended the continuation of the integrated Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) Scheme till 31st March 2026.
- ✓ This was done to make the tenure of the PM-AASHA co-terminus with the term of the 15th Finance Commission, which ends on 31st March 2026.
- ✓ The government of india has approved certain changes in the scheme as follows;
- ✓ The central government has allowed 100 % procurement of Tur, Urad and Masur under the Price Support Scheme (PSS) in identified states for the procurement year 2024-25.
- ✓ The Tur pulses will be procured from farmers in Andhra Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Haryana, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Telangana, and Uttar Pradesh.

- ✓ The Tur will be procured through central government agencies, the National Agricultural Cooperative Marketing Federation of India (NAFED) and the National Cooperative Consumer Federation of India(NCCF).
- ✓ India is the world's largest importer of pulses in the world.
- ✓ About the Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanrakshHan Abhiyan' (PM-AASHA)
- ✓ The Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay SanrakshHan Abhiyan' (PM-AASHA) is a market intervention scheme launched by the central government in 2018.
- ✓ Component of the PM -AASHA
- ✓ The PM-AASHA scheme comprises the Price Support Scheme (PSS), Price Deficiency Payment Scheme (PDPS) and Private Procurement and Stockist Scheme (PPSS).
- ✓ Price Support Scheme
- ✓ Crops covered - pulses(gram, tur, moong, urad, lentil), oilseeds(groundnut, rapeseed-mustard, soyabean, sesamum, sunflower, safflower, nigerseed)) and Copra.

EXTENDED TIMELINE IN NEWS 2024-25

- NPCI has extended the deadline for implementing a 30 per cent volume cap on third-party Unified Payments Interface (UPI) apps by another two years till December 31, 2026.
- Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman's announcement to extend the deadline for incorporation of startups by five years until April 1, 2030.
- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced an extension of the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) till 2028, with an outlay of Rs 67,000 crore in the Union Budget 2025-26.
- Union Cabinet has approved the extension of the National Health Mission (NHM) for an additional five years (2025 to 2030).
- The Indian government has announced an extension of the free import policy for Tur/Pigeon Peas (Cajanus Cajan) until March 31, 2026.
- Union Cabinet has approved the extension of the tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK) for three more years from 1.04.2025 to 31.03.2028.
- Government of India has extended the continuation of the integrated Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) Scheme till 31st March 2026.
- Union Cabinet in a meeting held in New Delhi and chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has extended the tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis for a period of three years till 31 March 2028.
- The government of India has extended the NITI Aayog's flagship Atal Innovation Mission till 31st March 2028.
- The government of India has extended the centrally sponsored Smart Cities Mission until 31 March 2025.
- The government approves the continuation of the Rebate of State and Central Taxes and Levies (RoSCTL) export incentive scheme for apparel and made-ups until March 31, 2026.
- Government approves extension of subsidy scheme on sugar supplied to AAY families by 2 years till March 2026.
- Union Cabinet has extended the Animal Husbandry Infrastructure Development Fund (AHIDF) till 2025-26.
- LIC Granted Extension till 2032 to Achieve 25% Public Shareholding.
- Ministry of Finance has granted a one-time exemption to Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) regarding the 25% Minimum Public Shareholding (MPS) rule. The decision allows LIC to achieve the mandated 25% MPS within 10 years of its listing, extending the deadline to May 2032.
- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced a two-year extension of the Payments Infrastructure Development Fund (PIDF) scheme until December 31, 2025.
- The Centre has extended the import duty exemption on masur dal (lentils) by another year till March 31, 2025.
- The Union Cabinet approved to keep the Fast Track Special Courts going from April 1, 2023, to March 31, 2026.

- Q.** Which bank has received RBI approval to establish a branch in GIFT City?
- A) IDFC FIRST Bank B) South Indian Bank
- C) Bank of Maharashtra D) State Bank of India

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) to establish a branch in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City), Gujarat.
- ✓ This approval will enhance the bank's offshore banking operations and align with its expansion plans in the region.
- ✓ The bank already operates 101 branches in Gujarat and is targeting a 25% business growth to ₹15,000 crore by the second quarter of FY25.

1. It aims to accelerate the development of indigenous space technology, reducing reliance on imported solutions.
2. It consists of a corpus of Rs 500 crore to support the growth of India's space startups.
3. It is an initiative of the Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe).

A) 1 and 2 only
B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1, 2 and 3
D) None

- ✓ Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Centre (IN-SPACe) has launched a new fund called Technology Adoption Fund.
- ✓ About Technology Adoption Fund:
- ✓ It consists of a corpus of Rs 500 crore to support the growth of India's space startups.
- ✓ This fund aims to accelerate the development of indigenous space technology, reducing reliance on imported solutions.
- ✓ Key features of Technology Adoption Fund
- ✓ The fund will offer financial support of up to 60 per cent of the project cost for startups and MSMEs, and 40 per cent for larger industries, with a maximum funding cap of Rs 25 Crores per project.
- ✓ It is also open to all eligible Non-Government Entities (NGEs)/companies that are ready to demonstrate the commercial potential of their innovations.

A) Users can access data related to SAARC countries.

B) It enables users to apply for RBI loans directly.

C) It provides information on macroeconomic statistics.

D) It provides time series data with graphical representations.

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- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has launched of an 'RBIDATA' mobile app, which offers macroeconomic and financial statistics-related data about the Indian economy.
- ✓ Key features of the RBIDATA app
 1. The new mobile application will give users access to 11,000 different economic data sets, which will give them a comprehensive overview of the health of the Indian economy.
 2. Users can view the time series data in the form of graphs or charts and download the data for their own analysis.
 3. The mobile application includes details like data sources, units of measurement, frequency, and recent updates, along with additional notes, which are there to help the users understand the graphs and charts better.
 4. The application will also have a "Popular Reports" section featuring frequently viewed reports.
 5. The application also has a "Search" option, which allows users to access data directly from the home screen without having to navigate across sections or publications.
 6. The mobile application will also give the user the option of "Banking Outlet" to use to find the nearest banking facilities within 20 km of their location.
 7. The users can also access data about SAARC countries using the "SAARC Finance" option link in the application.

Q. Who has been appointed as the new CEO of Nokia, effective April 1, 2025?

A) Sari Baldauf	B) Pekka Lundmark
C) Justin Hotard	D) Pat Gelsinger

Answer : C

- ✓ Justin Hotard has been named the new CEO of Nokia, effective April 1, 2025, succeeding Pekka Lundmark.
- ✓ Nokia
- ✓ Founders : Fredrik Idestam, Leo Mechelin & Eduard Polón
- ✓ Headquarters : Espoo, Finland
- ✓ CEO : Justin Hotard.
- ✓ Nokia, the telecom company, belongs to Finland.

Q. Who has been appointed as the Principal Secretary-2 to Prime Minister Narendra Modi?

A) Bimal Jalan	B) Yaga Venugopal Reddy
C) C Rangarajan	D) Shaktikanta Das

Answer : D

- ✓ Shaktikanta Das, the former Governor of the Reserve Bank of India, has been appointed as Principal Secretary-2 to Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ According to an order from the Cabinet Appointment Committee (ACC), Das will work alongside PK Mishra, who holds the position of Principal Secretary-1 to the Prime Minister.
- ✓ He took up this role following his retirement as RBI Governor in December 2024, after a six-year tenure during which he managed significant economic challenges, including the COVID pandemic and fluctuations in foreign exchange reserves.
- ✓ Shri Shaktikanta Das assumed charge as the 25th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India effective December 12, 2018.
- ✓ Immediately prior to his current assignment, he was acting as Member, 15th Finance Commission and G20 Sherpa of India.
- ✓ Shri Das has also served as India's Alternate Governor in the World Bank, Asian Development Bank (ADB), New Development Bank (NDB) and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).
- ✓ He has represented India in international fora like the IMF, G20, BRICS, SAARC, etc.

Q. Which is the institution that insures the deposits up to Rs 5 lakhs in banks?

- A) DICGC
- B) BRBNMPL
- C) ReBIT
- D) IFTAS

Answer : A

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed severe restrictions on New India Co-operative Bank, barring it from issuing new loans, accepting fresh deposits, or allowing withdrawals for six months.
- ✓ Key Highlights of RBI's Directive
- ✓ Loan and Deposit Ban : The bank cannot issue new loans or accept fresh deposits from customers.
- ✓ Withdrawal Restrictions : Depositors cannot withdraw money from their accounts for six months.
- ✓ Administrator Appointment : RBI has removed the board and appointed Shreekant, a former SBI Chief General Manager, as the Administrator for a period of 12 months.
- ✓ Committee of Advisors : A three-member advisory committee has been set up to assist the Administrator.
- ✓ Deposit Insurance Protection : Depositors are eligible to claim up to ₹5 lakh under the Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation (DICGC) scheme.
- ✓ Eligible depositors will be able to claim up to ₹5 lakh under the deposit insurance scheme.

Q. Which company has partnered with Amazon Web Services to Drive Smart & Consumer-Centric Energy Transition in India?

- A) Adani Power
- B) Reliance Power
- C) India Power
- D) Tata Power

Answer : D

- ✓ Tata Power partners with Amazon Web Services to Drive Smart & Consumer-Centric Energy Transition in India.
- ✓ Tata Power- one of India's largest integrated power companies with presence across T&D, Generation, Trading, Renewables (including Manufacturing), and Energy as a Service (EaaS) - has embarked on a data-driven transformation with Amazon Web Services (AWS) to accelerate the country's transition to a greener, smarter, and more consumer-centric energy ecosystem

Q. What is the maximum limit of Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in Insurance sector in India?

- A) 74%
- B) 47%
- C) 100%
- D) 49%

Answer : C

- ✓ The Union Finance Ministry released a consultation paper proposing to raise the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) limit in the insurance sector from 74% to 100%.
- ✓ The FDI limit in the insurance sector was previously increased from 49% to 74% in February 2021.

Q. Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) recently launched the iconic Indian soft drink "Campa Cola" in which country?

- A) Saudi Arabia
- B) Qatar
- C) UAE
- D) Kuwait

Answer : C

- ✓ Reliance Consumer Products Limited (RCPL) launched "Campa" in the UAE.

- Q.** Who has retained its position as India's most valuable company for the fourth consecutive year, as per the latest report released by Axis Bank's private banking unit Burgundy Private and Hurun India?

B) State Bank of India

D) Tata Consultancy Services

- ✓ Reliance Industries secures top spot in Burgundy Private-Hurun India rankings.
- ✓ Reliance Industries (RIL) has retained its position as India's most valuable company for the fourth consecutive year, as per the latest report released by Axis Bank's private banking unit Burgundy Private and Hurun India.
- ✓ The Mukesh Ambani-led company was followed by Tata Consultancy Services and HDFC Bank.
- ✓ The 2024 Burgundy Private and Hurun India 500 report recorded the total market capitalization of Reliance Industries at Rs 17.5 lakh crore, higher than Tata Consultancy Services and HDFC Bank which were ranked second and third with a market value of Rs 16.1 lakh crore and Rs 14.2 lakh crore respectively

- B) University of Chicago

D) University of Texas

- ✓ University of San Diego, California to set up New Campus in GIFT City, Gujarat.
- ✓ The University of San Diego (USD), based in California, USA is likely to be the first American university to set up campus in GIFT City, Gujarat.
- ✓ This development follows the footsteps of Deakin University (Australia), which has already set up its campus in GIFT City

- ### B) Maliban

D) Raskik

- ✓ Reliance Consumer's Campa partners with JioStar as co-powered sponsor of TATA IPL 2025.
- ✓ Campa, a brand of Reliance Consumer Products (RCPL), is partnership with JioStar to become a 'Co-Powered' sponsor for the upcoming season of TATA Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025 on both TV and digital platforms

- B) IMF

D) IIT Delhi

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- ✓ The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) and Korea Transport Institute (KOTI) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enhance cooperation in logistics and infrastructure development.
- ✓ The partnership aims to leverage KOTI's expertise to support India's infrastructure goals.

DPIIT IN NEWS 2024-25

- DPIIT and Korea Transport Institute Sign MoU to Boost Collaboration in Logistics and Infrastructure Development.
- DPIIT and JKEDI sign MoU to strengthen startup ecosystem in Jammu & Kashmir.
- DPIIT has signed an MoU with Apna to support DPIIT-registered startups by offering skilled manpower.
- DPIIT signs agreement with ITC to help startups in manufacturing sector.
- DPIIT partners with Stride Ventures to help startups in funding, mentorship.
- DPIIT constituted a 5 member committee led by Unnat P Pandit, deregisters patent agent over alleged misconduct.
- DPIIT signs MoU with Startup Policy Forum to Boost India's Start-up Eco-system Globally.
- DPIIT inks Pact with boAt to help Startups in mfg sector.
- DPIIT signs MoU with HDFC Bank to strengthen startup ecosystem and foster innovation.
- DPIIT inks MoU with Flipkart to invest in and mentor Indian startups
- DPIIT partners with HCLSoftware to support manufacturing startups

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Market Intervention Scheme:

1. It is a component of the integrated scheme of PM-AASHA.
2. It is implemented to all farm produces whose price reduces to 10% in the prevailing market price as compared to the previous normal year.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ The central government has revised the Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) guidelines.
- ✓ About Market Intervention Scheme:
- ✓ It is implemented on the request of State/UT Government for procurement of various perishable agricultural/horticultural commodities such as tomato, onion and potato etc. for which Minimum Support Price (MSP) is not applicable.
- ✓ It will be implemented only when there is a minimum reduction of 10% in the prevailing market price as compared to the previous normal year.
- ✓ Revised Market Intervention Scheme Guidelines
- ✓ It made MIS a component of the integrated scheme of PM-AASHA.
- ✓ The procurement/coverage limit of production quantity of crops has been increased from the existing 20 percent to 25 percent.
- ✓ The State has also been given the option to pay the difference between the Market Intervention Price (MIP) and the selling price directly into the bank account of the farmers in place of physical procurement.
- ✓ Reimbursement: The operational cost incurred in storage and transportation of crops from the producing State to other consuming States will be reimbursed by Central Nodal Agencies (CNA) like NAFED and NCCF, in the interest of farmers.

Q. Which Indian company has acquired a 49% stake in Oval Invincibles, a franchise in the England and Wales Cricket Board's (ECB) The Hundred?

- A) Wipro Group B) Tata Group
C) Reliance Industries D) Adani Group

Answer : C

- ✓ RIL to acquire 49% stake in London-based Oval Invincibles cricket team.
- ✓ Reliance Industries (RIL)-owned Mumbai Indians (MI), through its subsidiary RISE Worldwide, has announced the acquisition of a 49 per cent stake in London-based Oval Invincibles, a franchise in the England and Wales Cricket Board's (ECB) The Hundred, for an undisclosed amount.

Q. Which Indian quick commerce startup became the world's second most downloaded food and drink app in 2024?

- A) Swiggy
B) Blinkit
C) Zepto
D) Zomato

Answer : C

- ✓ Zepto, an Indian quick commerce startup, became the “world's second most downloaded mobile app in the food and drink” category in 2024, according to data released by Sensor Tower.
- ✓ United States holds the top spot, with McDonald's being the most downloaded food and drink app.
- ✓ Zomato ranks 5th, and Swiggy ranks 9th in the same category.
- ✓ Zepto is an Indian quick-commerce company headquartered in Bengaluru.
- ✓ It was founded in July 2021 by Aadit Palicha and Kaivalya Vohra.
- ✓ As of August 2024, the company is valued at over \$5 billion on paper and operates over 250 dark-stores across ten metropolitan areas in India

Q. Until which year has the Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) been extended?

- A) 2025
B) 2026
C) 2027
D) 2028

Answer : D

- ✓ The Jal Jeevan Mission (JJM) was launched in 2019 to provide tap water to every rural household by 2024.
- ✓ Initially, only 17% of rural households had tap water connections, but as of 2024, the coverage increased to 80%.
- ✓ To ensure complete access and sustainable infrastructure, the mission has been extended until 2028.
- ✓ This extension focuses on improving service delivery, public participation, and maintenance of rural water supply systems.
- ✓ JJM is expected to bring significant health benefits, save time for rural households, and contribute to a reduction in child mortality through access to safe drinking water.
- ✓ About JJM
- ✓ Background: National Rural Drinking Water Programme was restructured and subsumed in JJM.
- ✓ Nodal Ministry: Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- ✓ Type: Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
- ✓ Funding pattern between Centre and State:
- ✓ 90:10 for Himalayan (Uttarakhand, Himachal Pradesh) and North-Eastern States.
- ✓ 100% for UTs.
- ✓ 50:50 for rest of the States.
- ✓ Key Achievements under JJM

- ✓ Over 12 crore families have gained access of piped drinking water since 2019, up from 3.23 Crore (Economic Survey 2024-25).
- ✓ States achieved 100% coverage: Arunachal Pradesh, Goa, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh, Gujarat, Punjab, Telangana and Mizoram.
- ✓ UTs achieved 100% coverage: Andaman & Nicobar Islands, Dadra Nagar Haveli & Daman Diu and Puducherry

Q. Consider the following statements regarding GREAT scheme:

1. It was launched with the aim to develop the startup ecosystem in technical textiles in India.
2. It has evolved under the Research, Development, and Innovation Component of National Technical Textiles Mission.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer :C

- ✓ Central government has approved 04 Start-Ups with a grant under the 'Grant for Research & Entrepreneurship across Aspiring Innovators in Technical Textiles (GREAT)' scheme.
- ✓ It was launched in August 2023 with the aim to develop the Startup Ecosystem in Technical Textiles in India.
- ✓ It has evolved under the Research, Development, and Innovation Component of National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM).
- ✓ It encourages young innovators, scientists/technologists, and startup ventures in the field of Technical Textiles to translate their ideas into commercial technologies/products and make India self-reliant.
- ✓ It supports individual entrepreneurs or start-ups for functional prototypes or commercialization of their technologies for Technical Textile.
- ✓ It supports innovations under application areas in all segments of Technical Textiles such as Agro-textiles, Building-textiles, Cloth-textiles, Geotextiles, Home-textiles, Industrial-textiles, Medical-textiles, Mobile-textiles, Oeko-textiles, Packaging- textiles, Protective-textiles, Sports-textiles, etc.
- ✓ Funding: A grant-in-aid of up to Rs 50 lakh for up to a period of 18 months will be provided.
- ✓ Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Textiles

Q. Which company has partnered with Karnataka Bulldozers as a co-sponsor for CCL 2025?

- A) Paytm B) Google Pay
C) Airtel Payments D) PhonePe

Answer : C

- ✓ Airtel Payments Bank has partnered with Karnataka Bulldozers as a co-sponsor for the Celebrity Cricket League (CCL) 2025, starting on February 8.
- ✓ This collaboration is aimed at promoting secure digital banking and financial awareness among cricket fans.

SPONSOR IN NEWS 2024-25.

- Airtel Payments Bank has partnered with Karnataka Bulldozers as a co-sponsor for the Celebrity Cricket League (CCL) 2025.
- Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) is the bronze sponsor for the 38th National Games, which will be hosted in Uttarakhand for the first time.
- Lenovo has been named as FIFA's official technology partner for the 2026 men's World Cup and the 2027 women's World Cup

- BPCL Partners with Indian Olympic Association as Principal Sponsor from Paris 2024 to Los Angeles 2028.
- PUMA India has partnered with Indian Olympic Association (IOA) as the official footwear partner for the Indian contingent heading to the Paris Olympics 2024.
- Adani Group has been selected as the principal sponsor of the Indian contingent in the upcoming 2024 Paris Olympics.
- Tata Communications signed a five-year contract with global sports organization World Athletics.
- Puma signs deal with Athletics Federation of India for official kit sponsor
- Sri Lanka has announced Amul, one of India's iconic dairy brands with a global footprint, as their sponsor for the ICC T20 World Cup 2024
- Amul will be the lead arm sponsor for USA's cricket team that will participate in ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 which commences on June 1
- Aramco company would sponsor major FIFA tournaments until 2027.
- IndusInd Bank, a leading financial institution in India, has announced a significant multi-year sponsorship deal with the International Cricket Council (ICC).
- Nandini's Sponsorship of Ireland and Scotland Cricket Teams Sparks Debate
- Tata Group Secures IPL Title Sponsorship for Next 5 Years spanning 2024 to 2028.
- Indian Cricket Board announced that the IDFC First Bank has grabbed the title rights for home international series of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) for three years.

Q. Which company has launched the AI-powered home loan advisor 'KAI'?

- A) L&T
- B) HDFC
- C) ICICI Bank
- D) Bajaj Finserv

Answer : D

- ✓ L&T Finance Limited (LTF), a leading Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) in India, has introduced 'Knowledgeable AI' (KAI), an AI-powered virtual home loan advisor.
- ✓ KAI is designed to enhance customer experience by offering personalized assistance, instant loan calculations, and expert guidance throughout the home loan process.
- ✓ KAI provides a more interactive and intuitive experience, helping users navigate complex financial decisions.

Q. Which among the following best describes Majorana 1, recently seen in the news?

- A) A newly discovered subatomic particle.
- B) A new spacecraft designed for Mars exploration.
- C) A quantum computing chip.
- D) A propulsion technology developed for faster space travel

Answer : C

- ✓ Microsoft released Majorana 1, the world's first quantum chip built on a topological core, recently.
- ✓ **About Majorana 1:**
- ✓ It is the quantum computing chip developed by Microsoft.
- ✓ The Majorana 1 is designed to make quantum computing more practical, faster, and reliable.
- ✓ Quantum computers process information differently from traditional computers, using quantum bits (qubits) instead of regular bits.
- ✓ Qubits can exist in states 0, 1, or both simultaneously (superposition).
- ✓ The Majorana 1 chip is made of a material made from indium arsenide and aluminum to create what Microsoft calls the "world's first topoconductor,".

MICROSOFT IN NEWS 2024-25

- NITI Aayog's WEP partners with Urban Company to support women MSMEs
- Union Cabinet, chaired by the Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the continuation of its flagship initiative, the Atal Innovation Mission (AIM), under the aegis of NITI Aayog, with an enhanced scope of work and an allocated budget of Rs.2,750 crore for the period till March 31, 2028.
- NITI Aayog released the 4th edition of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) India Index and dashboard for 2023-24 : Kerala with a score of 79 points and Uttarakhand with a score of 79 points Share Top Spot.
- Bihar was the worst-performing state with a score of 57 points.
- NITI Aayog, in a report titled "Electronics: Powering India's Participation in Global Value Chains," has set an ambitious target of \$500 billion in electronic manufacturing in value terms for India to be achieved by 2030.
- NITI Aayog has announced the launch of the 'NITI GearShift Challenge' as part of the e-FAST India initiative.
- NITI Aayog (National Institution for Transforming India)
- Founded : 1st January 2015
- Preceding : Planning Commission (15th March 1950)
- Headquarters : New Delhi
- Chairperson : Narendra Modi
- Vice Chairperson : Suman K Bery
- CEO : BVR Subrahmanyam

Q. The government of India has extended the term of Chief Economic Advisor to the Ministry of Finance, V Anantha Nageswaran by how many years?

- A) Two years
- B) Three years
- C) Four years
- D) Five years

Answer : A

- ✓ Government of India has extended the tenure of the Chief Economic Advisor to the Ministry of Finance, V Anantha Nageswaran for a period of two years till 31st March 2027.
- ✓ Venkatraman Anantha Nageswaran was appointed as the Chief Economic Advisor in January 2022, succeeding KV Subramanian
- ✓ About the Chief Economic Advisor
- ✓ The Chief Economic Advisor to the Ministry of Finance is head of the Economic Division of the Department of Economic Affairs, Ministry of Finance.
- ✓ The main functions of the Division are advisory in nature and the Finance Minister is not bound to accept its recommendations.
- ✓ It examines the domestic and international economic trends and undertakes research studies having an impact on economic policies and management of the economy.
- ✓ Prepares Annual Economic Survey and Mid Year Review of the Indian Economy.
- ✓ First Chief Economic Advisor to the Union Finance Minister - JJ Anjaria from 1956 to 1961, during the tenure of former Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru.
- ✓ About Venkatraman Anantha Nageswaran
- ✓ V. Anantha Nageswaran is an alumnus of the Indian Institute of Management (IIM), Ahmedabad and did his PhD in finance from the University of Massachusetts, United States of America.
- ✓ He has taught in India and Singapore and has authored four books, including 'The Economics of Derivatives' and 'The Rise of Finance: Causes, Consequences and Cures.'
- ✓ He also served as a part time member of the Prime Minister's Economic Advisory Council from 2019-2021.

- Q.** Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) has recommended Dinesh Pant and Ratnakar Patnaik for the positions of Managing Directors (MDs) of which organisation?
- A) Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)
B) Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)
C) Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers (GRSE)
D) Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)

Answer : A

- ✓ FSIB recommends Dinesh Pant, Ratnakar Patnaik for MD positions at LIC.
- ✓ The Financial Services Institutions Bureau (FSIB) has recommended Dinesh Pant and Ratnakar Patnaik for the positions of Managing Directors (MDs) at Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC).
- ✓ The aforementioned recommendations are against vacancies that will be created due to the superannuation of current MDs – Jagannath M and Tablesh Pandey.

- Q.** Who has been appointed as the new MD & CEO of SBI Cards?
- A) Abhijit Chakravorty B) Rajeev Kumar
C) Salila Pande D) Amit Sharma

Answer : C

- ✓ Salila Pande has been appointed as the new MD & CEO of SBI Cards, effective from April 1, 2025.
- ✓ She succeeds Abhijit Chakravorty, who will retire on March 31, 2025.

- Q.** What percentage stake will 360 ONE Asset acquire in Bharti AXA Life Insurance?
- A) 10% B) 5%
C) 20% D) 15%

Answer : D

- ✓ 360 ONE Asset is set to acquire a 15% stake in Bharti AXA Life Insurance.
- ✓ This acquisition is part of the company's strategy to infuse fresh capital, drive innovation, and enhance its market presence.
- ✓ The move will provide Bharti AXA with the necessary financial resources to expand its operations, improve its product offerings, and strengthen its competitiveness in the rapidly evolving insurance sector.

- Q.** In which city is Google's largest campus in India, Ananta, located?
- A) Mumbai B) Bengaluru
C) Hyderabad D) Gurugram

Answer : B

- ✓ Google's largest campus in India, named Ananta, is located in Mahadevapura, Bengaluru.
- ✓ This state-of-the-art campus highlights India's role as a key player in global technological advancements, especially in AI and software development.
- ✓ Bengaluru, known as the "Silicon Valley of India," is a hub for tech giants like Google, emphasizing the city's significance in the tech landscape.

- Q.** Which organization has approved the amalgamation of Chaitanya India Fin Credit and Svatantra Holdings into Svatantra Microfin?
- A) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
 - B) Competition Commission of India (CCI)
 - C) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
 - D) Ministry of Finance

Answer : B

- ✓ The Competition Commission of India has approved amalgamations of Chaitanya India Fin Credit Private Limited and Svatantra Holdings Private Limited into Svatantra Microfin Private Limited.
- ✓ SHPL is engaged in the business of making investments in equity shares, preference shares and other securities.
- ✓ The proposed transaction relates to the amalgamation of Svatantra Holdings Private Limited (SHPL) and Chaitanya India Fin Credit Private Limited (CIFCPL) into Svatantra Microfin Private Limited (SMPL), through the Scheme of Amalgamation entered into between SHPL, CIFCPL, SMPL and their respective shareholders as has been approved by the board of directors.

- Q.** Which one of the following has expanded the scope of the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) by allowing Small Finance Banks (SFBs) to offer pre-sanctioned credit lines for UPI transactions?
- A) NPCI
 - B) RBI
 - C) SEBI
 - D) IRDAI

Answer : B

- ✓ RBI extends UPI credit line facility to Small Finance Banks.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced an expansion in the scope of Unified Payments Interface (UPI) by enabling transactions from pre-sanctioned credit lines at banks for Small Finance Banks too.
- ✓ Previously, when the announcement was first made in December 2024 during the MPC meet outcomes, Small Finance Banks, Payments Banks, and Regional Rural Banks were excluded from this feature.
- ✓ About SFBs
- ✓ Origin: Announced in Union Budget 2014-15.
- ✓ Objective: To further financial inclusion by -
- ✓ provision of savings vehicles primarily to unserved and underserved sections of the population, and
- ✓ supply of credit to small business units; small and marginal farmers; micro and small industries; and other unorganised sector entities, through high technology-low cost operations.
- ✓ Registration: As a public limited company under Companies Act, 2013.
- ✓ Licensed under: Section 22 of Banking Regulation Act, 1949.
- ✓ Capital requirement: Minimum paid-up voting equity capital of ₹200 crore (except for such SFBs which are converted from Urban Cooperative Banks).
- ✓ Priority Sector Lending (PSL) norms: Required to extend 75% of its Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) to the priority sectors, as classified by RBI.

- Q.** The latest issued banknotes in the denomination of Rs. 50 by RBI have what motif on their reverse side?
- A) Red Fort
 - B) Sanchi Stupa
 - C) Mangalyaan
 - D) Stone chariot of Hampi

Answer : D

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has declared the release of new banknotes with a denomination of ₹50 signed by Sanjay Malhotra, its recently appointed governor.
- ✓ Malhotra succeeded Shaktikanta Das as the 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India in December 2024.
- ✓ He succeeded Shaktikanta Das who completed six years as the RBI governor.
- ✓ Prior to his RBI stint, Malhotra was India's Revenue Secretary.
- ✓ in his first Monetary Policy Committee meeting after being appointed as the RBI governor, Malhotra delivered a rate cut of 25 basis points from 6.5 per cent to at 6.25 per cent. This is the first instance after 12 policies that the repo rate has been cut by the RBI Monetary Policy Committee.
- ✓ In order to ensure a continuous flow of India's monetary system, these new banknotes will stick to the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series' current design.
- ✓ However, the RBI confirmed that all previously issued ₹50 notes will still be legal currency and valid
- ✓ What Changes in the ₹50 Banknotes?
- ✓ The new ₹50 banknotes will continue with the existing design under the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series, which was introduced to enhance security and prevent counterfeiting. The note will retain Mahatma Gandhi's portrait on the front and cultural motifs on the reverse.
- ✓ The Rs. 50 banknote of the Mahatma Gandhi (New) series has a base color of fluorescent blue.
- ✓ The reverse of the new 50 rupee banknote in the Mahatma Gandhi (New) series has a motif of the Hampi with Chariot.
- ✓ The size of the new note is 66 mm x 135 mm.

Q. Which entity has tied up with AFD, under which the French lender will provide a \$100 million credit line?

A) RBI	B) SEBI
C) SIDBI	D) NPCI

Answer : C

- ✓ Sidbi partners with France's lender AFD for \$100 million credit line.
- ✓ The Small Industries Development Bank of India has tied up with AFD, under which the French lender will provide a \$100 million credit line.
- ✓ The resources will be deployed by Small Industries Development Bank of India (Sidbi) to scale up its green finance solutions for the Indian micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), according to a statement.

Q. Ministry of Health has extended the timeline to small and medium manufacturers having turnover of Rs____ or less for compliance with revised schedule 'M' notification up to December 31, 2025.

- A) Rs 100 crore
- B) Rs 200 crore
- C) Rs 150 crore
- D) Rs 250 crore

Answer : D

- ✓ Govt extends Schedule M implementation deadline till year-end for small, medium pharma firms.
- ✓ The implementation of revised Schedule M for good manufacturing practices has been conditionally extended to December 31, 2025, for small and medium pharmaceutical firms with turnover of Rs 250 crore or less.
- ✓ These firms must submit an upgrade plan by February 11, 2025, to qualify for the deadline extension.
- ✓ The updated regulations aim to enhance product quality and global competitiveness.

Q. RBI has imposed a penalty of Rs 6.70 lakh on which Small Finance bank for non-compliance with certain directions?

- A) Equitas Small Finance Bank
- B) Capital Small Finance Bank
- C) Fincare Small Finance Bank
- D) Ujjivan Small Finance Bank

Answer : D

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed penalties totalling Rs 68.1 lakh on Nainital Bank and Ujjivan Small Finance Bank for violations of regulatory norms.
- ✓ Nainital Bank Ltd faced a penalty of Rs 61.40 lakh for non-compliance with RBI's guidelines on 'Interest Rate on Advances' and 'Customer Service in Banks'.
- ✓ RBI imposed a penalty of Rs 6.70 lakh on Ujjivan Small Finance Bank for non-compliance with certain directions issued by RBI on 'Loans and Advances - Statutory and Other Restrictions'.

Q. RBI has imposed a penalty of ₹61.40 lakh on which bank for non-compliance with certain directions on 'Interest Rate on Advances' and 'Customer Service in Banks'?

- A) Nainital Bank
- B) Kotak Mahindra Bank
- C) Indian Overseas Bank
- D) Canara Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ A penalty of ₹61.40 lakh was imposed on Nainital Bank Ltd for non-compliance with certain directions on 'Interest Rate on Advances' and 'Customer Service in Banks'.

Q. What is the primary purpose of the RBI introducing Additional Factor of Authentication (AFA) for online international digital payments?

- A) To promote the use of international payment gateways
- B) To enhance the security of cross-border transactions
- C) To encourage cashless transactions within India
- D) To eliminate transaction fees for international payments

Answer : B

- ✓ RBI introduced an additional authentication layer for online international digital payments.
- ✓ Purpose: The RBI introduced AFA to enhance the security of cross-border transactions. This measure aims to provide the same level of security for international transactions as is available for domestic payments.
- ✓ Implementation: The AFA requires an extra layer of verification, such as a One-Time Password (OTP) or biometric authentication, for online international transactions.
- ✓ Rationale: The decision was driven by the increasing sophistication of cyber threats and the surge in digital frauds.

Q. Which company has partnered with UPM to modernize its IT infrastructure in the Nordic region?

- A) TCS
- B) Wipro
- C) Infosys
- D) Cognizant

Answer : A

- ✓ Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has partnered with UPM, a Finland-based company, to modernize its IT infrastructure. This collaboration focuses on cloud migration, AI-driven workplace transformation, and enhancing IT management for UPM's 19,000 employees.
- ✓ TCS will handle key IT functions such as data centre operations, network services, and end-user support.
- ✓ The partnership aims to improve operational efficiency and streamline business operations, reinforcing TCS's growing presence in the Nordic region and highlighting its capability to drive digital transformation for large enterprises.

TCS IN NEWS 2024-25

- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Bank of Baroda (BoB) extended their partnership for five years.
- TCS secures 5-year deal with Telenor Denmark for IT infrastructure management.
- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and the IIT Kharagpur have partnered to establish an advanced research center in Kolkata.
- TCS ranked the most valuable brand in Kantar's BrandZ report
- TCS ,Hdfc, Airtel, Infosys, SBI top 5
- TCS has signed a three- year contract extension for SPARSH , India's pension system for defence personnel.
- TCS has bagged a multi-year deal to assist Air France-KLM in transitioning to an advanced, AI-ready, and cloud-native data landscape
- Tata Consultancy Services has signed a 10-year strategic partnership with Brazil-based Insper.
- TCS signs \$245 million 15-year deal to transform Ireland's pension system.
- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)
- Founded : 1968
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Chairman : Natarajan Chandrasekaran
- MD & CEO : Kriti Krithivasan

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the NAMASTE Scheme:

1. It targets sewer and septic tank sanitation workers (SSWs) and wastepickers in urban areas of India.
2. It is jointly being implemented by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Union Minister for Social Justice and Empowerment (SJ&E) distributed Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) kits and Ayushman health cards to Sewer and Septic Tank Workers under the flagship scheme of National Action for Mechanized Sanitation Ecosystem (NAMASTE).
- ✓ About NAMASTE Scheme:
- ✓ The objective of the “National Action for Mechanised Sanitation Ecosystem” (NAMASTE) scheme is to formalize and institutionalize the persons engaged in hazardous cleaning of sewers and septic tanks and promoting safe and mechanized cleaning through trained sanitation workers.
- ✓ It is jointly supervised by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) and the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA).
- ✓ Implementing agency: It is implemented by the National Safai Karmacharis Finance Development Corporation (NSKFDC) under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE).
- ✓ Duration: It would be implemented for three years from FY 2023-24 to FY 2025-26.

- ✓ Target Groups: Sewer and septic tank sanitation workers (SSWs) and waste pickers in urban areas of India

Q. Who has been appointed as the CEO of Standard Chartered Bank for India?

- A) Prabdev Singh
- B) Zarin Daruwala
- C) David Solomon
- D) Jane Fraser

Answer : A

- ✓ Standard Chartered ropes in former JP Morgan India chief PD Singh as India CEO.
- ✓ Standard Chartered Bank has appointed Prabdev Singh as its chief executive officer (CEO) for India.
- ✓ The tenure would be effective April 1.
- ✓ Singh will succeed Zarin Daruwala, who will retire on March 31.
- ✓ Daurwala has been the India CEO of the bank since 2016.
- ✓ PD Singh earlier served as the CEO of JP Morgan Chase Bank in India

Q. Bima Vistaar portal, recently seen in the news, is launched by which organization?

- A) RBI
- B) NPCI
- C) IRDAI
- D) SEBI

Answer : C

- ✓ The portal for Bima Vahak, the localised, women-centric insurance field sales force, is nearing completion and is set for a soft launch for onboarding 'Vahaks' from April 2025.
- ✓ Bima Vahak initiative, a localised, women-centric insurance field sales force, is gearing up for a soft launch in April 2025, as per a press release by the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI).
- ✓ The Bima Trinity includes the electronic insurance marketplace—Bima Sugam and the women-centric distribution platform—Bima Vahak.
- ✓ With an aim to provide “Insurance for All by 2047,” the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) has announced the ‘Bima Vahak’ initiative, a women-centric insurance field sales force, which is inching closer to implementation.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Project Waterworth:

1. It uses AI to enhance subsea cable infrastructure to improve global connectivity.
2. It is an initiative of the World Economic Forum to improve digital inclusion across the world.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Meta announced its most ambitious subsea cable endeavour ever – Project Waterworth.
- ✓ **About Project Waterworth:**
- ✓ It stretches over 50,000 km long cable which connects India, US, Brazil, South Africa and other “key regions”.
- ✓ Its cable will reach depths of up to 7,000 meters in deep waters.
- ✓ The project is using AI to enhance subsea cable infrastructure to improve global connectivity.
- ✓ It focuses on enhancing cable deployment and maintenance, ensuring reliable and efficient internet access worldwide.

- ✓ It uses enhanced burial techniques in high-risk fault areas, such as shallow waters near the coast, to avoid damage from ship anchors and other hazards.

Q. Which bank launched the 'SIB Quick FD' for seamless digital investment?

- A) South Indian Bank
- B) HDFC Bank
- C) ICICI Bank
- D) Axis Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ South Indian Bank launched the 'SIB Quick FD' service, allowing customers to open Fixed Deposits digitally through UPI, without needing an existing account with the bank.
- ✓ The process is paperless, takes only 5 minutes, and requires minimal documentation.
- ✓ This service is designed to make Fixed Deposit investments accessible to a wider customer base and is available 24/7, making it convenient for users to invest at any time.
- ✓ Additionally, the FD investments are insured up to ₹5 lakhs under DICGC, ensuring security for customers.

Q. When will the new Income Tax Bill, 2025, take effect?

- A) April 1, 2026
- B) January 1, 2026
- C) April 1, 2025
- D) March 31, 2025

Answer : A

- ✓ The new Income Tax Bill, 2025, which was tabled by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in the Lok Sabha on February 13, 2025, is set to replace the current Income Tax Act of 1961.
- ✓ The bill is scheduled to take effect starting from April 1, 2026, as confirmed by the bill after a review of the existing law that was announced in July 2024

Q. Which company launched the AI-powered customer support platform 'Nugget'?

- A) Blinkit
- B) Hyperpure
- C) Zomato
- D) Swiggy

Answer : C

- ✓ Zomato introduced 'Nugget,' an AI-powered, no-code customer support platform designed to automate customer queries and improve operational efficiency.
- ✓ Developed over three years, Nugget currently handles over 15 million interactions monthly across Zomato's ecosystem, including Blinkit and Hyperpure.
- ✓ The platform aims to resolve up to 80% of customer queries autonomously, utilizing AI technologies like image classification, voice AI agents, and automated quality audits.

Q. Zomato has launched 'Zomato Quick', an in-App 10-Minute Food Delivery Service in Multiple Cities. Who among the following is the founder and CEO of Zomato?

- A) Deepinder Goyal
- B) Kunal Shah
- C) Ashutosh Kumar
- D) Rohit Kapoor

Answer : A

- ✓ Zomato rolls out in-app 10-minute food delivery service, Zomato Quick.
- ✓ Food aggregator Zomato has rolled out its in-app quick food delivery service, Zomato Quick, in multiple cities.
- ✓ The service allows users to get food delivered to their doorsteps in approximately 15 minutes.
- ✓ It is currently offering fast food and instant meals, including snacks, desserts, and beverages.

ZOMATO IN NEWS 2024-25

- Zomato Launches 'Zomato Quick', an In-App 10-Minute Food Delivery Service in Multiple Cities.
- Blinkit, Zomato's quick-commerce subsidiary, launched Bistro, a food delivery app that promises to deliver snacks, meals, and beverages within 10 minutes.
- Zomato has launched the District app for its going-out business.
- NSE inks pact with Zomato to empower delivery partners with financial literacy.
- Food delivery major Zomato has launched an initiative called "Food Rescue" to reduce food wastage.
- ZOMATO
- Founded : 2008
- Founders : Deepinder Goyal & Pankaj Chaddah
- Headquarters : Gurgaon, Haryana
- CEO : Deepinder Goyal

Q. What is the rate of interest applicable on the Government of India Floating Rate Bonds, 2035 (GOI FRB 2035) for the period January 25, 2025, to January 24, 2030?

- A) 6.25%
- B) 6.50%
- C) 6.66%
- D) 7.10%

Answer : C

- ✓ The rate of interest on the Government of India Floating Rate Bonds, 2035 (GOI FRB 2035) applicable for the period January 25, 2025 to January 24, 2030 shall be 6.66 percent per annum.
- ✓ The GOI FRB 2035 was issued on January 25, 2005 by the Government of India to the Reserve Bank of India on private placement basis against the transfer of subordinated debt of IDFC.
- ✓ The rate of interest of the bonds shall be reset by the Bank every five years at prevailing 5-year yield on Government of India securities as on the last working day before commencement of each period of five years.
- ✓ Accordingly, the coupon of the GOI FRB 2035 has been fixed on the basis secondary market transactions in Government of India securities as on January 24, 2025.

Q. Which financial institutions has invested ₹830 crore in Aditya Birla Housing Finance Ltd. (ABHFL) through non-convertible debentures (NCDs)?

- A) World Bank (WB)
- B) Asian Development Bank (ADB)
- C) International Finance Corporation (IFC)
- D) International Monetary fund (IMF)

Answer : C

- ✓ Aditya Birla Housing Finance Ltd. (ABHFL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Aditya Birla Capital has secured an investment of ₹830 crore through non-convertible debentures (NCDs) from the International Finance Corporation (IFC).
- ✓ The funds raised through IFC's investment will be utilised to address critical gaps by providing housing loans to low-income and middle-income groups (LIG and MIG), with particular focus on encouraging homeownership among women

Q. Which company has partnered with X to introduce a real-time payment system?

- A) Mastercard
- B) Visa
- C) PayPal
- D) American Express

Answer : B

- ✓ X, the social media platform owned by Elon Musk, has collaborated with Visa to launch a real-time payment system, aligning with Musk's goal of transforming X into an "everything app."
- ✓ "The new "X Money Account" service will enable digital wallets, peer-to-peer transactions, and bank transfers, allowing users to link their debit cards for seamless payments

Q. Which entity is set to acquire a 25% stake in the US-based fintech startup Seven Technology LLC for ₹8.7 crore (US\$1 million)?

A) Paytm Cloud Technologies	B) Paytm for Business
C) Paytm Payments Gateway	D) Paytm Credit Cards

Answer : A

- ✓ Paytm's subsidiary, Paytm Cloud Technologies Limited (PCTL), is set to acquire a 25% stake in the US-based fintech startup Seven Technology LLC for ₹8.7 crore (US\$1 million).
- ✓ This move follows Paytm's recent announcement of plans to establish three new subsidiaries in the UAE, Saudi Arabia, and Singapore through PCTL, aiming to expand its tech-driven payment and financial services on a global scale.
- ✓ Seven Technology LLC serves as the parent company of Dinie Correspondente Bancário e Meios de Pagamento Ltda, a Brazilian fintech platform that provides digital financial services to MSMEs in Brazil.

Q. Which company has launched the UPI Switch 'Blitz' for scalable payment solutions?

A) Razorpay	B) Paytm
C) CARD91	D) PhonePe

Answer : C

- ✓ CARD91, an Issuance Platform-as-a-Service company, has launched 'Blitz,' a proprietary UPI Switch designed to provide banks and financial institutions with seamless and scalable digital payment solutions.
- ✓ Blitz supports UPI 2.0, Credit Line on UPI, Rupay Credit Card on UPI, AutoPay, and Delegate Payments, ensuring high reliability with 99.99% uptime and the ability to process over 2000 transactions per second (TPS).

Q. Business Ready (B-READY) is the flagship report of which organization?

- A) International Monetary Fund
- B) World Bank
- C) United Nations Development Programme
- D) World Trade Organization

Answer : B

- ✓ The World Bank launched the Business Ready (B-READY) report, replacing the paused Ease of Doing Business report.
- ✓ The Ease of Doing Business report was suspended in 2020 due to data manipulation and ranking integrity concerns.
- ✓ B-READY serves as a benchmarking tool to evaluate the global business climate and promote inclusive private sector growth. It focuses on ten core topics: Business Entry, Location, Utility Services, Labor, Financial Services, International Trade, Taxation, Dispute Resolution, Market Competition, and Insolvency.

WORLD BANK IN NEWS 2024-25

- The World Bank launched the Business Ready (B-READY) report, replacing the paused Ease of Doing Business report.
- World Bank has sanctioned an \$800 million loan to support the development of Amaravati, the ambitious greenfield capital of Andhra Pradesh.
- World Bank has approved a \$325.10 million loan to the Uttar Pradesh government to boost the farmers' income in the state.
- World Bank approves \$188.28 million loan to Maharashtra to boost economic growth in backward districts.
- The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA), part of World Bank Group Guarantees and International Solar Alliance (ISA) to Establish Trust Fund to Support Solar Projects.
- World Bank has raised the growth forecast for the Indian economy in the current financial year (2024-25) to 7 per cent from its earlier projection of 6.6 per cent.
- World Bank report "India Development Update: India's Trade Opportunities in a Changing Global Context" was released on 3 September 2024.
- World Bank's Business Ready (B-READY) index will replace the Doing Business index. The first B-READY report is scheduled to be launched on September 25, 2024. India's B-Ready report is expected to be published in April 2026.
- World Bank and the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (Meity) are working together to create a state-level Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) adoption index.
- World Bank approves \$1.5 billion loan for low carbon energy sector.
- Remittance to India in 2024 Likely to be \$ 124 billion: The Migration and Development Brief is published by the World Bank twice a year, and the latest report was published.
- World Bank plans to provide a \$1 billion line of credit to the State Bank of India (SBI) to support the expansion of Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS) and electric mobility in the country.
- Rakesh Mohan, former Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), has been appointed as a member of the World Bank Group's Economic Advisory Panel, chaired by Lord Nicholas Stern and co-chaired by World Bank Group Chief Economist Indermit Gill.
- Commodity Markets Outlook Report is published by the World Bank in April and October, every year.
- WORLD BANK

- Founded : 1944
- Headquarters : Washington Dc
- 14th President : Ajay Banga
- MD&CFO : Anshula Kant
- Chief Economist : Carman Reinhart
- Executive Director : Rajesh Khullar
- Member Countries :189
- World Bank Group : 5 (IBRD, IDA, IFC, MIGA and ICSID).
- All of these efforts support the Bank Group's twin goals of ending extreme poverty by 2030 and boosting shared prosperity of the poorest 40% of the population in all countries.
- World Bank was created at the 1944 Bretton Woods Conference, along with the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- India is a member of IBRD, IFC, IDA and MIGA. The country is not a member of the ICSID

Q. Which entity and IIMA Ventures has launched Swanari TechSprint 3.0, a programme aimed at fostering women-centric fintech startups in India?

- A) Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH)
- B) Deposit Insurance and Credit Guarantee Corporation of India (DICGC)
- C) Reserve Bank Information Technology Private Limited (ReBIT)
- D) Indian Financial Technology and Allied Services (IFTAS)

Answer : A

- ✓ Reserve Bank Innovation Hub, IIMA Ventures launch programme to foster women-centric fintech startups.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank Innovation Hub and IIMA Ventures launched Swanari TechSprint 3.0, a programme aimed at fostering women-centric fintech startups in India.
- ✓ The programme provides a platform for fintech innovators to conceptualise, develop, and scale solutions that address the unique financial needs of women.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ✓ Financial inclusion is a fundamental pillar of India's Growth Story, and Swanari TechSprint serves as a platform to identify and support innovators dedicated to addressing the unique financial needs of women.

RBIH IN NEWS 2024-25

- Reserve Bank innovation Hub and IIMA ventures launched Swanari TechSprint 3.0 , a programme aimed at fostering women centric Fintech startup in India.
- Reserve Bank of India Innovation Hub (RBIH) has onboarded digital lender Vivifi Finance to run a pilot project to offer unsecured loans to gig workers.
- Reserve Bank of India Innovation Hub (RBIH), an RBI subsidiary, has developed MuleHunter AI, an artificial intelligence and machine learning (AI/ML) model to help banks and financial institutions detect so- called mule accounts used by frauders
- Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH): With an initial investment of 100 crore under the Companies Act of 2013, Shaktikanta Das launched the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH) on March 24, 2022 in Bengaluru with the goal of fostering financial innovation in a long-lasting way.
- The goal of RBIH was to develop an ecosystem that would support low-income Indian groups' access to financial services and goods.
- It will also assist in bringing cutting-edge innovation to the banking sector.

Q. Who is the chairman of the Working Group set up by the government of India on the revision of the base year of the Wholesale Price Index to 2022-23?

- A) Vijay Kumar Saraswat B) Vinod Kumar Paul
C) Ramesh Chand D) S. Venkatasubramanian

Answer : C

- ✓ The government recently announced the formation of an 18-member panel headed by NITI Aayog member Ramesh Chand to revise the base year of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) and suggest a road map for switching over to the Producer Price Index (PPI).
- ✓ About Ramesh Chand Panel:
- ✓ It was established to revise the base year of the Wholesale Price Index (WPI) from 2011-12 to 2022-23.
- ✓ Among its key mandates, the panel will:
- ✓ Propose a revised commodity basket for the WPI and the Producer Price Index (PPI) with the base year 2022-23, considering structural changes in the economy.
- ✓ Review the current system of price collection and recommend improvements.
- ✓ It will also decide on the computational methodology to be adopted for WPI and PPI.
- ✓ The panel will have economists in the government, rating agencies, asset management companies, banks, and representatives from the government and the Reserve Bank of India.
- ✓ It has been asked to submit its final report to the Office of the Economic Adviser at the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIT) within 18 months

Q. What is the base year of the current Wholesale Price Index (WPI)?

- A) 2011-12 B) 2010-11
C) 2020-21 D) 2018-19

Answer : A

- ✓ About WPI and CPI
- ✓ At present, there are two inflation indexes in the country WPI and Consumer Price Index (CPI).
- ✓ WPI
- ✓ The WPI I captures the average wholesale prices of goods. It includes only basic prices and does not include taxes, rebate/trade discounts, transport, and other charges.
- ✓ It is also called a producer-level
- ✓ index.
- ✓ The WPI includes only goods and services that are not included.
- ✓ It is used as a GDP deflator to calculate real GDP from nominal GDP.
- ✓ The WPI data is released monthly by the DIPT, Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry.

Q. The SBI Patrons Scheme, recently seen in the news, is designed specifically for which group of people?

- A) Women entrepreneurs
B) Government employees
C) Senior citizens aged 80 years and above
D) Farmers and agricultural worker

Answer : C

- ✓ State Bank of India recently launched two new deposit schemes namely, Har Ghar Lakhpati and SBI Patrons, designed to provide customers with greater financial flexibility and enhanced value.
- ✓ About Har Ghar Lakhpati Scheme:
- ✓ It is a pre-calculated recurring deposit scheme designed to help customers to accumulate Rs 1 lakh or multiples thereof.

- ✓ The apex payments body, “considering various factors”, extended the timeline for compliance of existing third party application providers (TPAPs) by another two years.
- ✓ This comes at a time when the real-time payments system has seen euphoric growth in terms of transaction volumes.
- ✓ UPI clocked 155.44 billion transactions this year as of November, a 32.2 per cent increase from 117.58 billion transactions in calendar year 2023 (CY23). The figures for December 2024 are yet to be published.
- ✓ The NPCI had initially proposed a 30 per cent cap on the volume of transactions that UPI apps can process back in November 2020, and had given time to the existing players to adhere to the volume cap in two years’ time

Q. Which of the following banks is NOT included in the acquisition of 9.5 percent stake by HDFC Bank?

- A) Kotak Mahindra Bank B) Indian Overseas Bank
C) AU Small Finance Bank D) Capital Small Finance Bank

Answer : B

- ✓ RBI allows HDFC Bank to acquire up to 9.5% stake in Kotak Mahindra Bank, AU SFB, Capital SFB.
- ✓ RBI has given its approval to HDFC Bank group to acquire “aggregate holding” of up to 9.50 per cent of the share capital or voting rights in Kotak Mahindra Bank, AU Small Finance Bank and Capital Small Finance Bank.
- ✓ HDFC Bank, in a regulatory filing, said the banking regulator’s approval is valid for one year from the date of RBI’s letter - till January 2, 2026.
- ✓ Further HDFC Bank needs to ensure that the “aggregate holding” by its group entities (HDFC Mutual Fund, HDFC Life Insurance Company, HDFC ERGO General Insurance Company, HDFC Pension Fund Management and others) in the above mentioned banks does not exceed 9.50% of the paid-up share capital or voting rights of the respective banks, at all times
- ✓ On February 5, 2024, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) approved HDFC Bank's request to acquire up to a 9.5% stake in six banks:
- ✓ ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, Suryoday Small Finance Bank, Bandhan Bank, Yes Bank, and IndusInd Bank.

Q. What is the primary purpose of the ‘Baanknet Portal’, recently seen in the news?

- A) To provide loans to small businesses.
B) To consolidate information on properties put up for e-auction by public sector banks.
C) To track the financial performance of public sector banks.
D) To facilitate online tax payments

Answer : B

- ✓ The government recently launched a revamped e-auction portal, ‘Baanknet,’ in Delhi.
- ✓ About Baanknet Portal:
- ✓ It is an e-auction portal that consolidates information on all properties that are put up for e-auction by public sector banks (PSBs).
- ✓ The portal is a one-stop destination for buyers and investors offering a wide range of properties.
- ✓ The listings on the new platform include residential properties such as flats, independent houses, and open plots, as well as commercial properties, industrial land and buildings, shops, vehicles, plant and machinery, and agricultural and non-agricultural land.
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ The new portal is equipped with improved and enhanced features, including frictionless user journeys where the portal will have the entire pre-auction, auction, and post-auction journeys in a single application.

- ✓ It includes an automated and integrated payment gateway alongside KYC tools, all built on a microservices-based architecture that allows for third-party integration through open application programming interface (API).
- ✓ Users can benefit from a dashboard feature for easy access to 'Spend Analytics' and various 'Management Information System (MIS) Reports' at the click of a button.
- ✓ Additionally, a dedicated helpdesk and call centre facility with a callback request option ensures customer support.
- ✓ More than 122,500 properties have already been migrated to the new portal for auction.

Q. Logistics Ease Across Different States Report is published by:

- A) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways of India
- B) Ministry of Civil Aviation
- C) NITI Aayog
- D) Ministry of Commerce & Industry

Answer : D

- ✓ Recently, the Union Minister of Commerce & Industry released the "Logistics Ease Across Different States (LEADS) 2024" report in New Delhi.
- ✓ It is the 6th edition of the LEADS report.
- ✓ It was conceived on the lines of the Logistics Performance Index of the World Bank in 2018 by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- ✓ It evaluates logistics performance across four key pillars: Logistics Infrastructure, Logistics Services, Operating and Regulatory Environment, and the newly introduced Sustainable Logistics.
- ✓ Key highlights of LEADS 2024:
 1. Coastal Group
 - ✓ Achievers: Gujarat, Karnataka, Maharashtra, Odisha, Tamil Nadu
 - ✓ Fast Movers: Andhra Pradesh, Goa
 - ✓ Aspirers: Kerala, West Bengal
 2. Landlocked Group
 - ✓ Achievers: Haryana, Telangana, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand
 - ✓ Fast Movers: Bihar, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Punjab, Rajasthan
 - ✓ Aspirers: Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand
 3. North-Eastern Group
 - ✓ Achievers: Assam, Arunachal Pradesh
 - ✓ Fast Movers: Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland, Sikkim, Tripura
 - ✓ Aspirers: Manipur
 4. Union Territories
 - ✓ Achievers: Chandigarh, Delhi
 - ✓ Fast Movers: Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu, Jammu and Kashmir, Lakshadweep, Puducherry
 - ✓ Aspirers: Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ladakh

Q. What is the new name of Shriram Housing Finance following its rebranding?

- A) HomePlus Finance
- B) Truhome Finance
- C) SafeNest Finance
- D) UrbanNest Finance

Answer : B

- ✓ Shriram Housing Finance has rebranded itself as Truhome Finance after being acquired by Warburg Pincus and Qatar Investment Authority (QIA), with a ₹1,225 crore investment.

- ✓ This strategic rebranding aligns with the company's vision to enhance accessibility to affordable home loans, particularly in Tier 2 to Tier 4 cities.
- ✓ The new identity underscores a commitment to trust, transparency, and customer-centric services while setting ambitious growth targets for assets under management and disbursements.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) Scheme:

1. It aims to boost the Indian startup ecosystem and provide access to domestic capital.
2. Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has been given the mandate of operating this fund.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Union Minister for Commerce and Industry recently emphasized that much of the success of the Startup India mission can be attributed to key funding mechanisms, particularly the Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS).
- ✓ About Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) Scheme:
- ✓ It was approved and established in 2016 with a corpus of Rs 10,000 crore, with contribution spread over the 14th and 15th Finance Commission cycle based on progress of implementation.
- ✓ Objective: To provide much-needed boost to the Indian startup ecosystem and enable access to domestic capital.
- ✓ The scheme does not directly invest in startups; instead, it provides capital to SEBI-registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), known as daughter funds, who in turn invest money in growing Indian startups through equity and equity-linked instruments.
- ✓ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has been given the mandate of operating this fund through the selection of suitable daughter funds and overseeing the disbursement of committed capital.
- ✓ AIFs supported under FFS are required to invest at least 2 times the amount committed under FFS in startups.

Q. Ashok Chandra has been appointed as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of which bank?

- A) Punjab National Bank
B) Kotak Mahindra Bank
C) Indian Overseas Bank
D) Canara Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ PNB Appoints Ashok Chandra as MD and CEO.
- ✓ Ashok Chandra has officially assumed the position of Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Punjab National Bank (PNB).
- ✓ Prior to this appointment, Chandra served as Executive Director at Canara Bank from November 21, 2022, to January 15, 2025

PNB IN NEWS 2024-25

- ✓ Ashok Chandra has officially assumed the position of Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Punjab National Bank (PNB).
- ✓ PNB launches its first cybersecurity Hackathon 2024-25 with the theme "Code Against Malware"
- ✓ Punjab National Bank has launched PNB Palaash debit card, a new Debit card variant made from recycled Pvc plastic.
- ✓ Carlyle group sells 12.8 pc stake in PNB Housing for Rs 2,578 cr; Singapore govt picks up stake

- ✓ PNB has entered into a MoU with the Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) to offer concessional loans to SAIL employees.
- ✓ Punjab National Bank plans to open a representative office in Dubai.
- ✓ About Punjab National Bank (PNB)
- ✓ Punjab National Bank is the third largest public sector bank after the State Bank of India and Bank of Baroda.
- ✓ The Punjab National Bank was established as a private bank in 1894 and commenced operation in 1895.
- ✓ It is the first bank to set up with Indian capital.
- ✓ Lala Lajpat Rai was the first person to open an account in the bank.
- ✓ It was nationalised in 1969, and presently, the government of India has a majority stake.
- ✓ Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO): Ashok Chandra
- ✓ Headquarters: New Delhi
- ✓ Tagline of the Bank: A name you can bank upon.

Q. Which bank is spearheading the State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) initiatives for Maha Kumbh Mela 2025 by offering AI-driven customer support, forex transaction facilities, onsite ATMs, and coin vending machines?

A) Bank of Baroda	B) HDFC Bank
C) Kotak Mahindra Bank	D) State Bank of India

Answer : A

- ✓ Bank of Baroda to provide AI-driven support, forex facility, ATMs, and coin vending machines for Maha Kumbh 2025
- ✓ Attracting millions of visitors to Prayagraj, the Bank of Baroda (BoB) has unveiled plans to provide advanced banking services.
- ✓ As the convenor of the State Level Bankers' Committee (SLBC) for Uttar Pradesh, the bank aims to promote digital payments and offer AI-driven customer support for the pilgrims.
- ✓ BoB set up two full-fledged branches equipped with forex facilities. Additionally, it deployed onsite and mobile ATMs, along with coin vending machines, to meet the diverse banking needs of the visitors
- ✓ The bank is extensively promoting its newly launched UPI payment PSP app, BoB e-Pay, offering a complete suite of payment features.

BOB IN NEWS 2024-25

- Bank of Baroda to provide AI-driven support, forex facility, ATMs, and coin vending machines for Maha Kumbh 2025.
- Bank of Baroda Expands Employee Assistance Program to Promote Emotional and Mental Well-being.
- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Bank of Baroda (BoB) have expanded their longstanding partnership to continue delivering financial inclusion solutions for the next 5 years.
- Bank of Baroda ropes in Sachin Tendulkar as global brand ambassador
- Bank of Baroda (BoB) has introduced 'Aditi', a GenAI-powered virtual relationship manager, to enhance the digital customer service experience.
- Bank of Baroda launches GenAI Hackathon in collaboration with Microsoft.
- Bank of Baroda (BoB) has launched the BoB Earth Green Term Deposit Scheme, aimed at raising deposits for financing eligible environment-friendly projects and sectors.
- Bank of Baroda (BOB) said the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to waive the ₹5 crore penalty that was previously imposed on it due to a shortfall in soiled note remittances.
- Bank of Baroda (BoB) has raised ₹5,000 crore through the issuance of long-term infrastructure bonds
- Bank of Baroda (BOB)
- Founded : 1908
- Founder : Sayajirao Gaekwad III

- Headquarters : Vadodara, Gujarat
- MD & CEO : Debadatta Chand
- Tagline : India's International Bank

Q. Which entity has inked an agreement with Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) for 120 billion Japanese yen loan facility?

- A) PFC
B) NTPC
C) GAIL
D) BHEL

Answer : A

- ✓ PFC signs 120 bn yen loan pact with Japan's JBIC for RE project.
- ✓ State-owned PFC has inked an agreement with Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC) for 120 billion Japanese yen (around Rs 6,600 crore) loan facility.
- ✓ According to a PFC statement, under the agreement signed, JBIC will provide funding of JPY 72 billion, and the balance will be funded by commercial banks.
- ✓ This long-term (up to 20 years) loan to PFC will be provided under JBIC's initiative 'Global action for Reconciling Economic growth and Environmental preservation' (GREEN).
- ✓ The funds will be utilized by PFC to finance its renewable energy portfolio, advancing India's transition to non-fossil-fuel-based energy sources.

Q. Which bank has introduced a new specialised fixed deposit scheme, ' Chiranjeevi-Super Senior Citizen FD,' targeting customers aged 80 years and above?

- A) IDBI Bank
B) IDFC first Bank
C) ICICI Bank
D) HDFC Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ IDBI Bank unveils Chiranjeevi super senior citizen Fd scheme, offers 8.5% interest
- ✓ IDBI Bank has introduced a new specialised fixed deposit scheme, 'IDBI Chiranjeevi-Super Senior Citizen FD,' targeting customers aged 80 years and above.
- ✓ The premium offering provides enhanced interest rates, with an additional 65 basis points above standard fixed deposit rates and 15 basis points over existing senior citizen rates
- ✓ The 555-day tenure under this scheme offers an interest rate of 8.05 per cent per annum, making it one of the most competitive options in the market for super senior citizens.
- ✓ The bank has also introduced appealing rates for other tenure options, including 7.90 per cent per annum for 375 days, 8.00 per cent per annum for 444 days, and 7.85 per cent per annum for 700 days.

IDBI BANK IN NEWS 2024-25

- IDBI Bank unveils Chiranjeevi super senior citizen Fd scheme, offers 8.5% interest.
- IDBI Bank board of directors approved raising ₹10,000 crore through long-term bonds.
- Stressed Assets Stabilisation Fund (SASF) of IDBI Bank sold a portfolio of non-performing assets (NPAs) worth Rs 6,151.16 crore to Omkara Asset Reconstruction Company (ARC).
- RBI has completed its review of potential buyers for a majority stake in IDBI Bank, approving Fairfax Financial holding, Emirates NBD , and Kotak Mahindra Bank as bidders.
- Currently Govt holds 45.48 % stake and LIC holds 49.24% stake in IDBI.
- IDBI Bank
- Founded : 1964
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- Chairman : M. R. Kumar

- Q.** Consider the following statements with respect to “eBkay”:

2. “eBkay” platform enables the online auction of the attached assets transparently and cleanly for the improved realization of value by the Public Sector banks (PSBs) Which of the following codes given below is/are correct?

- Answer : C

- Q.** What is the name of the new food delivery app launched by Swiggy, It is a 15-minute food delivery app offering quick snacks and meals, similar to Zepto's Zepto Cafe?

- Answer : A

- ✓ Swiggy launches new app 'Snacc' for 15-minute food delivery
- ✓ Swiggy has launched a new standalone food delivery app 'Snacc by Swiggy'. Snacc is a 15-minute food delivery app offering quick snacks and meals, similar to Zepto's Zepto Cafe.
- ✓ Snacc is currently being piloted in very select pin codes of Bengaluru.
- ✓ The offerings include items like tea, coffee, breakfast items, quick meals and dessert options.
- ✓ Most recently, Zomato launched a 15-minute food delivery option on its main app, where it is delivering quick-to-prepare and ready to eat options from restaurants within a 2-kilometre radius.

Swiggy IN NEWS 2024-25

- Swiggy has launched a new standalone app called "Pyng" to enter the professional services marketplace enlisting lawyers, astrologers, therapists, etc.
- Food aggregator platform Swiggy has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Robin Hood Army, an NGO focused on fighting hunger through surplus food distribution.
- The partnership aims to tackle food wastage and hunger, with a goal to distribute 50 million meals by 2030.
- Swiggy has launched a new standalone food delivery app 'Snacc by Swiggy'. Snacc is a 15-minute food delivery app offering quick snacks and meals, similar to Zepto's Zepto Cafe.
- Swiggy to launch a standalone mobile app for its quick commerce service Instamart.
- Swiggy Partners with NSE to Empower its Delivery Partners with Financial Literacy Programs.
- Swiggy has launched a new initiative "Project Next" for its delivery partners.
- Swiggy launched the "International Logins" feature for non-resident Indians (NRIs).
- Swiggy has joined hands with the Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) to launch Swiggy Skills.
- Swiggy launched an industry-first Incognito mode feature that allows users to place private orders for food and quick commerce.
- Swiggy
- Founded : 2014
- Founders : Sriharsha Majety, Nandan Reddy & Rahul Jaimini
- Headquarters : Bangalore, Karnataka
- CEO : Sriharsha Majety
- CEO - Food : Rohit Kapoor
- CEO - Instamart : Phani Kishan Addepalli

Q. As per Union Budget 2025-26, The central government is likely to increase the borrowing limit under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme from Rs 3 lakh to Rs ?

- A) ₹5 lakh B) ₹4 lakh
C) ₹3.5 lakh D) ₹4.5 lakh

Answer : A

- ✓ Budget likely to raise KCC credit limit from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh
- ✓ The central government is likely to increase the borrowing limit under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme from Rs 3 lakh to Rs 5 lakh in the upcoming Union Budget for FY26
- ✓ The government is preparing to increase the loan limit on Kisan Credit Card (KCC) to ₹5 lakh.
- ✓ Currently, the maximum borrowing limit under the Kisan Credit Card (Budget 2025) scheme is ₹3 lakh.
- ✓ According to sources, this proposal may be included in the budget (Budget 2025), which will be presented in Parliament on 1 February.
- ✓ Kisan Credit Card Scheme
- ✓ The Kisan Credit Card scheme was launched in 1998.
- ✓ The aim of this scheme is to provide farmers with accessible and affordable credit for crop production and agriculture-related activities.
- ✓ Currently, a 9% interest rate applies to Kisan Credit Cards (Budget 2025).
- ✓ However, the government provides a 2% interest subsidy, and farmers who repay their loans on time receive an additional 3% discount. In this way, farmers can borrow at an interest rate of only 4%.

INCREASE LIMIT IN NEWS 2024-25

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) increased the UPI 123Pay per-transaction limit from ₹5,000 to ₹10,000, and the UPI Lite limit from ₹500 to ₹1,000.
- ✓ RBI increased the UPI Lite transaction limit and wallet limit.

- ✓ **Wallet limit:** The wallet limit was increased from ₹2,000 to ₹5,000
- ✓ **Transaction limit:** The transaction limit was increased from ₹500 to ₹1,000 per transaction
- ✓ RBI increased the collateral-free loan limit for farmers from ₹1.6 lakh to ₹2 lakh, effective January 1, 2025.
- ✓ The RBI raised the bulk fixed deposit limit from ₹2 crore to ₹3 crore.
- ✓ For Scheduled Commercial Banks and Small Finance Banks, bulk deposit means 'Single Rupee term deposits of Rs3 crore and above'.
- ✓ For the Local Area Banks and the Regional Rural Bank, the bulk deposit means a Single Rupee term deposit of Rs1 crore and above
- ✓ RBI has increased the upper limit for tax payments through the Unified Payments Interface (UPI) to Rs 5 lakh per transaction from the previous limit of Rs 1 lakh.
- ✓ The government has doubled the limit of Mudra loans under the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY) from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 20 lakh, introducing a new 'Tarun Plus' category.
- ✓ Reserve Bank of India has increased the maximum amount outstanding in respect of full-KYC PPIs (KYC-compliant PPIs) from Rs. 1 lakh to Rs. 2 lakh
- ✓ The Indian government has raised the maximum limit of retirement gratuity and death gratuity from Rs 20 lakh to Rs 25 lakh, effective from January 1, 2024.

A) Paytm

C) PhonePe

Answer : C

PhonePe IN NEWS 2024-25

- Online travel aggregator (OTA) ixigo and the digital payments platform PhonePe have partnered to allow users to book flights, buses, and trains directly within the PhonePe app.
- PhonePe and PickMe have partnered to allow Indian travelers in Sri Lanka to make UPI-based QR payments for rides on the PickMe ride-hailing platform.
- PhonePe
- Founded : 2015
- Headquarters : Bengaluru, Karnataka
- Founder : Sameer Nigam, Rahul Chari & Burzin Engineer
- CEO : Sameer Nigam.

Q. Which bank has completed the acquisition of ₹3,300 crore personal loan portfolio of Standard Chartered Bank India?

- A) Kotak Mahindra Bank B) Indian Overseas Bank
C) Punjab National Bank D) State Bank of India

Answer : A

- ✓ Kotak Mahindra Bank has completed the acquisition of Rs 3,300 crore personal loan book of Standard Chartered Bank India following regulatory approvals.

KOTAK MAHINDRA BANK IN NEWS 2024-25

- Kotak Mahindra Bank acquires Rs.3,300 crore loan book from Standard chartered bank of India .
- RBI has given its approval to HDFC Bank group to acquire “aggregate holding” of up to 9.50 per cent of the share capital or voting rights in Kotak Mahindra Bank, AU Small Finance Bank and Capital Small Finance Bank.
- Zurich Insurance Company Ltd (Zurich) acquired a 70% stake in Kotak Mahindra General Insurance Company Limited .
- RBI has completed its review of potential buyers for a majority stake in IDBI Bank, approving Fairfax Financial holding, Emirates NBD , and Kotak Mahindra Bank as bidders.
- Currently Govt holds 45.48 % stake and LIC holds 49.24% stake in IDBI.
- Kotak Mahindra Bank unveiled a new Distribution structure to integrate its physical branches, digital platforms, and voice channels.
- Zurich buys 70% stake in Kotak for Rs.5,560 crore, Kotak Mahindra Bank now holds a 30% stake in the general insurance company.
- Kotak Mahindra Bank
- Founded 1985
- Founders : Uday Kotak
- Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- MD & CEO : Ashok Vaswani
- Tagline : Let's Make Money Simple Ab Kona Kona Kotak.

Q. With reference to Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs), consider the following statements:

1. ARC is required to have a minimum net owned fund (NOF) of Rs 300 crore
2. They are mandated to maintain a capital adequacy ratio of a minimum of 15% of its total risk-weighted assets.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Entity Locker is integrated with the Union Ministry of Corporate Affairs, the Goods and Services Tax Network (GSTN), the Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), and other regulatory institutions.

Q. What is the Digital Payments Index (DPI) for September 2024 as per RBI data?

- A) 465.33
- B) 304.06
- C) 512.44
- D) 458.15

Answer : A

- ✓ Digital payments across the country registered an 11.11 per cent year-on-year rise as on September 2024, according to RBI's index that measures the adoption of online transactions.
- ✓ RBI's Digital Payments Index (RBI-DPI) for September 2024 stands at 465.33 as against 445.5 for March 2024.
- ✓ RBI has introduced Digital Payments Index in January 2021 with March 2018 as the base year to capture the extent of digitisation of payments across the country.
- ✓ This means that the DPI score for March 2018 is set at 100.
- ✓ RBI has started publishing the Digital Payments Index (DPI) on a semi-annual basis from March 2021 onwards with a lag of 4 months
- ✓ This means that the DPI will be released by RBI for March and September every year in the months of July and January respectively.
- ✓ The index comprises five broad parameters that enable the measurement of the deepening and penetration of digital payments in the country over different periods.
- ✓ These parameters are Payment Enablers (weightage 25 per cent); Payment Infrastructure Demand-side factors (10 per cent); Payment Infrastructure Supply-side factors (15 per cent); Payment Performance (45 per cent); and Consumer Centricity (5 per cent).

Q. Which parameter has the highest weight in the RBI DPI?

- A) Payment Enablers
- B) Payment Performance
- C) Consumer Centricity
- D) Payment Infrastructure

Answer : B

- ✓ According to the RBI's Digital Payments Index (DPI), the parameter with the highest weight is "Payment Performance" at 45%;
- ✓ Other DPI parameters and their weights are:
- ✓ Payment Enablers: 25%
- ✓ Payment Infrastructure - Demand-side factors: 10%
- ✓ Payment Infrastructure - Supply-side factors: 15%
- ✓ Consumer Centricity: 5%

Q. Which entity has launched iSPOT Portal for Reporting Technical Glitches?

- A) RBI
- B) SEBI
- C) SIDBI
- D) IRDAI

Answer : B

- ✓ SEBI Introduces iSPOT Portal for Reporting Technical Glitches.
- ✓ SEBI has launched iSPOT, a web-based portal for MIIs to report technical glitches, replacing the previous email-based system.
- ✓ Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has launched a web-based portal, Integrated SEBI Portal for Technical Glitches (iSPOT), for reporting technical issues faced by stock exchanges and other market infrastructure institutions (MIIs).

- ✓ This new system aims to streamline the submission of preliminary and final Root Cause Analysis (RCA) reports and establish a centralised repository for such incidents.
- ✓ SEBI highlighted that iSPOT will provide automated reminders to MIIs regarding RCA submissions and generate system-driven reports for regulatory oversight.
- ✓ The portal has been integrated with SEBI's Intermediary (SI) portal, allowing MIIs to access it using their existing login credentials

Q. “When-listed” platform is an initiative of:

- A) Securities and Exchange Board of India
- B) Reserve Bank of India
- C) World Bank
- D) World Economic Forum

Answer : A

- ✓ The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) is looking to launch a “when-listed” platform.
- ✓ It is launched for trading of shares of companies that have finished their initial public offering (IPO) and are yet to be listed on stock exchanges.
- ✓ This is aimed at reducing the activity in the grey market, which is largely unregulated and has a significant influence on listings.
- ✓ Present timeline of listing shares in India
- ✓ At present, once the IPO is closed, shares have to be listed on trading platforms in trading plus three working days (T+3), with T being the closing day of the offer. The allotment of shares is done on T+1 day.
- ✓ In the period between the allotment of shares and listing day, investors trade in the grey market.

Q. Who has become the first fintech in India to launch a full-scale Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) wallet, e-rupee (₹), in collaboration with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Yes Bank?

- A) Upstox
- B) Instamojo
- C) CRED
- D) MobiKwik

Answer : D

- ✓ MobiKwik has become the first fintech in India to launch a full-scale Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) wallet, e-rupee (₹), in collaboration with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Yes Bank.
- ✓ The ₹ wallet, now available to all Android users of MobiKwik, enables peer-to-peer (P2P) and peer-to-merchant (P2M) transactions. Users can pay by scanning any UPI QR code using ₹, as the wallet is fully compatible with the Unified Payments Interface (UPI)
- ✓ The wallet allows daily transactions of up to ₹50,000, with a limit of ₹10,000 per transaction. It supports denominations ranging from ₹0.50 to ₹500.
- ✓ Note :- CRED launched the beta version of its ₹ wallet, developed in collaboration with the RBI and Yes Bank as the sponsor bank.
- ✓ MobiKwik
- ✓ Founded : 2009
- ✓ Founders : Bipin Preet Singh & Upasana Taku
- ✓ Headquarters : Gurgaon, Haryana
- ✓ Co-Founder, MD & CEO : Bipin Preet Singh
- ✓ MobiKwik is an Indian financial technology company

Q. Who has launched beta version of e₹ wallet, becomes first fintech to integrate RBI's digital currency?

- A) Upstox
- B) CRED
- C) Groww
- D) MobiKwik

Answer : B

- ✓ Bengaluru based CRED launches beta version of e₹ wallet, becomes first fintech to integrate RBI's digital currency
- ✓ The product was developed in collaboration with the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and Yes Bank -- which would function as the sponsor bank and enable CBDC issuance for Cred -- the firm said in a statement.
- ✓ At present, Cred is a third party application provider (TPAP) on India's real-time payment rails Unified Payment Interface (UPI)
- ✓ Cred members whitelisted for the beta can pay UPI-linked bank accounts, and send/receive money to other CBDC wallets," the Bengaluru-based fintech firm said in a statement
- ✓ The wallet supports transactions up to Rs 10,000 per transfer with a daily limit of Rs 50,000.
- ✓ Cred said that future updates will enable programmable merchant payments, CRED Pay integration and PIN-less transactions below Rs 500.
- ✓ CRED
- ✓ Founded : 2018
- ✓ Founder : Kunal Shah
- ✓ Headquarters : Bangalore, Karnataka
- ✓ CEO : Kunal Shah
- ✓ Dreamplug Technologies Pvt. Ltd (CRED) is an Indian fintech company

Q. Which fintech firm has completed its merger with North East Small Finance Bank?

- A) Paytm
- B) PolicyBazaar
- C) Slice
- D) PhonePe

Answer : C

- ✓ Slice to rebrand as Slice Small Finance Bank after North East SFB merger.
- ✓ Slice completed its merger with North East Small Finance Bank, the bank is set to rebrand its name to Slice Small Finance Bank Limited (Slice SFB).
- ✓ The company received the National Company Law Tribunal's (NCLT) approval for its merger with North East Small Finance Bank.
- ✓ Earlier, Slice had acquired a 5 per cent stake in North East Small Finance Bank for \$3.4 million in September 2022

Q. Which entity has launched a digital knowledge repository "Dharohar"?

- A) RBI
- B) SEBI
- C) SIDBI
- D) IRDAI

Answer : B

- ✓ SEBI launches digital knowledge repository, Dharohar.
- ✓ Capital markets regulator SEBI has launched a digital knowledge repository, "Dharohar - Milestones in the Indian securities market", on the occasion of the country's 76th Republic Day.
- ✓ The securities market, known for its diverse products, participants, and institutions, has a long-standing history of organised trading over the past 150 years.
- ✓ "Dharohar has been designed to document and showcase this rich heritage and evolution of the Indian securities market,"

- Q.** What is the maximum amount of compensation for loss of the complainant's time, expenses incurred and for harassment/mental anguish suffered by the complainant that RBI Ombudsman can award?
- A) Rs 1 lakh
 - B) Rs 2 lakh
 - C) Rs 1.5 lakh
 - D) Rs 2.5 lakh

Answer : A

- ✓ Up to Rupees One lakh for the loss of the complainant's time, expenses incurred and for harassment/mental anguish suffered by the complainant

INTEGRATED OMBUDSMAN SCHEME

- ✓ Ombudsman Scheme of RBI, is a grievance redressal mechanism framed by RBI for customers of banking sectors.
- ✓ RBI launches Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2021 by integrating its old Ombudsman Schemes
- ✓ The new scheme integrates the existing three Ombudsman schemes of RBI namely,
 - I. the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006
 - II. the Ombudsman Scheme for Non-Banking Financial Companies, 2018; and
 - III. the Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions, 2019
- ✓ The integration of the earlier three Ombudsman Scheme is a step towards 'One Nation One Ombudsman' approach by making the RBI Ombudsman mechanism jurisdiction neutral.
- ✓ Apart from this, Non-Scheduled Primary Co-operative Banks with a deposit size of Rs. 50 crore and above, have been brought into the ambit of Integrated Ombudsman Scheme, 2021.
- ✓ A Centralised Receipt and Processing Centre (CRPC) has been set up at RBI, Chandigarh for receipt and initial processing of physical and email complaints in any language.
- ✓ The Executive Director-in charge of Consumer Education and Protection Department of RBI would be the Appellate Authority under the Scheme
- ✓ Banking Ombudsman Scheme
- ✓ Introduction : The Banking Ombudsman Scheme of the Reserve Bank of India provides the Customers of Commercial Bank a forum to lodge complain relating to certain services provided by bank.
- ✓ Section of Banking Ombudsman Scheme : The Banking Ombudsman Scheme is introduced under Section 35 A of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 by RBI with effect from 1995.
- ✓ Current Banking Ombudsman Scheme in Force : The Banking Ombudsman Scheme 2006
- ✓ Banks covered: under the Banking Ombudsman Scheme, 2006 : All Scheduled Commercial Banks, Regional Rural Banks and Scheduled Primary Co-operative Banks are covered under the Scheme.
- ✓ Fees for filing complaint with Banking Ombudsman : No fees is charged.
- ✓ Compensation under the Banking Ombudsman Scheme : Maximum Rs 20 lakh or the amount of loss suffered by the complainant arising directly out of the act or omission of the bank, whichever is lower.
- ✓ Compensation for Mental Agony : Maximum Rs 1 lakh (The Banking Ombudsman may award compensation not exceeding ₹ 1 lakh to the complainant for mental agony and harassment faced by him from his bank.
- ✓ Number of Banking Ombudsman/Offices : Presently there are 22 Banking Ombudsman Offices in India
- ✓ Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions
- ✓ Introduction : The Ombudsman Scheme for Digital Transactions, 2019 has been introduced by the Reserve Bank of India w.e.f January 31, 2019 to deals with complaints regarding digital transactions undertaken by customers.
- ✓ Section and Act : The Scheme is being introduced under Section 18 Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007, with effect from January 31, 2019

Q. With reference to the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS), consider the following statements:

1. Both current and future Central Government employees covered under National Pension System (NPS) are eligible to opt for the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS).
2. Under the UPS, employees who complete 25 years of service will receive 50% of the average basic pay earned during the 12 months prior to retirement.
3. If the payout holder passes away after superannuation, the legally wedded spouse will receive a family payout equal to 60% of the payout that was admissible to the holder

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
- B) 2 and 3 only
- C) 1 and 3 only
- D) 1, 2 and 3

Answer : D

- ✓ Union Finance Ministry recently notified operationalisation of the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) as an option under the National Pension System (NPS) for central government employees.
- ✓ About Unified Pension Scheme (UPS):
- ✓ UPS shall apply to Central Government employees who are covered under the National Pension System (NPS) and who choose this option under the NPS.
- ✓ Both current and future Central Government employees covered under the NPS have the option to choose between the UPS or continue with the existing NPS plan.
- ✓ Once a decision is made to switch to the UPS, it is considered final and binding.
- ✓ Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) may issue regulations for operationalizing the UPS.
- ✓ The effective date for operationalization of the Unified Pension Scheme shall be April 1, 2025.
- ✓ Key Features of UPS:
- ✓ UPS provides a guaranteed payout to employees upon superannuation.
- ✓ UPS will offer 50% of the average basic pay drawn by a Central government employee during the 12 months prior to retirement, provided they complete 25 years of service.
- ✓ Employees with less than 25 years of service but more than 10 years will receive a pension on a proportionate basis.
- ✓ A minimum payout of Rs 10,000 per month is assured for employees with 10 or more years of qualifying service.
- ✓ For those who choose to retire voluntarily after 25 years of service, the payout will begin from the date they would have reached superannuation if they had continued working.
- ✓ In the event of the payout holder's death after superannuation, a family payout at 60% of the payout admissible to the holder will be given to the legally wedded spouse.
- ✓ Additionally, dearness relief will be available on the assured payout and family payout, calculated in the same manner. Dearness Relief will be worked out in the same manner as Dearness Allowance applicable to serving employees.
- ✓ UPS or assured payout would not be available in case of removal or dismissal from service or resignation of the employee.
- ✓ Contributions under the UPS:
- ✓ Unlike the old pension scheme, UPS is contributory in nature, wherein employees will be required to contribute 10 percent of their basic salary and dearness allowance while the employer's contribution (the central government) will be 18.5 percent.
- ✓ However, the eventual payout depends on the market returns on that corpus, mostly invested in government debt.

Q. With reference to MSME Trade Enablement and Marketing (TEAM) Initiative, consider the following:

1. It has been launched under the "Raising and Accelerating MSME Productivity (RAMP)" Programme.
2. It is an initiative in partnership with the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC).
3. It will focus on onboarding 5 lakh micro and small enterprises, with 50 per cent of these being SC/ST led businesses.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1, 2 and 3
D) None

Answer : A

- ✓ Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME), in partnership with the Open Network for Digital Commerce (ONDC), has announced the launch of MSME Trade Enablement and Marketing (TEAM) initiative to enable small and micro enterprises to join ONDC.
- ✓ It has been launched under the "Raising and Accelerating MSME Productivity (RAMP)" Programme.
- ✓ It is aimed to enable MSMEs to embrace digital commerce and expand their market presence.
- ✓ Funding: The initiative has a budget of ₹277.35 crore over 3 years.
- ✓ Targeted beneficiaries: It will focus on onboarding 5 lakh micro and small enterprises, with 50 per cent of these being women-led businesses.
- ✓ It will focus on
 - ✓ Connecting MSMEs with the ONDC Network.
 - ✓ Provides access to digital storefronts, integrated payment systems, and logistics support.
 - ✓ Reduce operational barriers and helps businesses tap into wider customer bases.
 - ✓ It emphasizes formalizing operations and establishing digital transaction histories, which will enhance the credibility and trust of participating MSMEs.
- ✓ Over 150 workshops will be held across Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities, targeting key MSME clusters, with special attention to women and SC/ST-led enterprises.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (MCGS-MSMEs):

1. It aims at providing 60 per cent guarantee coverage by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC) to Member Lending Institutions.
2. Under this scheme a borrower should be an MSME with valid Udyam Registration Number.
3. It provides a loan guarantee up to Rs 100 crore

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1, 2 and 3
D) None

Answer : C

- ✓ The central government approved the Mutual Credit Guarantee Scheme for micro, small and medium enterprises (MCGS-MSMEs), guaranteeing loans up to ₹100 crore.
- ✓ It aims at providing 60 per cent guarantee coverage by National Credit Guarantee Trustee Company Limited (NCGTC) to Member Lending Institutions (MLIs) for credit facility up to Rs 100 crore to eligible MSMEs for purchase of equipment/machinery.
- ✓ Salient Features
- ✓ Borrower should be an MSME with valid Udyam Registration Number;

- ✓ It provides a loan guarantee up to Rs 100 crore, with a minimum of 75 per cent of the project cost allocated for equipment or machinery.
- ✓ Under the scheme for loans upto Rs.50 crore shall have repayment period of upto 8 years with upto 2 years moratorium period on principal instalments.
- ✓ Annual Guarantee Fee on loan under the Scheme shall be Nil during the year of sanction.
- ✓ During the next 3 years, it shall be 1.5% p.a. of loan outstanding as on March 31 of previous year.
- ✓ Thereafter, Annual Guarantee Fee shall be 1% p.a. of loan outstanding as on March 31 of previous year.
- ✓ The Scheme will be applicable to all loans sanctioned under MCGS-MSME during the period of 4 years from the date of issue of operational guidelines of the scheme or till cumulative guarantee of Rs. 7 lakh crore are issued, whichever is earlier.

Q. Which bank has launched a TAB-based digital onboarding process for NRIs to open NRE and NRO accounts?

A) State Bank of India	B) Kotak Mahindra Bank
C) Indian Overseas Bank	D) Canara Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ The State Bank of India (SBI) has introduced a TAB-based, fully digital onboarding process for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) to open NRE and NRO accounts.
- ✓ Launched on January 2, 2025, this initiative eliminates the need for physical paperwork by enabling digital document verification. It ensures faster account setup and enhances convenience for NRIs.

Q. Which bank has begun offering collateral free loans up to Rs.50 lakh for students heading out to top foreign universities?

A) State Bank of India	B) Punjab National Bank
C) Indian Overseas Bank	D) Kotak Mahindra Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ India's largest lender State Bank of India (SBI) has begun offering collateral-free study loans of up to ₹50 lakh for students heading out to top foreign universities, entering an arena dominated by top private lenders.
- ✓ Students enrolling at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Imperial College London, University of Oxford, Harvard University and University of Cambridge can access collateral-free loans up to the new limit.

Q. The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) has invested Rs 745 crore in long-term bonds issued by NDR InvIT. Who sponsors NDR InvIT?

A) India Ratings	B) CARE Ratings
C) Reserve Bank of India	D) NDR Warehousing Private Limited

Answer : D

- ✓ NaBFID invests Rs 745 crore in long-term bonds issued by NDR InvIT
- ✓ The National Bank for Financing Infrastructure and Development (NaBFID) has invested Rs 745 crore in long-term bonds issued by NDR InvIT.
- ✓ NDR InvIT is an Infrastructure Investment Trust managed by NDR InvIT Managers and sponsored by NDR Warehousing Private Limited.
- ✓ These 15-year bonds, rated AAA/Stable by India Ratings (FITCH) and CARE, underscore NDR InvIT's key role in advancing India's warehousing and industrial parks sector.

- ✓ NaBFID is a newly created development finance institution (DFI) that has been set up by the government to support the development of long-term non-recourse infrastructure financing, including the development of the bonds and derivatives markets necessary for infrastructure financing and to carry on the business of financing infrastructure.
- ✓ Earlier this year, the Government had infused ₹ 20,000 crore into NaBFID
- ✓ KV Kamath is the chairman of NaBFID
- ✓ Rajkiran Rai named as new MD of NaBFID
- ✓ NaBFID is a newly set up development financial institution (DFIs) in India.
- ✓ The authorized share capital of the NaBFID is Rs one lakh crore. The initial paid-up capital of NaBFID is Rs 20,000 crore.
- ✓ The headquarters of NaBFID is in Mumbai

Q. Under which guidelines have VFS Capital applied for a small finance bank licence?

- A) 'Greenfield' Bank Licensing Guidelines
- B) 'Rural Finance' Bank Licensing Guidelines
- C) 'Financial Inclusion' Bank Licensing Scheme
- D) 'On-tap' Licensing Scheme for SFBs in the Private Sector

Answer : D

- ✓ VFS Capital seeks small finance bank licence from RBI under 'on-tap' scheme
- ✓ Microfinance company VFS Capital has applied for a small finance bank (SFB) licence under the guidelines for 'on tap' licensing of SFBs in the private sector.
- ✓ During the quarter ended December 31, 2024, the Reserve Bank of India has received one application under the guidelines for 'on tap' Licensing of Small Finance Banks in the Private Sector dated December 5, 2019 from VFS Capital Limited.
- ✓ VFS Capital, previously known as Village Financial Services Private and headquartered in West Bengal, was incorporated in 1994 as a non-deposit taking non-banking financial company-microfinance institution (NBFC-MFI).
- ✓ It started microfinance activity in 2006 and got registered with RBI as NBFC-MFI in September 2013.
- ✓ VFS provides loans to individual female members mainly from rural areas in a joint liability group (JLG) with each group consisting of five members. VFS Capital makes its entire disbursements through digital mode.

Q. Which of the following small savings schemes has an interest rate of 8.2% for the January-March 2025 quarter?

- A) Kisan Vikas Patra
- B) National Savings Certificate
- C) Public Provident Fund
- D) Sukanya Samriddhi Account

Answer : D

- ✓ The Union Ministry of Finance has made no change in the interest rates on the various schemes under the National Small Saving Scheme, for the last quarters of the 2024-25 fiscal year.
- ✓ The interest rate will remain unchanged from 1st January to 31st March 2025.
- ✓ The Union Ministry of Finance has reviewed the interest rates on the small saving schemes every quarter since 2016.
- ✓ What are the National Small Savings Schemes?
- ✓ The National Small Savings Scheme is managed by the Ministry of Finance, Government of India offered to the general public through the post office and also through banks in the case of the Public Provident Fund.
- ✓ The government offers interest rates on the deposits made by the public in these schemes.
- ✓ The investment in these schemes is 100 % safe as it is guaranteed by the government of India.

- ✓ Use of the Deposits
- ✓ The money received by the government is pooled by the government in the National Small Savings Fund which is used by the central government to meet its fiscal deficit.
- ✓ Categories of Schemes
- ✓ The National Small Savings Schemes are grouped into three categories - Post office deposits, savings certificates, and social security schemes.

1. POST OFFICE DEPOSITS & INTEREST RATES

- ✓ Under the Post Office deposits, there are saving accounts and time deposits (recurring and fixed)
- ✓ Saving Accounts:
 - ✓ The minimum account opening requirement is Rs 500 and no maximum limit.
 - ✓ The interest rate is 4 % per year.
 - ✓ It is the only savings account in India that is not regulated by the Reserve Bank of India.
- ✓ Recurring Deposit:
 - ✓ The minimum account opening is Rs 100 and Rs 10 per month.
 - ✓ There is no maximum deposit limit.
 - ✓ The interest rate is 6.7% per annum.
 - ✓ The maturity (duration) period is 5 years.
- ✓ Time Deposit Accounts:
 - ✓ The maturity(duration) of the account is 1 to 5 years (interest rate varies from 6.9 % to 7.5 % per year depending upon the duration).
 - ✓ The minimum account opening is Rs 1000 and there is no maximum deposit limit.
 - ✓ The principal and interest amount is paid at the maturity of the account.
- ✓ National Monthly Income Account:
 - ✓ The duration of the account is 5 years and the interest rate is Rs 7.4 % per year.
 - ✓ The interest is paid monthly to the depositor.
 - ✓ The minimum account opening is Rs 1000 and the maximum limit is Rs 9 lakhs for a single account. For joint accounts, the maximum limit is Rs 15 lakhs.
- ✓ National Citizen Savings Scheme:
 - ✓ It is for persons above 60 years.
 - ✓ The minimum account opening requirement is Rs 1000 and the maximum is Rs 30 lakhs.
 - ✓ the interest rate is 8.2 % per year and it is paid every quarter.
 - ✓ The duration of the scheme is 5 years.
- ✓ Sukanya Samridhi Yojana:
 - ✓ For girl children below 10 years of age.
 - ✓ Accounts can be opened in a maximum of two girls' names.
 - ✓ Rate of Interest 8.2 % per year.
 - ✓ Minimum account opening Rs 250 and maximum 1.50 lakhs in a financial year.
 - ✓ Deposit for a maximum period of 15 years from the opening of the account.
 - ✓ The account can be closed after 21 years from the date of opening of the account or at the time of marriage of the girl after she attains 18 years of age.

2. SAVINGS CERTIFICATES

- ✓ National Saving Certificates (NSC):
 - ✓ The minimum account opening amount is Rs 1000 and no maximum limit.
 - ✓ Interest rate -7.7% per year.
 - ✓ The duration of the scheme is 5 years.
 - ✓ The principal and interest amount is paid after 5 years.
- ✓ Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP):
 - ✓ The minimum account opening is Rs 1000 and no maximum limit.
 - ✓ The interest rate is 7.5% and the deposit amount doubles in 115 months.
 - ✓ The principal and interest amount is paid after 115 months.
- ✓ Mahila Samman Saving Certificates :

- ✓ Minimum account opening Rs 1000 and maximum Rs 2 lakh. It is for women only.
- ✓ Interest rate 7.5% per year.
- ✓ The duration of the scheme is 2 years.
- ✓ The principal and interest amount is paid after 2 years.

3. SOCIAL SECURITY SCHEMES

- ✓ Public Provident Fund:
- ✓ Only one account per person can be opened in the post office or banks.
- ✓ The account can be opened in the name of minors.
- ✓ Minimum account opening Rs 500 and maximum Rs 1.5 lakh in a financial year.
- ✓ Interest rates are 7.1% per year.
- ✓ Duration -15 years.

Q. Which of the following interest rate on small savings scheme is not correct under the January to March quarter of financial year 2025-2026?

- A) Senior Citizen Savings Scheme – 8.2%
- B) National Savings Certificate – 7.7%
- C) Public Provident Fund Scheme – 7.4%%
- D) Sukanya Samriddhi Account – 8.2%

Answer : C

- ✓ Interest rates for Jan-March 2025
- ✓ Savings Deposit- 4 per cent
- ✓ Senior Citizens Savings Scheme- 8.2 per cent
- ✓ Sukanya Samriddhi Account- 8.2 per cent
- ✓ Monthly Income Account- 7.4 percent
- ✓ National Saving Certificates (NSC)- 7.7 percent
- ✓ Kisan Vikas Patra- 7.5 percent (will mature in 115 months)
- ✓ Public Provident Fund- 7.1 per cent

Q. The interest rate on Kisan Vikas Patra for January to March quarter of financial year 2025-2026 is set at 7.5 percent. What is the maturity period of this scheme?

- A) 125 months
- B) 120 months
- C) 115 months
- D) 128 months

Answer : C

- ✓ Kisan Vikas Patra (KVP):
- ✓ The minimum account opening is Rs 1000 and no maximum limit.
- ✓ The interest rate is 7.5% and the deposit amount doubles in 115 months.
- ✓ The principal and interest amount is paid after 115 months.

Q. Union Bank of India has enhanced its Digital Rupee (₹) application with accessibility features, marking a significant step in digital inclusion. What is the Digital Rupee (₹)?

- A) A cryptocurrency
- B) A type of foreign exchange
- C) A prepaid gift card
- D) A digital version of fiat currency

Answer : D

- ✓ Union Bank of India Enhances Digital Rupee App with Accessibility Features.

- ✓ Union Bank of India has set a milestone in digital accessibility by integrating new features into its Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) application, popularly known as the Digital Rupee (e₹).
- ✓ As the first Public Sector Bank (PSB) to introduce such inclusive functionality, Union Bank is paving the way for greater financial inclusion and innovation.
- ✓ The Digital Rupee, issued and regulated by the Reserve Bank of India, serves as a digital version of fiat currency, enabling wallet-based transactions, interoperability with UPI QR codes, auto-load capabilities, and real-time settlements.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank announces the launch of the first pilot for retail digital Rupee (e₹-R) on December 01, 2022.
- ✓ The e₹-R would be in the form of a digital token that represents legal tender.
- ✓ The e₹-R would offer features of physical cash like trust, safety and settlement finality.
- ✓ Eight banks have been identified for phase-wise participation in this pilot. The first phase will begin with four banks, viz., State Bank of India, ICICI Bank, Yes Bank and IDFC First Bank in four cities across the country. Four more banks, viz., Bank of Baroda, Union Bank of India, HDFC Bank and Kotak Mahindra Bank will join this pilot subsequently.
- ✓ Union Bank of India
- ✓ Founded : 1919
- ✓ Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- ✓ Managing Director & CEO : A. Manimekhalai

Q. Which bank has launched FedOne, a new transaction banking platform powered by Nucleus Software's FinnAxia solution?

A) Kotak Mahindra Bank	B) Indian Overseas Bank
C) Federal Bank	D) Bank of Baroda

Answer : C

- ✓ Federal Bank launches digital platform FedOne for corporate banking
- ✓ Federal Bank, one of India's largest private sector banks, has launched FedOne, a new transaction banking platform powered by Nucleus Software's FinnAxia solution.
- ✓ The implementation, completed after a 10-month collaboration, aims to modernize the bank's corporate banking services.
- ✓ FedOne is set to revolutionise the corporate banking landscape, enabling Federal Bank to seize emerging business opportunities and deliver exceptional value through streamlined processes and advanced technology.
- ✓ Federal Bank Limited
- ✓ Founded : 1913
- ✓ Founder : K. P. Hormis
- ✓ Headquarters : Aluva, Kochi, Kerala
- ✓ MD & CEO : KVS Manian

Q. Punjab & Sind Bank will launch an instant loan scheme for the MSME sector. What is the maximum loan amount under the instant loan scheme for the MSME sector by Punjab & Sind Bank?

A) Rs 10 lakh	B) Rs 20 lakh
C) Rs 25 lakh	D) Rs 50 lakh

Answer : C

- ✓ Punjab & Sind Bank to roll out instant loan scheme for MSMEs based on GST return
- ✓ State-owned Punjab & Sind Bank will launch instant loan scheme up to Rs 25 lakh for the MSME sector during this month as part of its initiative to push credit through its digital platform.
- ✓ As part of its transformative agenda, the bank has already introduced digital home loan and vehicle loan schemes under which in-principle approval to an application is given within 15 minutes.

- ✓ The journey from applying the loan to sanction, for both the segments i.e. PSB e-Apna Ghar and PSB e-Apna Vahan (launched last month), is based on Straight Through Process (STP) which runs on a pre-defined Business Rule Engine (BRE).
- ✓ Punjab & Sind Bank
- ✓ Founded : 1908
- ✓ Headquarters : New Delhi
- ✓ Non-Exe Chairman : Charan Singh
- ✓ MD & CEO : Swarup Kumar Saha

Q. What percentage of its stake in Unity Small Finance Bank does BharatPe plan to sell?

- A) 25%
- B) 49%
- C) 51%
- D) 33%

Answer : A

- ✓ BharatPe, a leading fintech company, plans to sell 25% of its 49% stake in Unity Small Finance Bank as part of its strategy to comply with RBI regulations.
- ✓ This stake sale aims to raise approximately \$800 million (Rs 6,500 crore) and will help BharatPe align with the requirement to reduce its stake to 10% by 2029.
- ✓ BharatPe
- ✓ Founded : 2018
- ✓ Headquarters : New Delhi
- ✓ Founder : Ashneer Grover, Shashvat Nakrani & Bhavik Koladiya
- ✓ Chairman : Rajnish Kumar
- ✓ Unity Small Finance Bank (USFB)
- ✓ Founded : 1st November 2021
- ✓ Headquarters : New Delhi
- ✓ Chairman : Vinod Rai
- ✓ MD & CEO : Inderjit Camotra
- ✓ It is the 12th Small Finance Bank in India

Q. What is the total issue size announced by Edelweiss Financial Services Limited (EFSL) for its public Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs) issue?

- A) Rs. 1,000 million
- B) Rs. 1,500 million
- C) Rs. 2,000 million
- D) Rs. 2,500 million

Answer : C

- ✓ Edelweiss Financial Services Launches Rs. 2,000 Million Public Issue of Secured Redeemable NCDs
- ✓ Edelweiss Financial Services Limited (EFSL) has announced the public issue of Secured Redeemable Non-Convertible Debentures (NCDs) with a total issue size of up to Rs. 2,000 million. The offering includes a base issue of Rs. 1,000 million and a green shoe option to retain an additional Rs. 1,000 million.
- ✓ The NCDs, priced at Rs. 1,000 each, will be available in twelve series with tenures of 24, 36, 60, and 120 months. Investors can choose from fixed coupons with annual, monthly, or cumulative interest payment options, offering an effective annual yield ranging from 9.50% to 11.00% per annum.
- ✓ EFSL plans to allocate at least 75% of the funds raised to repay or prepay existing borrowings (interest and principal), with the remainder earmarked for general corporate purposes, subject to regulatory limits set by SEBI.
- ✓ The NCDs have been rated "CRISIL A+/Negative," reflecting the company's moderate credit risk profile with a negative outlook.
- ✓ The debentures will be listed on the Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE) to enhance liquidity for investors.

- ✓ The public issue is being managed by Trust Investment Advisors Private Limited, Nuvama Wealth Management Limited, and Tipsons Consultancy Services Private Limited.

Q. Which entity has achieved 'Excellent' rating for the performance MoU signed with the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) for the financial year 2023-24, with a score of 98.24.?

- A) NTPC
- B) IREDA
- C) BHEL
- D) GAIL

Answer : B

- ✓ IREDA achieves 'Excellent' rating for 4th consecutive year in MoU performance
- ✓ Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Limited (IREDA) has achieved 'Excellent' rating for the performance MoU signed with the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) for the financial year 2023-24, with a score of 98.24.
- ✓ This marks the fourth consecutive year that IREDA has received 'Excellent' rating, showcasing its unwavering commitment to operational excellence and highest standards of corporate governance.
- ✓ In the previous three years, IREDA consistently delivered exceptional results, achieving an 'Excellent' rating with scores of 93.50 in FY 2022-23, 96.54 in FY 2021-22 and 96.93 in FY 2020-21.

Q. The Financial Stability Report (FSR) is released by which organisation?

- A) RBI
- B) SEBI
- C) SIDBI
- D) IRDAI

Answer : A

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its biannual Financial Stability Report (FSR), focusing on the health and resilience of the Indian financial system.
- ✓ The RBI's Financial Stability Report (FSR) highlights improvements in the banking sector's asset quality and resilience.
- ✓ Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs) achieved a 12-year low Gross Non-Performing Asset (GNPA) ratio of 2.6% by September 2024.
- ✓ The Provisioning Coverage Ratio (PCR) rose to 77%, mainly due to proactive provisioning by Public Sector Banks (PSBs).
- ✓ The slippage ratio increased slightly to 0.7%, showing controlled NPA growth.
- ✓ Household debt in India reached 42.9% of GDP by June 2024, rising gradually. India's Real GDP growth is projected at 6.6% for 2024-25, supported by rural consumption, government investments, and services exports.

Q. What is the new deadline for resolving income tax disputes under the Vivad Se Vishwas Scheme?

- A) April 30, 2025
- B) January 31, 2025
- C) February 28, 2025
- D) March 31, 2025

Answer : B

- ✓ The Vivad Se Vishwas Scheme, aimed at settling income tax disputes, has been extended by one month, setting the new deadline to January 31, 2025.
- ✓ This extension allows taxpayers additional time to avail of reduced settlement amounts, especially for those declared by the deadline
- ✓ The deadline for determining the payable amount under the Direct Tax Vivad Se Vishwas Scheme 2024 has been extended by the Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT).

Q. Which company acquired Karkinos Healthcare for ₹375 crore?

- A) Tata Group
- B) Adani Group
- C) Reliance Industries
- D) Birla Group

Answer : C

- ✓ Reliance Industries, through its subsidiary RSBVL, acquired Karkinos Healthcare for ₹375 crore.
- ✓ This strategic acquisition focuses on enhancing Reliance's healthcare portfolio, especially in oncology.
- ✓ Karkinos specializes in early cancer detection and treatment, and with partnerships with 60 hospitals and plans to establish a cancer hospital in Imphal, the acquisition is expected to significantly expand Reliance's reach in cancer care and management.

Q. Which organization has launched the quantum processor 'Willow'?

- A) Amazon
- B) Meta
- C) Google
- D) Microsoft

Answer : C

- ✓ Google launched the quantum processor 'Willow,' advancing quantum computing to solve practical problems.
- ✓ Willow has 105 physical qubits and operates at near absolute zero temperatures (-273.15°C).
- ✓ It features better error correction and faster performance than other quantum computers. The coherence time of Willow's qubits is around 100 microseconds, improved by error correction.
- ✓ Willow's architecture enables lower error rates with more qubits

Q. Which organization has been re-certified as a 'Great Place to Work' for January 2025 to January 2026?

- A) Tata Steel
- B) Hindustan Zinc
- C) SAIL
- D) JSW Steel

Answer : C

- ✓ Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL) has been re-certified as a 'Great Place to Work' for the period January 2025 to January 2026 by the Great Place to Work Institute, India.
- ✓ This marks SAIL's second consecutive certification, emphasizing its commitment to fostering a positive work environment through innovative HR practices, employee empowerment, and trust-building initiatives

Q. Who has been appointed as the new CEO of DBS Bank India effective March 1, 2025?

- A) Surojit Shome
- B) Piyush Gupta
- C) Rajat Verma
- D) Anand Kumar

Answer : C

- ✓ Rajat Verma, currently heading the Institutional Banking Group at DBS Bank India, will take over as the new CEO of DBS Bank India starting March 1, 2025.
- ✓ He succeeds Surojit Shome, who retires after a successful tenure.
- ✓ Verma brings over 27 years of experience in banking, including significant contributions to DBS' institutional banking growth and recognition in sustainable finance
- ✓ About Development Bank of Singapore (DBS) Bank
- ✓ Founded : 1968
- ✓ Headquarters : Singapore
- ✓ Chairman : Peter Seah
- ✓ CEO : Piyush Gupta

✓ DBS Bank India' CEO : Rajat Verma

Q. The government of India has extended the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme till-?

A) 2026-27

B) 2025-26

C) 2027-28

D) 2029-30

Answer : B

- ✓ Government extends Agriculture Crop insurance scheme till 2025-26.
- ✓ In a boost to the agricultural sector in the country, the government of India has approved several policy decisions including the extension of the major crop insurance scheme- Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme and Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana.
- ✓ The government has also approved the creation of FIAT to fund research and development projects in the agricultural sector like YES-TECH, and WINDS.
- ✓ The decision was taken in a meeting of the Union cabinet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 1 January 2025.
- ✓ Extension of the Crop Insurance Scheme
- ✓ The central government has extended the central sector crop insurance scheme -Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana and Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme by one year till 2025-26.
- ✓ The total allocation for both the schemes from 2021-22 to 2025-26 is now Rs.69,515.71 Crore.
- ✓ Both schemes are a crop insurance scheme in which the insured farmers are compensated in case of crop failure under certain terms and conditions.
- ✓ The only difference is that in the Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana, the farmer is compensated for the crop loss due to unforeseen conditions.
- ✓ In the Restructured Weather Based Crop Insurance Scheme the farmer is insured against the loss of crops due to the incidence of adverse conditions of weather parameters like rainfall, temperature, frost, humidity, etc.
- ✓ Creation of Fund for Innovation and Technology (FIAT)
- ✓ The Union Cabinet also approved the establishment of the Fund for Innovation and Technology (FIAT).
- ✓ The total corpus of the FIAT is Rs.824.77 crore.
- ✓ The fund will be used to promote research and development and provide funding for YES-TECH, WINDS, etc

Q. What is the corpus of the recently approved central sector scheme Fund for Innovation and Technology (FIAT)?

A) Rs.761.44 Crore

B) Rs.517.33 Crore

C) Rs.619.22 Crore

D) Rs.824.77 Crore

Answer : D

- ✓ Union Cabinet has approved the establishment of the Fund for Innovation and Technology (FIAT).
- ✓ The total corpus of the FIAT is Rs.824.77 crore.
- ✓ The fund will be used to promote research and development and provide funding for YES-TECH, WINDS, etc

Q. Which is the only state in India to adopt 100 % technology for the estimation of crop yields?

A) Uttar Pradesh

B) Punjab

C) Madhya Pradesh

D) Bihar

Answer : C

- ✓ Yield Estimation System using Technology (YES-TECH)
- ✓ The Yield Estimation System using Technology (YES-TECH) uses remote sensing technology to assess the yield of the standing crops. The government uses the General Crop Estimation Survey (GCES) to estimate the yield of standing crops.
- ✓ The weightage of the YES-TECH in the GCSE will be a minimum of 30 percent.
- ✓ At present, the YES-TECH project is being implemented in 9 states -Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Haryana, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Assam, Uttar Pradesh, Maharashtra, and Tamil Nadu & Karnataka
- ✓ Madhya Pradesh is the only state in India that has adopted 100 % technology-based estimation.
- ✓ About Weather Information and Network Data Systems (WINDS)
- ✓ Under the Weather Information and Network Data Systems (WINDS), Automatic Weather Stations (AWS) will be set up at the block level and Automatic Rain Gauges (ARGs) at the panchayat level to collect data.
- ✓ WINDS is being implemented in Uttar Pradesh, Kerala, Assam, Himachal Pradesh, Karnataka, Puducherry, Odisha, Rajasthan and Uttarakhand.
- ✓ For the first year, the funding pattern of the WINDS will be - the central government will bear 90 % of the cost while the state will bear 10% cost

Q. What is the primary objective of the Gobardhan Portal?

- A) To promote solar energy systems
- B) To streamline the setup process for Biogas/Compressed Biogas plants in India
- C) To facilitate rural electrification projects
- D) To develop irrigation systems

Answer : B

- ✓ India is promoting compressed biogas (CBG) as a future fuel to reduce fossil fuel usage and transition to renewable energy. CBG is produced from agricultural waste, animal waste, municipal solid waste, press mud, and sewage sludge.
- ✓ However, adoption of CBG plants has been slow, with only 115 plants operational as of December 2024, far from the 5,000 plant target by 2030.
- ✓ The GOBARdhan scheme, launched in 2018 under Swachh Bharat Mission Grameen-Phase II, focuses on converting cattle dung, agricultural waste, and organic materials into Biogas, CBG, and bio-fertilizers.
- ✓ It promotes a circular economy by turning waste into wealth.
- ✓ The scheme is managed by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.

Q. Which Mutual Fund has launched India's first MSCI India Index ETF?

- A) Aditya Birla Sun Life Asset Management
- B) UTI Asset Management
- C) SBI Mutual Fund
- D) Kotak Mutual Fund

Answer : D

- ✓ Kotak Mutual Fund launches India's first MSCI India Index ETF.
- ✓ Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company (Kotak Mutual Fund) launched the Kotak MSCI India ETF, India's first fund tracking the MSCI India Index.
- ✓ The open-ended scheme will replicate or track the MSCI India Index and is open for public subscription from January 29, 2025, to February 12, 2025.

- ✓ The MSCI India Index is a global benchmark that includes 156 large and midcap companies, covering about 85% of the Indian equity universe. It offers sector diversification across consumer discretionary, finance, healthcare, and real estate, providing a cost-effective way to gain exposure to Indian equities

Q. Which of the following has received a Certificate of Registration (CoR) from the Reserve Bank of India(RBI) to commence operations?

A) Signature Global Group	B) Alphonic Network Solutions
C) Macrotech Developers Ltd	D) RMBS Development Company Limited

Answer : D

- ✓ NHB-Backed RDCL receives Certificate of Registration from RBI to commence Operations.
- ✓ RMBS Development Company Limited (RDCL) has now received a Certificate of Registration (CoR) from the Reserve Bank of India(RBI) to commence operations, on January 23, 2025.
- ✓ National Housing Bank (NHB), a statutory body under the Government of India has set up RMBS Development Company Limited (RDCL) as the single largest shareholder and is supported by a strong mix of investor classes across Banks, HFC/ NBFC and Insurance companies.
- ✓ The Company is envisioned to play the role of a commercially sustainable market intermediary to facilitate the growth and development of the Residential Mortgage-Backed Securitisation (RMBS) market in the country.

Q. Vedanta Group will invest Rs 1 lakh crore for an integrated aluminium complex and an aluminium park in which state?

A) Assam	B) Karnataka
C) Telangana	D) Odisha

Answer : D

- ✓ Vedanta Group will invest Rs 1 lakh crore more in Odisha for an integrated aluminium complex and an aluminium park in Rayagada district.
- ✓ The aluminium major signed an MoU with the state government on the first day of the Utkarsh Odisha.
- ✓ Vedanta Limited chairman Anil Agarwal said the company will set up an aluminium refinery with a production capacity of 6 million tonne per annum (MTPA) and a smelter with a capacity of 3 MTPA.
- ✓ "Vedanta Ltd has already invested Rs 1 lakh crore in Odisha.
- ✓ Since we want to double our production, we will invest Rs 1 lakh crore more in addition to our previous investments.
- ✓ The project will be powered by renewable energy as the company is emphasising on producing green aluminium.
- ✓ As aluminium is the metal of the future, its demand will double by 2030
- ✓ Vedanta Limited
- ✓ Founded : 1979
- ✓ Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- ✓ Non-Executive Chairman : Anil Agarwal
- ✓ CEO : Sunil Duggal

Q. Ministry of Finance has notified that penal charges imposed by banks and non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) for non-compliance with loan terms will not attract an what per cent goods and services tax (GST)?

A) 5%	B) 12%
C) 18%	D) 28%

Answer : C

- ✓ GST will not be charged on penal charges levied by banks and NBFCs, as clarified by the CBIC.
- ✓ This exemption is due to such charges being deemed as breaches of contract terms.
- ✓ Additionally, GST exemption applies to Payment Aggregators for transactions up to Rs 2,000, but not to Payment Gateway services.
- ✓ The Ministry of finance notified that penal charges imposed by banks and Nbf for non compliance with loan terms will not attract an 18% gst.

Q. Which company to set up India's first exclusive electric two-wheeler plant by 2028?

- A) Hero MotoCorp
- B) Bajaj Auto
- C) TVS Motor
- D) Honda

Answer : D

- ✓ Honda to set up India's first exclusive electric two-wheeler plant by 2028.
- ✓ The Japanese auto giant has announced plans to set up a dedicated electric motorcycle plant in India by 2028.
- ✓ This facility will produce a variety of electric two-wheelers while ensuring their total cost of ownership is comparable to traditional petrol models
- ✓ This new plant will be set up in Karnataka and will become operational by 2028.
- ✓ Honda Motor
- ✓ Founder : Soichiro Honda
- ✓ Headquarters : Minato, Tokyo, Japan
- ✓ Chairman, president & CEO : Toshihiro Mibe

Q. Which of the following has approved the proposed acquisition of up to 72.64% shareholding in ITD Cementation India Limited by Renew Exim DMCC?

- A) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- B) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
- C) Competition Commission of India (CCI)
- D) Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)

Answer : C

- ✓ CCI approves the proposed acquisition of up to 72.64% shareholding in ITD Cementation India Limited by Renew Exim DMCC.
- ✓ The Competition Commission of India has approved the proposed acquisition of up to 72.64%shareholding in ITD Cementation India Limited by Renew Exim DMCC.
- ✓ The proposed combination involves the following:
- ✓ Acquisition by Renew Exim DMCC (Acquirer) of approximately 46.64% equivalent to 8,01,13,180 shares of the total issued and voting equity share capital of the ITD Cementation India Limited (Target).
- ✓ Pursuant to the SEBI (Substantial Acquisition of Shares and Takeovers) Regulations, 2011 (as amended) (Takeover Regulations), the Acquirer has launched an open offer for further acquisition of up to 4,46,64,772 fully paid-up equity shares having a face value of INR 1 (Indian Rupee One) each, representing approximately 26% of the Voting Share Capital of the Target (Open Offer).
- ✓ Competition Commission of India (CCI)
- ✓ Formed : 2003
- ✓ Headquarters : New Delhi
- ✓ Chairperson : Ravneet Kaur

Q. Who has been reappointed as the MD & CEO of IDBI Bank for a three-year?

- A) Rakesh Sharma B) Sunil Mehta
C) Sanjiv Chadha D) Aditya Puri

Answer : A

- ✓ Rakesh Sharma has been reappointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO) of IDBI Bank for a three-year term starting March 19, 2025, following approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ✓ He has played a crucial role in improving the bank's financial performance, leading it out of the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework in 2021.
- ✓ Sharma has extensive experience in the banking sector, having previously served as MD & CEO of Canara Bank and held leadership roles at Lakshmi Vilas Bank and the State Bank of India (SBI).
- ✓ His reappointment aims to ensure stability and continued growth for IDBI Bank
- ✓ IDBI Bank
- ✓ Founded : 1964
- ✓ Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- ✓ Chairman : M. R. Kumar
- ✓ MD & CEO : Rakesh Sharma
- ✓ LIC holds 49.24% shareholding and the Government of India holds 45.48%

Q. What is the minimum support price for raw jute announced by the government of India for the 2025-26 agricultural season?

- A) Rs 5350 per quintal B) Rs 6220 per quintal
C) Rs 4780 per quintal D) Rs 5650 per quintal

Answer : D

- ✓ MSP of Raw Jute increased to Rs.5,650 per quintal for 2025-26 season.
- ✓ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the minimum support price (MSP) of raw jute (TD-3 grade) for the agricultural marketing season 2025-26 at Rs 5650 per quintal.
- ✓ The meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs was held in New Delhi on 22 January 2025 and was chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ Increase of Rs 315 per quintal for Raw Jute in 2025-26 season.
- ✓ The MSP of Rs.5,650/- per quintal for 2025-26 season is an increase of Rs 315 per quintal as compared to the 2024-25 season.
- ✓ The government has been consistently increasing the MSP for raw jute over a period of time. In 2014-15 the MSP was Rs.2400 per quintal which has been increased to Rs.5,650/- per quintal in 2025-26.
- ✓ The MSP of Rs.5,650 per quintal in 2025-26 would ensure a return of 66.8 percent over the all India weighted average cost of production.
- ✓ About the Golden Fiber- Jute
- ✓ Jute is also known as the golden fiber and India is the largest producer of raw jute in the world.
- ✓ In India ,Jute is the second most important cash crop after cotton.
- ✓ Jute is grown in six states of India- West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Odisha, Tripura and Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ West Bengal is the major producer of jute in India followed by Assam and Bihar.
- ✓ Around 40 lakh farming families are directly or indirectly dependent on Jute Industry.

Q. Which company partnered with ESAF Small Finance Bank for tailored vehicle financing solutions?

- A) Tata Motors
B) Mahindra & Mahindra
C) Ashok Leyland
D) Bajaj Auto

Answer : C

- ✓ Ashok Leyland has entered into a partnership with ESAF Small Finance Bank to provide customized vehicle financing solutions.
- ✓ This collaboration aims to offer flexible loan options with tailored monthly repayment plans, making vehicle ownership more accessible for customers.
- ✓ ESAF Bank will also provide a range of comprehensive financial services to Ashok Leyland's customers, strengthening the partnership's value proposition and enhancing customer convenience.

Q. Which act has been amended by the Reserve Bank of India to promote cross-border transactions in Indian Rupee (INR)?

- A) Banking Regulation Act B) Companies Act
C) Payment and Settlement Systems Act D) Foreign Exchange Management Act

Answer : D

- ✓ RBI revises FEMA guidelines to boost cross-border transactions in rupee and local currencies
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India, in consultation with the Government, has made changes certain changes in the extant Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) regulations to promote cross-border transactions in Indian rupee (INR) and local / national currencies.
- ✓ This move comes in the backdrop of the rupee coming under pressure amid a strengthening dollar, weakening Chinese currency.
- ✓ As per the changes in FEMA, overseas branches of banks, which are authorised to deal in foreign exchange (Authorised Dealer), will be able to open INR accounts for a resident outside India for settlement of all permissible current account and capital account transactions with a resident in India.
- ✓ Persons resident outside India will be able to use their balances held in repatriable INR accounts for foreign investment, including FDI, in non-debt instruments, per the FEMA changes.

Q. Who has been reappointment as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for another three-year term?

- A) Rakesh Sharma B) Binod Kumar
C) Ashok Chandra D) Partha Sengupta

Answer : A

- ✓ IDBI Bank Re-appoints Rakesh Sharma as MD & CEO.
- ✓ IDBI Bank has announced the reappointment of Rakesh Sharma as Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for another three-year term.
- ✓ The decision, approved by the Board of Directors on January 23, 2025, comes into effect from March 19, 2025, following the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) approval.
- ✓ He transitioned from SBI to serve as MD & CEO of Lakshmi Vilas Bank Ltd. from March 2014 to September 2015.
- ✓ Subsequently, he joined Canara Bank as MD & CEO in September 2015, where he led the organization for three years before retiring in July 2018.
- ✓ During his tenure at Canara Bank, he also chaired the group companies of the bank.
- ✓ In October 2018, Rakesh took over as MD & CEO of IDBI Bank

Q. Who is the chairman of the Standing External Advisory Committee (SEAC) for evaluating applications for Universal Banks as well as Small Finance Banks?

- A) K. Jain B) Revathy Iyer
C) N. S. Kannan D) Hemant G. Contractor

Answer : A

- ✓ Interest: Interest on SSA as announced by Government of India every quarter will be applicable and compounded annually.
- ✓ Partial withdrawal:
- ✓ Withdrawal shall be allowed after the account holder attains the age of eighteen years or has passed the tenth standard, whichever is earlier.
- ✓ For higher education 50% of the balance at the end of the previous financial year can be withdrawn. For marriage of adult account holder, 100% withdrawals permitted.
- ✓ Premature Closure: Allowed in the event of death of the depositor or in cases of extreme compassionate grounds such as medical support in life threatening diseases to be authorized by an order by the Central Government.
- ✓ Tax Benefits: On investing in this scheme, tax exemption is also available under Section 80C of the Income Tax Act. The amount invested, interest earned and maturity amount is tax free.

Q. Which company received in-principle approval from the RBI to operate as a Payment Aggregator-Cross Border entity?

A) Skydo	B) Paytm
C) Razorpay	D) PhonePe

Answer : A

- ✓ Skydo Technologies, a Bengaluru-based fintech firm, received in-principle approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to operate as a Payment Aggregator-Cross Border (PA-CB) entity.
- ✓ This approval allows Skydo to provide seamless and cost-effective cross-border payment solutions to Indian exporters.
- ✓ Skydo, which serves over 12,000 Indian exporters, is now poised to scale operations, expand its services globally, and diversify its offerings

Q. Which bank has launched its first Cybersecurity Hackathon 2024-25, with the theme Code Against Malware?

A) Kotak Mahindra Bank	B) Bank of India
C) Bank of Baroda	D) Punjab National Bank

Answer : D

- ✓ Punjab National Bank Launches First Cybersecurity Hackathon 2024-25.
- ✓ Punjab National Bank (PNB) has launched its first Cybersecurity Hackathon 2024-25, with the theme Code Against Malware
- ✓ The hackathon aims to address the rising threat of malware and enhance the nation's cybersecurity defences.
- ✓ The event brings together innovators, researchers, and academicians from across India to collaborate on developing advanced solutions for cybersecurity in the banking sector.
- ✓ The hackathon focuses on key areas like Malware detection and removal using intelligence-powered tools, Real-time threat monitoring and mitigation, Ransomware resilience solutions and Next-generation antivirus tools and attack surface management.
- ✓ The hackathon is held under the guidance of the Ministry of Finance and aligns with the Department of Financial Services (DFS) directive for Public Sector Banks (PSBs) to host annual hackathons.

Q. Which food delivery aggregator has launched a new standalone app called "Pyng" to enter the professional services marketplace?

A) Zomato	B) Swiggy
C) KFC	D) Domino's Pizza

Answer : B

- ✓ Swiggy Launches “Pyng” App to Seize Professional Services Marketplace.
- ✓ Leading restaurant aggregator Swiggy has launched a new standalone app called “Pyng Professional” to enter the professional services marketplace. Incidentally, this launch comes months after Swiggy sought to pilot “Yello” for customers to get services from professionals.
- ✓ What is Swiggy's new app all about?
- ✓ Pyng Professional, similar to Chinese tech giants like Alibaba and Meituan with multiple apps under the group for various services is slated to launch soon.
- ✓ It would host a range of services from enlisted professionals such as lawyers, astrologers, therapists, educational consultants, yoga trainers, career mentors, digital artists, nutritionists, fitness experts, financial consultants, etc.

Q. Which Food aggregator platform has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Robin Hood Army, an NGO focused on fighting hunger through surplus food distribution?

- A) Zomato
B) Swiggy
C) EatSure
D) Domino's Pizza

Answer : B

- ✓ Swiggy launches Swiggy Serves; aims to distribute 50 million meals by 2030.
- ✓ Food aggregator platform Swiggy has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Robin Hood Army, an NGO focused on fighting hunger through surplus food distribution.
- ✓ The partnership aims to tackle food wastage and hunger, with a goal to distribute 50 million meals by 2030.
- ✓ The Robin Hood Army is a volunteer-based, zero-funds organisation with thousands of young professionals, retired folks, homemakers and college students as volunteers.
- ✓ These volunteers, called Robins, collect surplus food from restaurants/weddings/events and distribute it to the less fortunate.

Q. With reference to Bima Sugam, consider the following statements:

- 1.It aims to simplify the process of purchasing insurance for consumers.
- 2.It is a government-owned insurance company.
- 3.Bima Sugam will fulfill all insurance needs, encompassing life, health, and general insurance, such as motor and travel coverage.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1 and 3 only
D) 1, 2 and 3

Answer : C

- ✓ Insurance e-marketplace Bima Sugam first phase launch likely in April 2025
- ✓ The first phase of Bima Sugam — an ambitious project of the insurance regulator to create an Amazon-like one-stop digital platform for buying, selling, and servicing insurance policies — is expected to be rolled out in the mid of this year instead of April announced earlier, a source privy to the development
- ✓ The capital requirement for the insurance regulator's ambitious project, Bima Sugam, an online marketplace to buy, service, and sell insurance products, has increased to Rs 500 crore from the previously envisaged Rs 100–200 crore.
- ✓ The collective efforts of all stakeholders are critical and we are confident Bima Sugam platform will play a pivotal role in achieving Insurance for All by 2047.

- ✓ The IRDAI has approved the establishment of Bima Sugam, an online insurance marketplace, aimed at simplifying the process of buying, selling, and servicing insurance policies, as well as settling claims
- ✓ Features of Bima Sugam:
- ✓ Bima Sugam functions as an e-commerce platform where insurance companies can offer their products, providing customers with an end-to-end digital journey.
- ✓ It eliminates paperwork by offering policies in electronic format and allows customers to access all their policies – life, health, and non-life insurance – in one application or window.
- ✓ Bima Sugam is expected to make insurance policies more affordable by reducing commissions paid to intermediaries, potentially leading to lower premiums for policyholders.
- ✓ Prasun Sikdar appointed as MD, CEO of Bima Sugam India Federation for 3 yrs

Q. Which entity has achieved “Excellent” rating for its performance under the MoU with the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) for the financial year 2023-24?

- A) Adani Green Energy Ltd B) Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited
C) NTPC Renewable Energy Limited D) Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd

Answer : D

- ✓ SECI Secures “Excellent” Rating in MoU Performance for FY 2023-24
- ✓ Solar Energy Corporation of India Ltd (SECI) has achieved “Excellent” rating for its performance under the MoU with the Ministry of New & Renewable Energy (MNRE) for the financial year 2023-24, earning a score of 96 out of 100.
- ✓ This achievement highlights SECI's unwavering dedication to operational excellence and upholding the highest standards of corporate governance.
- ✓ SECI plays a pivotal role in the development and expansion of renewable energy (RE) capacity in India, with a cumulative awarded generation capacity exceeding 73 GW as of December 31, 2024
- ✓ SECI was granted Navratna status by the Ministry of Finance.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Universal Account Number (UAN):

1. It is a 12-digit number that each member of the Employee Provident Fund (EPF) is allotted against his/her name.
2. This number is the same throughout an employee's professional life.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Employee Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) has extended the deadline for activating Universal Account Numbers (UAN) and linking Aadhaar with bank accounts.
- ✓ About Universal Account Number (UAN):
- ✓ UAN is a number allotted to all salaried employees, who contribute a part of their income towards the Employee Provident Fund (EPF).
- ✓ It is a 12-digit number that each member of the EPF is allotted against his/her name.
- ✓ It is generated and allotted by the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) and authenticated by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Government of India.
- ✓ This number is the same throughout an employee's professional life.
- ✓ When an employee changes his job, his EPF account number and Member Identification Number (Member Id) change, but UAN remains the same.

Q.

- A) 7.0% B) 6.2%
- C) 6.8% D) 6.5%

Answer : D

- ✓ IMF keeps India's GDP growth forecast unchanged at 6.5% for FY25 and FY26
- ✓ The International Monetary Fund (IMF) has lowered India's growth forecast to 6.5 per cent for the current fiscal year (2024-25 or FY25) as against 7 per cent estimated in October. Meanwhile, it has maintained the growth projection for the next two fiscal years (2025-26 or FY26 and 2026-27 or FY27) at 6.5 per cent
- ✓ Growth in India also slowed more than expected, led by a sharper-than-expected deceleration in industrial activities," IMF said in latest update of World Economic Outlook
- ✓ According to the latest IMF forecast, the world economy is expected to grow 3.3% in CY25 (calendar year 2025), up from its earlier estimate of 3.2%.
- ✓ In CY26, the IMF expects the world economy to grow at 3.3%. The US economy is expected to grow at 2.7% in CY25, and 2.1% in CY26, and China is expected to grow at 4.6% in CY25 and 4.5% in CY26.

IMF IN NEWS 2024-25

- International Monetary Fund (IMF) has maintained its Indian growth forecast unchanged at 6.5% for FY25 and FY26 in an update to its World Economic Outlook released
- According to the recently published International Monetary Fund (IMF) report, India is expected to overtake Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy in the financial year 2025.
- Currently, India is the world's 5th largest economy in terms of its gross domestic product (GDP) at market price in US dollar terms. India follows April-March as the financial year.
- Kristalina Georgieva has been re-appointed as the Managing Director (MD) of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) for a new 5 year term.
- Pakistan is set to request a formal bailout package from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) under the Extended Fund Facility (EFF), which provides a larger and more extended package.
- International Monetary Fund has approved an immediate disbursement of USD 1.1 billion to Pakistan as part of a bailout package supported by the IMF's Stand-By Arrangement (SBA).
- Recently, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) released the latest Global Financial Stability Report.
- International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- Founded : 1945
- Headquarters: Washington, D.C.
- Managing Director : Kristalina Georgieva (Bulgaria)
- First Deputy MD : Gita Gopinath
- Chief Economist : Pierre-Olivier Gourinchas (France)
- Executive Director for India at IMF : Krishnamurthy Subramaniam
- Member countries : 190 (Andorra)
- IMF Released Report
- Global Financial Stability Report
- World Economic Outlook.
- The value of Special Drawing Right (SDR) is determined by the basket of 5 currencies.
- The currencies are, US Dollar, Japanese Yen, British Pound, Chinese Yuan and Euro.
- Special Drawing Right is known as the Paper Gold. The value of the SDR is based on a basket of key international currencies reviewed by IMF every five years. SDR was introduced in the 1969 by the IMF to solve the problem of International liquidity

Q. The scheme 'SVAMITVA' recently seen in news is related to which of the following?

- A) Creation of data base for manpower planning and management.
- B) Web portal for assistance to disabled persons.
- C) Digital mapping of Indian villages.
- D) A new Early warning system for Cyclones.

Answer : C

- ✓ PM Modi distributes property cards under SVAMITVA scheme across 10 states, 2 UTs.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has distributed property cards under the SVAMITVA (Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas) scheme to property owners in more than 230 districts across 10 states and two Union Territories.
- ✓ They include Chhattisgarh, Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Mizoram, Odisha, Punjab, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh and 2 UTs – Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh.
- ✓ SVAMITVA scheme has given a unique identity to land through Bhu-Aadhaar and added that about 23 crore Bhu-Aadhaar numbers have been issued.
- ✓ The ownership scheme was started 5 years ago so that people living in villages can be given their legal proof. In the last 5 years, these ownership cards have been given to about 1.5 crore people. more than 65 lakh families have received these ownership cards under this program
- ✓ About SVAMITVA Scheme:
- ✓ The Survey of Villages and Mapping with Improved Technology in Village Areas (SVAMITVA) is a central sector scheme launched in 2020.
- ✓ It was launched with a vision to enhance the economic progress of rural India by providing 'Record of Rights' to households possessing houses in inhabited areas in villages through the latest surveying drone technology.
- ✓ The scheme seeks to achieve the following objectives
- ✓ To bring financial stability to the citizens in rural India by enabling them to use their property as a financial asset for taking loans and other financial benefits.
- ✓ Creation of accurate land records for rural planning.
- ✓ Determination of property tax, which would accrue to the GPs directly in States where it is devolved or else, add to the State exchequer
- ✓ Creation of survey infrastructure and GIS maps that can be leveraged by any department for their use.
- ✓ To support the preparation of a better-quality Gram Panchayat Development Plan (GPD) by making use of GIS maps.
- ✓ To reduce property related disputes and legal cases
- ✓ Nodal Ministry: The Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR) is the Nodal Ministry for implementation of the scheme.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) Scheme:

1. It aims to boost the Indian startup ecosystem and provide access to domestic capital.
2. Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has been given the mandate of operating this fund.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Union Minister for Commerce and Industry recently emphasized that much of the success of the Startup India mission can be attributed to key funding mechanisms, particularly the Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS).
- ✓ About Fund of Funds for Startups (FFS) Scheme:
- ✓ It was approved and established in 2016 with a corpus of Rs 10,000 crore, with contribution spread over the 14th and 15th Finance Commission cycle based on progress of implementation.
- ✓ Objective: To provide much-needed boost to the Indian startup ecosystem and enable access to domestic capital.
- ✓ The scheme does not directly invest in startups; instead, it provides capital to SEBI-registered Alternative Investment Funds (AIFs), known as daughter funds, who in turn invest money in growing Indian startups through equity and equity-linked instruments.
- ✓ Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) has been given the mandate of operating this fund through the selection of suitable daughter funds and overseeing the disbursement of committed capital.
- ✓ AIFs supported under FFS are required to invest at least 2 times the amount committed under FFS in startups.



Q. How much loan has been sanctioned by the Asian Development Bank to India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL) to finance sustainable infrastructure projects?

- A) \$200 million B) \$300 million
C) \$400 million D) \$500 million

Answer : D

- ✓ \$500 million ADB loan to develop sustainable infrastructure in India.
- ✓ Asian Development Bank (ADB) has sanctioned a \$500 million financial intermediation loan to India to finance environmentally sustainable infrastructure development in the country.
- ✓ The \$500 million loan has been granted to India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL), owned by the government of India.
- ✓ The loan has a sovereign guarantee. It means that if IIFCL fails to repay the loan to the ADB, then the government of India will repay the loan to ADB on behalf of the IIFCL.
- ✓ **About IIFCL**
- ✓ The India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL) is a wholly owned company of the government of India, which was set up in 2006.
- ✓ It is registered as a Non-Banking Finance Company-Non Deposit-taking Infrastructure Financing Company(NBFC-ND-IFC) with the Reserve Bank of India.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India regulates it.
- ✓ IIFCL provides long-term loans to viable infrastructure projects.
- ✓ It provides loans to both greenfield (new projects) and brownfield (existing projects) projects in transportation, energy, water, sanitation, communication, and social and commercial infrastructure sectors.
- ✓ Headquarters: New Delhi
- ✓ Managing Director: Padmanabhan Raja Jaishankar

Q. Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL) has joined which bank to promote the adoption of rooftop solar systems under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana?

- A) ICICI Bank
B) Kotak Mahindra Bank
C) Canara Bank
D) Bank of Baroda

Answer : C

- ✓ Tata Power Renewable Energy joins Canara Bank to boost PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.
- ✓ Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL), a subsidiary of the Tata Group, has joined Canara Bank to promote the adoption of rooftop solar systems under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.
- ✓ For systems with a capacity of up to 3 kW, the scheme offers loans of up to Rs 2 lakh with a 10 per cent margin money requirement, collateral-free financing, a competitive interest rate of 7 per cent per annum, and a tenure of up to 10 years.
- ✓ For systems between 3 kW and 10 kW, the scheme provides loans of up to Rs 6 lakh with a 20 per cent margin money requirement, collateral-free financing, and interest rates at 10 per cent per annum, with a maximum tenure of 10 years.

- ✓ PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana is a landmark initiative, launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 15, 2024. It aims to transform India's energy landscape by providing free electricity to households.
- ✓ It is set to reshape the country's energy landscape by empowering millions of households with solar power.
- ✓ The government has set a target of reaching 10 lakh households by March 2025 and increasing its ambit to one crore by March 2027.
- ✓ **DON'T CONFUSE**
- ✓ Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL) joins Canara Bank to boost PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana.
- ✓ IndusInd Bank has collaborated with Tata Power Renewable Energy Limited (TPREL) to offer collateral-free solar financing solutions to Micro and Small Enterprises (MSEs) in India.
- ✓ Tata Power Solar Systems Ltd (TPSSL) has entered into a strategic partnership with ICICI Bank to offer financing solutions for solar units to both residential and corporate customers.
- ✓ Tata Power Solar Systems Ltd (TPSSL) has partnered with the Bank of India to offer financing solutions for rooftop solar installations and EV charging stations.

Q. Which entity has approved UltraTech Cement Limited's acquisition of The India Cements Limited?

- A) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- B) Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)
- C) Competition Commission of India (CCI)
- D) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)

Answer : C

- ✓ Competition Commission of India (CCI) has approved UltraTech Cement Limited's acquisition of The India Cements Limited.
- ✓ The Proposed Combination envisages UltraTech Cement Limited's (UltraTech/Acquirer) acquisition of 32.72% of the paid-up equity share capital of The India Cements Limited (India Cements/Target) from the promoters and members of the promoter group of India Cements and Sri Saradha Logistics Private Limited, and (ii) up to 26% of the paid-up equity share capital of India Cements by way of an open offer.

Q. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has extended its partnership with which Bank for another five years to enhance financial inclusion across underserved and unbanked regions in India?

- A) Kotak Mahindra Bank
- B) Bank of Baroda
- C) Canara Bank
- D) Punjab National Bank

Answer : B

- ✓ Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Bank of Baroda (BoB) have expanded their longstanding partnership to continue delivering financial inclusion solutions for the next 5 years.
- ✓ This collaboration is to help strengthen banking services in unbanked and underserved regions, with a focus on operations and accessibility.
- ✓ Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)
- ✓ Founded : 1968
- ✓ Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- ✓ Chairman : Natarajan Chandrasekaran
- ✓ MD & CEO : Kirti Krithivasan

Q. Which organisation has invested \$75 million (Rs 630 crore) in sustainability linked bond (SLB) issued by NDR InvIT?

- A) Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA)
B) International Development Association (IDA)
C) International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)
D) International Finance Corporation (IFC)

Answer : D

- ✓ IFC invests Rs 630 cr in NDR InvIT to bolster sustainable warehousing
- ✓ IFC has invested USD 75 million (about Rs 630 crore) in domestic currency Sustainability Linked Bond issued by NDR InvIT in a strategic move to boost sustainable warehousing infrastructure and promote logistics sector.
- ✓ This Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) is sponsored by NDR Warehousing Private Limited.
- ✓ This Sustainability Linked Bond (SLB) is the first by a warehousing InvIT in India International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group.
- ✓ Warehouse space expected to increase from 300 million square feet in FY23 to 500 million square feet by 2030

Q. Which bank and Times Internet have launched a super-premium credit card, 'Times Black,' crafted from historic Times of India printing plates?

- A) ICICI Bank
B) Yes Bank
C) HDFC Bank
D) Axis Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ ICICI Bank and Times Internet launch super-premium credit card.
- ✓ ICICI Bank and Times Internet have launched a super-premium credit card, 'Times Black,' crafted from historic Times of India printing plates.
- ✓ Targeting ultra high-net-worth individuals, the card offers exclusive benefits like lounge access, reward points, and even helicopter rides.
- ✓ The annual fee is ₹20,000, waived for yearly expenditures of ₹25 lakh

ICICI BANK IN NEWS 2024

- ICICI Bank and Times Internet have launched a super-premium credit card, 'Times Black,' crafted from historic Times of India printing plates.
- ICICI Bank and MakeMyTrip (MMT) have launched a co-branded credit card for travel enthusiasts
- ICICI Bank has crossed the Rs 9 lakh crore market capitalization mark for the first time
- ICICI Bank partners with PFRDA to launch NPS Vatsalya, a pension account for minors
- Tata Power Solar Systems Ltd (TPSSL) has signed an agreement with ICICI Bank to provide financing for solar units to residential and corporate customers.
- Industrial Credit and Investment Corporation of India (ICICI) BANK
- Founded : 1994
- HQ : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- MD & CEO : Sandeep Bakhshi
- Tagline : Hum Hai Na Khayal Apka

Q. Who inaugurated the Bima Sakhi scheme of the Life Insurance Corporation?

- A) Narendra Modi
B) Siddhartha Mohanty
C) Debasish Panda
D) Madhabi Puri Buch

Answer : A

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Bima Sakhi scheme of the public-sector insurance company, the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC), at Panipat in Haryana
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that besides creating income opportunities for 2 lakh women, the LIC's Bima Sakshi scheme will help achieve the government's target of Insurance for All by 2047.
- ✓ The prime minister said his government was committed to empowering women, and the LIC's Bima Sakhi scheme is a step in that direction

Q. What is the minimum age for a woman to be enrolled in the Bima Sakhi scheme of the Life Insurance Corporation?

- A) 21 years
- B) 18 years
- C) 25 years
- D) 15 years

Answer : B

- ✓ About the Bima Sakhi scheme of the LIC
- ✓ The Bima Sakhi scheme is for women, and they will receive training for the first three years to promote financial literacy and awareness about insurance products among people, especially in rural areas.
- ✓ These women trainees, called Bima Sakhi, will also receive a stipend in addition to the commission for selling the LIC insurance policies.
- ✓ After completing the training, the women can become LIC insurance agents.
- ✓ In the scheme's first year, LIC will recruit 2 lakh women.
- ✓ Eligibility & Benefit of the Scheme
- ✓ Women in the age group 18-70 years are eligible to become Bima Sakhi.
- ✓ They should be at least the 10th pass.
- ✓ The scheme is not eligible for relatives of existing agents and employees or retired LIC employees.
- ✓ If women sell a minimum of 24 policies, they will receive a commission of Rs 48,000 (excluding bonus) for the first year.
- ✓ The candidates will also get a monthly stipend of Rs 7,000 per month.
- ✓ In the second year, they will get a stipend of Rs 6,000 per month, subject to certain conditions.
- ✓ In the third year, the monthly stipend will be Rs 5,000 per month, subject to certain conditions
- ✓ About Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)
- ✓ The government of India established the Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) on September 1, 1956, by nationalising 245 Indian and foreign insurance companies.
- ✓ The LIC was established under the Life Insurance Corporation Act 1956 provisions.
- ✓ It is the largest insurance company in India, and it is owned by the central government.
- ✓ Headquarters: Mumbai, Maharashtra
- ✓ Chief Executive Officer and Managing Director: Siddhartha Mohanty
- ✓ Slogan of LIC: "Yogakshemam Vahamyaham" taken from Bhagavad Gita

Q. The government has set a target 'Insurance for All' by which year?

- A) 2030
- B) 2035
- C) 2040
- D) 2047

Answer : D

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi said that besides creating income opportunities for 2 lakh women, the LIC's Bima Sakshi scheme will help achieve the government's target of Insurance for All by 2047

Q. What is the duration of training provided to women trainees under the LIC's Bima Sakhi scheme?

- A) two years
- B) three years
- C) four years
- D) six years

Answer : B

- ✓ The Bima Sakhi scheme is for women, and they will receive training for the first three years to promote financial literacy and awareness about insurance products among people, especially in rural areas

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Bima Sakhi Yojana:

1. It is an initiative of the state-owned Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).
2. It intends to give health insurance to women falling below the poverty line.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Prime Minister recently launched the Bima Sakhi Yojana in Haryana's Panipat.
- ✓ About Bima Sakhi Yojana:
 - ✓ It is an initiative of the state-owned Life Insurance Corporation (LIC).
 - ✓ It is designed to empower women aged 18-70 years who have passed out of Class 10.
 - ✓ They will receive specialised training and a stipend for the first three years to promote financial literacy and insurance awareness.
 - ✓ Under the scheme, female agents will get a stipend of Rs. 7,000 per month for the first year, Rs. 6,000 per month in the second year, and Rs. 5,000 per month in the third year.
 - ✓ Bima Sakhis will also get commissions. They will receive a commission of Rs 48,000 (excluding bonus) for the first year.
 - ✓ The plan is to appoint two lakh Bima Sakhi over a period of three years.
 - ✓ Following the completion of the training, women can serve as LIC agents, and the graduate Bima Sakhis would have the opportunity to qualify for being considered for development officer roles in LIC.
 - ✓ Relatives of existing agents and employees are not eligible for the scheme. Retired employees are also ineligible.

Q. Consumer Confidence Survey, recently seen in the news, is published by:

- A) Reserve Bank of India B) NITI Aayog
C) Union Ministry of Finance D) Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Answer : A

- ✓ According to the latest Consumer Confidence Survey of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) Indian consumers' confidence about general economic situation, employment scenario, their income and spending have weakened.
- ✓ It is a survey that indicates how optimistic or pessimistic consumers are regarding their expected financial situation.
- ✓ If the consumers are optimistic, spending will be more, whereas if they are not so confident, then their poor consumption pattern may lead to recession
- ✓ It is released by the Reserve Bank of India bi-monthly.
- ✓ Indicators of consumer confidence survey:
 - ✓ Current Situation Index (CSI)
 - ✓ Future Expectation Index (FEI).
- ✓ The future expectations index (FEI) improved by 0.5 points to 121.9 in the latest survey.
- ✓ The current situation index (CSI) moderated by 0.7 points to 94 in November 2024 from 94.7 in September 2024

Q. Which organization has launched an AI model for weather prediction called GenCast?

- A) Microsoft
B) World Bank
C) Google
D) World Meteorological Organization

Answer : C

- ✓ Google DeepMind unveiled GenCast, an AI model for weather prediction outperforming the European Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasts (ECMWF), the world's top forecast system.
- ✓ GenCast provides faster, more accurate forecasts up to 15 days ahead, advancing beyond its deterministic predecessor by generating 50+ weather scenarios.
- ✓ It uses diffusion AI adapted to Earth's spherical geometry to model complex weather probabilities.
- ✓ GenCast improves predictions of extreme weather risks, aiding officials in saving lives, reducing damage, and cutting costs

Q. Who has been appointed as the new Executive Director of Yes Bank?

- A) Rajnish Kumar
B) Alok Mandal
C) Manish Jain
D) Rajiv Sinha

Answer : C

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the appointment of Manish Jain as the new executive director of Yes Bank, effective from December 11, 2024 to December 10, 2027

Q. Which multilateral financial institution will provide a \$325.10 million loan to the UP-AGREES (Uttar Pradesh Agricultural Growth and Rural Enterprises Ecosystem Strengthening) Project?

- A) World Bank
B) Asian Development Bank
C) International Monetary Fund
D) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ World Bank okay \$325.10 million loan for UP to boost farmer income.
- ✓ World Bank has approved a \$325.10 million loan to the Uttar Pradesh government to boost the farmers' income in the state. The loan will finance the Rs 3,903 crore or \$ 500 million. Uttar Pradesh Agricultural Growth and Rural Enterprises Ecosystem Strengthening (UP-AGREES) Project. The project aims to improve crop productivity and increase farmer's income in the state.
- ✓ The loan was approved by the World Bank's Board of Executive Directors in a meeting in Washington, D.C. United States on 12 December 2024.
- ✓ Funding of the UP-AGREES Project
- ✓ The total cost of the UP-AGREES project is Rs 3,903 crore or \$ 500 million.
- ✓ The World Bank will provide a \$325.10 million loan or Rs 2,737 crore.
- ✓ The state government will provide Rs 1,166 crore.
- ✓ The private sector is expected to contribute \$15 million to the project.
- ✓ The Project is also supported by the governments of France, Israel and the Gates Foundation.
- ✓ World Bank Loan through IBRD
- ✓ The World Bank loan of \$325.10 million will be provided through its subsidiary, the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD).
- ✓ The loan repayment period is 33.5 years, including a grace period of 6 years.
- ✓ Duration of UP-AGREES Project
- ✓ The Yogi Adityanath government in Uttar Pradesh has launched the state's World Bank-funded Uttar Pradesh Agriculture Growth and Rural Enterprise Ecosystem Strengthening (UP-AGREES).
- ✓ The duration of the UP-AGREES scheme is six years.

Q. Revenue Secretary, Sanjay Malhotra has been appointed the __ Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

- A) 26th
B) 28th
C) 29th
D) 24th

Answer : A

- ✓ The Revenue Secretary, Union Ministry of Finance, Sanjay Malhotra, has been appointed the 26th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ✓ He will assume office on 11 December 2024 after the incumbent Governor, Shaktikanta Das, retires on 10 December 2024.
- ✓ Term of Sanjay Malhotra as 26th RBI Governor
- ✓ Sanjay Malhotra has been appointed for three years, starting 11 December 2024. The central government can dismiss him before the completion of his tenure, or he can resign from his office.
- ✓ Under section 8 of the Reserve Bank of India Act 1934, the Central government appoints the Governor and four Deputy Governors of the RBI.
- ✓ According to the RBI Act 1934,
- ✓ the Governor or the Deputy Governor can be appointed for a maximum term of five years and is eligible for reappointment.
- ✓ It means that one term of the Governor or the Deputy Governor can be up to 5 years.
- ✓ Normally, the government appoints a Governor and Deputy Governor for three years, and if necessary, it reappoints them for another fresh term, as Shaktikanta Das was reappointed in 2021
- ✓ About Sanjay Malhotra
- ✓ Sanjay Malhotra is an IAS officer of the 1990 batch of the Rajasthan Cadre who assumed the office of revenue secretary on December 1, 2022.
- ✓ He is an IITian and holds a degree in Computer Science Engineering from the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur. He also holds a Master's in Public Policy from Princeton University, United States of America.
- ✓ About Shaktikanta Das
- ✓ Shaktikanta Das, an IAS Officer and former secretary at the Departments of Revenue and Economic Affairs assumed office as the 25th Governor of the RBI on 12 December 2021.
- ✓ He was reappointed for a term of three years in 2021, and he retired on 10 December 2024.
- ✓ He is the fifth governor of the RBI and has a tenure of six years.
- ✓ In 2023, he became the second RBI Governor after Raghuram Rajan(2014)to have won the 'Governor of the Year award' of Central Banking, an international economic research journal.
- ✓ He received an 'A+' rating for two years in a row and was ranked among the top three central bankers in the Global Finance Central Banker Report Card 2024 by U.S based Global Finance magazine.
- ✓ Governor Das has served six years, making him the second-longest-serving RBI governor after Benegal Rama Rau, who held the position for seven and a half years in the 1950s.

Q. What is the tenure of Sanjay Malhotra as the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India?

- A) two years
B) five years
C) four years
D) three years

Answer : D

- ✓ Sanjay Malhotra has been appointed for three years, starting 11 December 2024

Q. What is the maximum tenure of the Governor of the Reserve Bank of India?

- A) five years
B) six years
C) four years
D) three years

Answer : A

- ✓ According to the RBI Act 1934, the Governor or the Deputy Governor can be appointed for a maximum term of five years and is eligible for reappointment.
- ✓ Sir Osborne Smith was the first Governor of the Reserve Bank.
- ✓ Sir C. D. Deshmukh was the first Indian to serve as the governor and the first governor of independent India.
- ✓ Sir Benegal Rama Rau was the longest serving governor.
- ✓ Manmohan Singh, the fifteenth governor, later served as the thirteenth prime minister of India.
- ✓ Y.V. Reddy was governor from 2003 to 2008. He is credited with helping to stabilise the Indian economy during the 2008 financial crisis.
- ✓ Additional Information
- ✓ Dr. Raghuram Rajan assumed charge as the 23rd Governor of the Reserve Bank of India on September 4, 2013.
- ✓ Dr. D. Subbarao took over on September 5, 2008 as the 22nd Governor of the Reserve Bank of India.
- ✓ Dr. Urjit R. Patel assumed charge as the twenty-fourth Governor of the Reserve Bank of India effective September 4, 2016 after serving as Deputy Governor since January 2013

Q. How much liquidity is likely to be released in the banking sector due to the 0.50% cut in Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) ?

- A) Rs 1.16 lakh crore B) Rs 3.76 lakh crore
C) Rs 1.80 lakh crore D) Rs 2.23 lakh crore

Answer : A

- ✓ According to the RBI, the 0.50% cut in the CRR is expected to release around Rs 1.16 lakh crore into the banking system.

Q. RBI has allowed banks to provide how much collateral-free agriculture loans to the farmers?

- A) Rs 4 lakh per borrower B) Rs 3 lakh per borrower
C) Rs 2 lakh per borrower D) Rs 5 lakh per borrower

Answer : C

- ✓ Policy Initiatives Announced by the RBI Governor .
- ✓ Banks can provide a collateral-free agricultural loan of up to Rs 2 lakh per borrower. Earlier, the limit was Rs 1.60 lakh per borrower.
- ✓ This is expected to benefit the small and marginal farmers.
- ✓ Small Finance Banks can extend credit through Unified Payment Interface.
- ✓ Till now only Scheduled Commercial Banks were allowed to offer this facility to their customers.
- ✓ However, the Payments Banks and Regional Rural Banks are not allowed to use this facility.

Q. What is the Current Cash reserve Ratio (CRR) as per RBI Monetary Policy?

- A) 4.65% A) 4.50%
C) 4.45% D) 3.65%

Answer : B

- ✓ Maintenance of Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR)
- ✓ As announced in the Statement on Developmental and Regulatory Policies dated December 06, 2024, it has been decided to reduce the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) of all banks by 50 basis points in two equal tranches of 25 basis points each to 4.0 per cent of net demand and time liabilities (NDTL).

- ✓ Accordingly, banks are required to maintain the CRR at 4.25 per cent of their NDTL effective from the reporting fortnight beginning December 14, 2024 and 4.00 per cent of their NDTL effective from fortnight beginning December 28, 2024.
- ✓ With a view to monitoring compliance of maintenance of statutory reserve requirements viz. CRR and SLR by the SCBs, the Reserve Bank of India has prescribed statutory returns i.e. Form A return (for CRR) under Section 42 (2) of the RBI Act, 1934 and Form VIII return (for SLR) under Section 24 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

Q. MuleHunter.AI, recently in news, is an initiative of:

- A) Reserve Bank Innovation Hub B) UNESCO
C) Arctic Council D) World Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India asked banks to collaborate with its initiative MuleHunter.AI to weed out mule accounts which are used to commit financial fraud.
- ✓ It is the Artificial Intelligence/ Machine Learning-based model.
- ✓ It is developed by the Reserve Bank Innovation Hub (RBIH), which is a subsidiary of Reserve Bank.
- ✓ This model enables detection of mule bank accounts in an efficient manner. A pilot with two large public sector banks has yielded encouraging results.
- ✓ What is a mule bank account?
- ✓ A mule account is a bank account that is used by criminals for illegal activities, including the laundering of illicit funds.
- ✓ A mule account is typically bought over by the criminals from their original users, individuals who are often from lower income groups, or have low levels of technical literacy.

Q. Paytm's parent company One97 Communications is selling its 5.4% stake in Japanese payments firm PayPay to which bank for about \$280 million?

- A) Barclays Bank B) DBS Bank
C) SoftBankD) Deutsche Bank

Answer : C

- ✓ Paytm Parent to sell 5.4% stake in Japan company PayPay to SoftBank.
- ✓ One97 Communications (OCL), which runs digital payment platform Paytm, has announced that it is selling its 5.4% shareholding in Japanese payment company PayPay for ₹2,364 crore, or nearly \$280 million, to SoftBank.

Q. What was the total FDI inflow attracted by India in FY25 as per the data by DPIIT?

- A) USD 1,033.4 billion B) USD 1,516.4 billion
C) USD 1,278.4 billion D) USD 1,389.4 billion

Answer : A

- ✓ India's FDI Inflows Surpass \$1 Trillion, Solidifying Global Investment Status.
- ✓ India has achieved a significant milestone as Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) inflows surpass \$1 trillion between April 2000 and September 2024, reinforcing its position as a top investment destination.
- ✓ With cumulative FDI reaching \$1,033.4 billion, including equity, reinvested earnings, and other capital, the country has seen substantial growth, especially post-2014.
- ✓ About 25% of India's FDI inflows came via Mauritius, followed by Singapore (24%) and the US (10%). Other notable investors include the Netherlands, Japan, the UK, and the UAE.

- ✓ Since 2014, India has attracted \$667.4 billion in FDI, marking a 119% rise from the previous decade (2004-14). The manufacturing sector alone saw \$165.1 billion in equity inflows during this period, reflecting a 69% increase compared to the earlier decade.
- ✓ India received USD 177.18 billion from Mauritius, USD 167.47 billion from Singapore and USD 67.8 billion from the US during the period

Q. Which country was the largest source of FDI in India in FY25?

- A) Mauritius
B) Singapore
C) Netherlands
D) United States

Answer : A

- ✓ About 25 per cent of the FDI came through the Mauritius route. It was followed by Singapore (24 per cent), the US (10 per cent), the Netherlands (7 per cent), Japan (6 per cent), the UK (5 per cent), UAE (3 per cent) and Cayman Islands. Germany and Cyprus accounted for 2 per cent each.

Q. World Bank has approved a \$188.28 million loan to support economic growth in which state?

- A) Uttar Pradesh
B) Maharashtra
C) Rajasthan
D) Madhya Pradesh

Answer : B

- ✓ World Bank approves \$188.28 million loan to Maharashtra to boost economic growth in backward districts.
- ✓ The loan, provided by the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), has a maturity period of 15 years, including a five-year grace period
- ✓ The initiative aims to enhance district-level planning and growth strategies.

Q. Which bank has launched a digital campaign titled 'Khabar Nahi, Khabardar Bano to combat cyber fraud?

- A) Indian Bank
B) Kotak Mahindra Bank
C) Indian Overseas Bank
D) HDFC Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ Indian Bank unveils 'Khabar Nahi, Khabardar Bano' campaign to combat cyber fraud.
- ✓ Indian Bank has launched a digital campaign titled 'Khabar Nahi, Khabardar Bano' to educate customers about the growing threat of cyber fraud and empower them with preventive measures.
- ✓ Conceptualized by Goldmine Advertising, the bank's Digital Agency on Record, the campaign uses relatable scenarios to address the social stigma and embarrassment that often accompany falling victim to online scams

Q. Which one of the following Acts is proposed to be amended by the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024?

- A) Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934 B) State Bank of India Act, 1955
C) Banking Regulation Act, 1949 D) All of the above

Answer : D

- ✓ The Lok Sabha recently passed the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024 by a voice vote.
- ✓ About Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill, 2024:
- ✓ It introduces significant changes aimed at improving governance in the banking sector and enhancing customer convenience.

- ✓ The bill seeks to amend five acts: the Reserve Bank of India Act, 1934; the Banking Regulation Act, 1949 (or the BR Act); the State Bank of India Act, 1955; the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1970; and the Banking Companies (Acquisition and Transfer of Undertakings) Act, 1980.
- ✓ Highlights of the Bill:
- ✓ Key provisions include allowing bank account holders to nominate up to four individuals for their accounts, with an option for successive or simultaneous nominations.
- ✓ Locker holders, however, will be restricted to successive nominations.
- ✓ The bill also proposes a revision to the definition of "substantial interest" for directorships, raising the threshold from ₹5 lakh to ₹2 crore.
- ✓ Additionally, the tenure of directors (excluding chairpersons and whole-time directors) in cooperative banks will increase from 8 to 10 years, aligning with the Constitution (Ninety-Seventh Amendment) Act, 2011.
- ✓ It would allow a director of a Central Cooperative Bank to serve on the board of a State Cooperative Bank.
- ✓ The Bill also seeks to give greater freedom to banks in deciding the remuneration to be paid to statutory auditors.
- ✓ It also seeks to redefine the reporting dates for banks for regulatory compliance to the 15th and last day of every month instead of the second and fourth Fridays.

Q. Which central government ministry will administer the recently launched Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR-based Pledge Financing (CGS-NPF) scheme?

- A) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
- B) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
- C) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- D) Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution

Answer : D

- ✓ The government of India has launched a credit guarantee scheme to enable the farmers to access credit from eligible financial institutions on harvested crops deposited in registered warehouses.
- ✓ The Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR-based Pledge Financing (CGS-NPF) was launched by the central government in New Delhi on 6 December 2024.
- ✓ The government hopes that the launch of the scheme will boost the post-harvest lending to farmers/traders to Rs 5.5 lakh crore in the next 10 years.
- ✓ The Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR-based Pledge Financing (CGS-NPF) was launched by the Union Minister for Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution and New & Renewable Energy, Pralhad Joshi, in New Delhi.
- ✓ The corpus of the CGS-NPF Scheme is Rs 1000 crore.
- ✓ The CGS-NPF fund will be managed by the Union Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution.
- ✓ The farmers/traders can avail loans from eligible financial institutions against the electronic negotiable warehouse receipts issued by Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA) accredited warehouses.
- ✓ Counter Guarantee of Loans
- ✓ Agricultural loans up to Rs 75 lakhs and loans up to Rs. 2 crores for nonagricultural purposes are covered.
- ✓ The government will reimburse the financial institution 85% of the loan amount for loans up to Rs 3 lakhs.
- ✓ For loans of Rs 3 -75 lakhs, the reimbursement amount is 80 % of the loan amount for small and marginal farmers/women/scheduled caste/scheduled tribes/persons with disabilities farmers.
- ✓ For the other borrowers, the counter-guarantee for Rs 3-Rs 75 lakh loan is 75 % of the loan amount.

- ✓ Eligible Farmers/Traders
- ✓ Small and Marginal farmers/Women/Scheduled Caste/Schedule Tribes/Person with Disabilities farmers and other category farmers.
- ✓ Micro Small and Medium Enterprises(MSME), Farmer Producer Organisation, Farmer Cooperatives and Traders.
- ✓ Eligible financial institutions
- ✓ All scheduled banks and all cooperative banks

Q. What is the corpus of the central government's Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR-based Pledge Financing (CGS-NPF) scheme?

A) Rs 1000 crore	B) Rs 2000 crore
C) Rs 3000 crore	D) Rs 4000 crore

Answer : A

- ✓ Corpus of the CGS-NPF Scheme
- ✓ The corpus of the CGS-NPF Scheme is Rs 1000 crore.

Q. How much agricultural loans are covered under the recently launched central government's Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR-based Pledge Financing (CGS-NPF) scheme?

A) Rs 25 lakhs	B) Rs 75 lakhs
C) Rs 50 lakhs	D) Rs 60 lakhs

Answer : B

- ✓ Counter Guarantee of Loans
- ✓ Agricultural loans up to Rs 75 lakhs and loans up to Rs. 2 crores for nonagricultural purposes are covered.
- ✓ The government will reimburse the financial institution 85% of the loan amount for loans up to Rs 3 lakhs.
- ✓ For loans of Rs 3 -75 lakhs, the reimbursement amount is 80 % of the loan amount for small and marginal farmers/women/scheduled caste/scheduled tribes/persons with disabilities farmers.
- ✓ For the other borrowers, the counter-guarantee for Rs 3-Rs 75 lakh loan is 75 % of the loan amount.

Q. Which country has approved Bharti Global's acquisition of a 24.5 per cent stake in BT?

A) Canada	B) France
C) Germany	D) United Kingdom

Answer : D

- ✓ UK govt approves Bharti Global's acquisition of 24.5% stake in BT.
- ✓ The UK government has approved Bharti Global's acquisition of a 24.5 per cent stake in BT following a detailed national security assessment of the process since the Indian multinational and British telecom major announced the deal back in August.
- ✓ The order noted that Bharti Televentures UK Limited acquired 24.5 per cent of the issued share capital of BT – 9.99 per cent on August 12, 2024, and 14.51 per cent on November 18, 2024

Q. Which bank partnered with DPIIT to empower startups through financial access and mentorship?

A) ICICI Bank	B) Yes Bank
C) Axis Bank	D) HDFC Bank

Answer : D

- ✓ HDFC Bank collaborated with DPIIT to strengthen the startup ecosystem by offering financial access, mentorship, and innovation support.
- ✓ This partnership provides startups with tailored banking products, access to HDFC Bank's extensive network, and capacity-building initiatives to overcome funding challenges and foster growth, ensuring a robust support system for budding entrepreneurs.
- ✓ The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) is a central government department under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry in India

Q. How much of a loan has been provided by the Asian Development Bank to Maharashtra in December 2024 for its 'Maharashtra Sustainable Climate-Resilient Coastal Protection and Management Project'?

- A) \$ 60 million
B) \$ 74 million
C) \$ 80 million
D) \$ 42 million

Answer : D

- ✓ \$42 million ADB loan to restore and stabilise Maharashtra's coastline.
- ✓ Manila-based Asian Development Bank (ADB) has signed an agreement with the government of India to provide a \$42 million loan for the Maharashtra Sustainable Climate-Resilient Coastal Protection and Management Project.
- ✓ The loan amount will be utilised to restore and stabilise Maharashtra's coastline.
- ✓ The coastal erosion protection project aims to protect the livelihood of fishermen and those in the tourism sector who are adversely affected by poor coastal management, coastal erosion, and flooding.
- ✓ The Project encourages the involvement of the local communities- women, youth, and vulnerable groups- in coastal zone management and to enhance their ability to prepare for and respond effectively to disasters.

Q. How much loan has been provided by the Asian Development Bank to SK Finance Limited to provide loans to buyers of electric vehicles and women-owned micro, small and medium enterprises?

- A) \$200 million B) \$300 million
C) \$500 million D) \$100 million

Answer : D

- ✓ ADB has signed an agreement with SK Finance Limited, a non-banking finance company (NBFC), to provide a \$100 million loan.
- ✓ SK Finance will use 20% of ADB's \$100 million loan to provide loans to customers for buying electric vehicles (EVs).
- ✓ 80% of the \$100 million loan will be used by the company to provide loans, mainly to women-owned micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs).
- ✓ SK Finance Limited is a Delhi-based NBFC that mainly provides loans for vehicles and MSME loans.

Q. Who has been elected as the 11th President of Asian Development Bank (ADB)?

- A) Masato Kanda
B) Bhargav Dasgupta
C) Masatsugu Asakawa
D) Takehiko Nakao

Answer : A

- ✓ Japanese Masato Kanda was elected as the 11th President of ADB.
- ✓ The Board of Governors of the multilateral Asian Development Bank announced on 28 November 2024 that Masato Kanda of Japan has been elected as the 11th President of the Bank.
- ✓ Masato Kanda will replace the current President, Masatsugu Asakawa, who will leave his office on 23 February 2025.

- ✓ 'Har Ghar Lakhpati': State Bank of India's new mantra for deposit accretion.
- ✓ First is an aspirational product that promises to make depositors lakhpatis by helping them grow their deposits to Rs 1 lakh through recurring deposit (RD) schemes.

Q. Which of the following has decided to exit the co-branded credit card space as it has ended its eight-year tie-up with RBL Bank and DBS Bank India?

- A) Bajaj Finance
B) Tata Capital Financial Services Ltd
C) Aditya Birla Finance Ltd
D) L & T Finance Ltd

Answer : A

- ✓ Bajaj Fin exits co-branded credit card biz, ends tieup with DBS India, RBL
- ✓ Bajaj Finance has decided to exit the co-branded credit card space as it has ended its eight-year tie-up with RBL Bank and DBS Bank India.
- ✓ The move comes on the back of a Reserve Bank of India direction that restricted the co-brand partners' role to only sourcing cards, and providing access to the cardholder for the goods/services offered.
- ✓ RBL Bank's outstanding credit cards stand at 5.17 million as of October, of which 3.4 million are in association with Bajaj Finance. RBL Bank partnered with Bajaj Finance in 2016 to issue co-branded credit cards for five years. The partnership was renewed for another five years in 2021
- ✓ DBS Bank India launched its credit card with a tie-up with Bajaj Finance in June 2022. The former has a credit card base of 500,000, most of which are co-branded.

Q. What is the new collateral-free agricultural loan limit set by RBI?

- A) ₹1 Lakh
B) ₹4 Lakh
C) ₹2 Lakh
D) ₹3 Lakh

Answer : C

- ✓ Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has increased the collateral-free agricultural loan limit from ₹1.6 lakh to ₹2 lakh, effective January 1, 2025.
- ✓ This initiative is aimed at benefiting farmers and allied activities by reducing borrowing costs and improving credit access, especially for small and marginal farmers.
- ✓ The increase in loan limits also enhances the uptake of Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loans, allowing farmers to avail loans up to ₹3 lakh at a 4% effective interest rate.
- ✓ This move supports agricultural growth and financial inclusion.

Q. What is the new name of Max Life Insurance after rebranding?

- A) Axis Max Life Insurance
B) HDFC Max Life Insurance
C) ICICI Max Life Insurance
D) SBI Max Life Insurance

Answer : A

- ✓ Max Life Insurance has rebranded to Axis Max Life Insurance following regulatory and corporate approvals.
- ✓ As part of the rebranding, Axis Bank increased its stake in Max Life to 19.99%, while Max Financial Services Ltd's stake was reduced from 87% to 81%.
- ✓ The rebranding also includes a new logo that incorporates Axis Bank's 'A' and a burgundy shade, symbolizing the strengthened partnership between the two entities.
- ✓ This move reflects the growing collaboration and alignment between Axis Bank and Max Life Insurance.

Q. What is the name of the AI-powered video generator launched by OpenAI?

- A) Sora
- B) DALL-E
- C) GPT-4
- D) Codex

Answer : A

- ✓ OpenAI has launched Sora, an AI-powered video generator designed to create realistic videos.
- ✓ While offering high-quality video content creation, Sora comes with restrictions on how it can depict people, addressing ethical concerns and the potential risks of deepfakes.
- ✓ This tool aims to provide advanced capabilities for video content creation across various industries, while also ensuring responsible use of the technology

Q. What percentage of stake did Coca-Cola sell in its India bottling business to Jubilant Bhartia Group?

- A) 40%
- B) 30%
- C) 50%
- D) 25%

Answer : A

- ✓ Coca-Cola sold a 40% stake in its India bottling business, Hindustan Coca-Cola Holdings (HCCH), to Jubilant Bhartia Group for ₹12,500 crore, valuing the company at ₹31,250 crore.
- ✓ This sale aligns with Coca-Cola's asset-light refranchising strategy and will help strengthen its presence in India, its fifth-largest market

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR based Pledge Financing:

1. Under this scheme Small and Marginal Farmers and Traders are eligible to borrow loans.
2. All scheduled banks and cooperative banks can provide the credit under the scheme.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ About Credit Guarantee Scheme for e-NWR based Pledge Financing (CGS-NPF):
- ✓ It aims to provide credit facilities to small farmers to prevent them from distress selling.
- ✓ It provides a corpus of Rs 1,000-crore for post-harvest finance availed by farmers against electronic negotiable warehouse receipts (e-NWRs) after depositing commodities in Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA) accredited warehouses.
- ✓ Coverage: Loans up to Rs. 75 lakhs for agricultural purpose and Loans up to Rs. 200 Lakhs for nonagricultural purpose.
- ✓ All scheduled banks and all cooperative banks.
- ✓ Eligible Borrowers: Small and Marginal Farmer (SMF)/ Women/SC/ST/PwD Farmers, other farmers, MSMEs, Traders, FPOs and Farmer cooperatives.
- ✓ The credit guarantee schemes are expected to enhance the availability and accessibility of finances for the targeted beneficiaries, as they play an important role in economic growth.

Q.

1. It is an innovative health-centric Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.
2. Under this, families with annual income below Rs. 8 Lakhs from all sources will be eligible to get benefits of this initiative.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Under the guidance of the Ministry of Coal, Singrauli based Coal India arm Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) has rolled out 'CHARAK' initiative.
- ✓ Community Health: A Responsive Action for Koylanchal (CHARAK) is an innovative health-centric Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiative.
- ✓ This project is aimed at providing free treatment for the patients suffering from identified Life-Threatening diseases belonging to Economically Weaker Sections of Singrauli region.
- ✓ It will provide free treatment of identified life-threatening diseases at its dedicated hospital (NSC) or at specialised empanelled hospitals across the country.
- ✓ Eligibility: Residents of Singrauli and Sonbhadra districts having annual family income below Rs. 8 Lakhs from all sources will be eligible for benefit under this scheme.
- ✓ Diseases covered: Under this scheme, Malignancy, TB and related complications, HIV and related complications, Cardiovascular diseases, Organ Transplant, Burns with contractures leading to permanent disability, Liver disorders, sudden hearing loss, ARDS, Acute Surgical Emergencies, Neurological Disorders, Neurovascular disorders, Accidental trauma, Serious handicap, Multisystem disorders, Connective Tissue disorders, Sudden vision loss etc

Q.

- A) ICICI Bank
B) HDFC Bank
C) Yes Bank
D) Axis Bank

Answer : B

- ✓ Private sector HDFC Bank has become the first domestic lender to execute a gold forward deal from GIFT City.
- ✓ The deal was executed by HDFC BANK GIFT City IBU in collaboration with Hindustan Platinum Pvt Ltd, a global refiner and manufacturer of high purity precious metal products and industrial services, HDFC Bank.
- ✓ The bank's International Banking Unit (IBU) in GIFT City serves as a key player, holding memberships on the Indian International Bullion Exchange (IIBX).

Q.

- A) 5% B) 12%
- C) 18% D) 28%

Answer : C

- ✓ The GST Council, chaired by Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman, announced that popcorn would now be taxed differently depending on its content.

- ✓ Non-branded popcorn with salt and spices (plain salted popcorn, for example) will be taxed at 5%.
- ✓ Pre-packaged and branded popcorn (like the ones you buy in a bag at the supermarket) will have a 12% GST.
- ✓ Caramel popcorn (the sweet, sugar-coated variety) will be taxed at a higher 18%, because it's classified as a sugar confectionery

Q. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has appointed Amitava Chatterjee as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer (MD & CEO) of which bank?

- A) Jammu and Kashmir Bank B) Indian Overseas Bank
C) Kotak Mahindra Bank D) Canara Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ J&K Bank has appointment of Amitava Chatterjee, currently Deputy Managing Director of State Bank of India (SBI), as its new managing director (MD) and CEO.
- ✓ Chatterji will succeed Baldev Prakash, who is retiring on December 27, 2024. Prakash is expected to assume the role of Managing Director at SBI next year
- ✓ J&K BANK
- ✓ Founded : 1 October 1938
- ✓ Founder : Maharaja Hari Singh
- ✓ Headquarters : Srinagar, Jammu and Kashmir
- ✓ Chairman & MD : Rajesh Kumar Chhibber
- ✓ MD & CEO : Amitava Chatterjee
- ✓ Tagline ; "Serving to Empower"

Q. Which organization has launched a quantum computing chip called Willow?

- A) IBM B) Google
C) Microsoft D) Amazon

Answer : B

- ✓ Recently, Google has announced a significant advancement in quantum computing as it unveiled its next-generation chip called 'Willow'.
- ✓ It is a new state-of-the-art quantum computing chip developed by Google.
- ✓ The components of the chip include single and two-qubit gates, qubit reset, and readout that have been engineered and integrated to ensure that there is no lag between any two components as that may adversely impact system performance.
- ✓ It was able to solve a complex mathematical problem in just five minutes — a task that would take classical computers longer than the history of the universe.

Q. Which institution approved a \$789 million loan for the development of Amaravati?

- A) World Bank
B) Asian Development Bank
C) International Monetary Fund
D) United Nations Development Programme

Answer : B

- ✓ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) approved a loan of \$789 million for the development of Amaravati, aiming to transform it into a smart, green capital city with world-class infrastructure.
- ✓ This loan is intended to boost job creation, private investment, and inclusive economic growth while positioning Amaravati as a model for sustainable urban development.

- ✓ IFC invests Rs 630 cr in NDR InvIT to bolster sustainable warehousing
- ✓ IFC has invested USD 75 million (about Rs 630 crore) in domestic currency Sustainability Linked Bond issued by NDR InvIT in a strategic move to boost sustainable warehousing infrastructure and promote logistics sector.
- ✓ This Infrastructure Investment Trust (InvIT) is sponsored by NDR Warehousing Private Limited.
- ✓ This Sustainability Linked Bond (SLB) is the first by a warehousing InvIT in India International Finance Corporation (IFC), a member of the World Bank Group.
- ✓ Warehouse space expected to increase from 300 million square feet in FY23 to 500 million square feet by 2030

Q. Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) has extended its partnership with which Bank for another five years to enhance financial inclusion across underserved and unbanked regions in India?

- A) Kotak Mahindra Bank B) Bank of Baroda
C) Canara Bank D) Punjab National Bank

Answer : B

- ✓ Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) and Bank of Baroda (BoB) have expanded their longstanding partnership to continue delivering financial inclusion solutions for the next 5 years.
- ✓ This collaboration is to help strengthen banking services in unbanked and underserved regions, with a focus on operations and accessibility.
- ✓ Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)
- ✓ Founded : 1968
- ✓ Headquarters : Mumbai, Maharashtra
- ✓ Chairman : Natarajan Chandrasekaran
- ✓ MD & CEO : Kriti Krithivasan

Q. Which financial institutions has sanctioned an \$800 million loan to support the development of Amaravati, the ambitious greenfield capital of Andhra Pradesh?

- A) World Bank B) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank
C) International Monetary Fund D) Asian Development Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ World Bank approves 800 million dollars loan for Amaravati development.
- ✓ World Bank has sanctioned an \$800 million loan to support the development of Amaravati, the ambitious greenfield capital of Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ The funding is part of the Amaravati Integrated Urban Development Programme, aimed at establishing the city as a sustainable, climate-resilient growth hub.
- ✓ The Asian Development Bank (ADB) has also pledged 788.8 million dollars towards Amaravati's development, alongside the World Bank's contribution. Out of the total estimated loan of ₹15,000 crore for the project, the central government will provide the remaining share.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the SMILE Programme:

1. It is a programmatic Policy-Based Loan (PBL) to support the government in undertaking wide-ranging reforms in the logistics sector in India.
2. It comprises establishing uniform standards to streamline supply chains and attract private investment.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Indian Government and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) signed a landmark \$350 million Policy-Based Loan under the second sub programme of the Strengthening Multimodal and Integrated Logistics Ecosystem (SMILE) programme.
- ✓ The Strengthening Multimodal and Integrated Logistics Ecosystem (SMILE) is a programmatic Policy-Based Loan (PBL) to support the government in undertaking wide-ranging reforms in the logistics sector in India.
- ✓ The programmatic approach comprises two subprograms, which aim to expand India's manufacturing sector and improve the resilience of its supply chains.
- ✓ This initiative is in collaboration with the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) under the Ministry of Finance, the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, and ADB.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the 'FREE-AI' Committee, recently seen in the news:

1. It was constituted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to develop a framework for responsible and ethical Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the financial sector.
2. Its mandate is to study the present level of AI adoption in financial services and review regulatory and supervisory approaches on AI with a focus on the financial sector globally.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India recently said it has set up a committee, which will be called as FREE-AI, to develop the framework for responsible and ethical enablement of artificial intelligence.
- ✓ About 'FREE-AI' Committee:
- ✓ It is an eight-member panel constituted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to develop a framework for responsible and ethical Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the financial sector.
- ✓ It will be headed by Pushpak Bhattacharyya, Professor, Department of Computer Science and Engineering, IIT Bombay.
- ✓ The panel includes representatives from NITI Aayog, HDFC Bank, IIT Madras, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology, law firm Trilegal, and Microsoft India.

Q. Who is the chairman of the committee to develop a framework for responsible and ethical enablement of artificial intelligence (FREE-AI) in the financial sector?

- A) Debjani Ghosh
C) Anjani Rathor
B) Suwendu Pati
D) Pushpak Bhattacharyya

Answer : D

- ✓ To develop a framework for responsible and ethical enablement of artificial intelligence (FREE-AI) in the financial sector, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up an eight-member expert committee.
- ✓ The chairman of the expert committee is Professor Pushpak Bhattacharyya of IIT Bombay

Q. Which of the following entity has released the "Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2023-24" report?

- A) RBI
B) SEBI
C) IRDAI
D) SIDBI

Answer : A

- ✓ Report on Trend and Progress of Banking in India 2023-24 released by Reserve Bank of India (RBI).
- ✓ RBI released its annual report under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949, highlighting the performance of the banking sector in 2023-24.
- ✓ Key Highlights
- ✓ Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs)
- ✓ Credit Growth & Profitability: SCBs recorded improved profitability for the sixth consecutive year.
- ✓ Improved Asset Quality: Gross NPAs declined to a 13-year low at 2.5% in September 2024.
- ✓ Strong Capital Position: The Capital-to-Risk-Weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) stood at 16.8% as of September 2024, meeting regulatory requirements.
- ✓ RBI mandates banks to maintain a minimum CRAR of 9% against the 8% CRAR required under BASEL-III norms.
- ✓ Urban Co-operative Banks (UCBs): The combined balance sheet expanded, with asset quality improving for the third straight year.
- ✓ Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs): Achieved double-digit credit growth, with GNPA falling to 3.4% by September 2024
- ✓ Technological Advancements: Emerging platforms like the Unified Lending Interface (ULI) and Open Credit Enablement Network (OCEN) aim to enhance credit access for small businesses and individuals.
- ✓ Financial Inclusion: The upcoming National Strategy for Financial Inclusion (NSFI) 2025-30 will deepen financial inclusion while addressing emerging challenges.
- ✓ Report has also raised concern about rising banking frauds. Stating fraud cases surged to ₹21,367 crore during April-September 2024, up from ₹2,623 crore last years, threatening reputation, operations, and financial stability.

Q. Apple iPhone supplier Wistron has approved an initial investment of \$20 million in one of its subsidiaries to construct a new factory line in which state?

- A) Kerala
B) Karnataka
C) Tamil Nadu
D) Telangana

Answer : B

- ✓ Wistron approves \$20 million initial investment for a new factory line in Karnataka.
- ✓ Apple iPhone supplier Wistron has approved an initial investment of \$20 million in one of its subsidiaries to construct a new factory line in Karnataka, laying the foundation to support its upcoming laptop manufacturing plant in India.
- ✓ Recently, Wistron acquired a 32-acre land parcel in the Hi-Tech Defence & Aerospace Park in Karnataka's Devanahalli district for ₹160 crore.
- ✓ In October 2023, the Tata Group announced its 100% acquisition of Wistron InfoComm Manufacturing (India)'s plant in Karnataka from SMS InfoComm (Singapore) and Wistron Hong Kong Limited for \$131 million (over ₹1,000 crore).
- ✓ This acquisition made Tata Electronics the first Indian company to manufacture iPhones for both domestic and global markets.

Q. Which Cement company has acquired 8.69 per cent in Star Cement for ₹851 crore ?

- A) ACC
B) Ambuja
C) Dalmia Bharat
D) UltraTech

Answer : D

- ✓ UltraTech to acquire 8.69% in Star Cement for ₹851 crore

- ✓ UltraTech Cement, an Aditya Birla Group company, has acquired 8.69 per cent in Star Cement for ₹851 crore to further consolidate its position as the largest cement producer in the country
- ✓ Star Cement, a leading player in North-Eastern India, has a production capacity of about 5.7 million tonnes per annum (mtpa).
- ✓ The company is currently expanding its capacity to 9.7 MTPA by 2025-26, and plans to increase it to 12 mtpa by 2027.

Q. What is the position of India in the world in the export of textiles and apparel in 2023?

- A) 1st
B) 4th
C) 3rd
D) 6th

Answer : D

- ✓ India world's sixth largest exporter of Textile & Apparel in 2023.
- ✓ According to the government of India, the country will emerge as the 6th largest exporter of textiles and apparel in the world in 2023.
- ✓ The share of the country in the world's textiles and apparel market was 3.9 % in 2023.
- ✓ China remains the largest exporter of textiles and apparel in the world followed by the European Union and Bangladesh.
- ✓ According to the provisional data released by the government, the export of textiles, apparel, and handicrafts during April-October month of the financial year 2024-25 was USD 21.358 billion.
- ✓ The total import during the period was USD 5.425 billion.

Q. What was the share of India in the world export of textiles and apparel in 2023?

- A) 4.9% B) 2.9%
- C) 3.9% D) 5.9%

Answer : C

Q. What was the total import of textiles and apparel during the April-October of FY 25?

- A) USD 5.425 billion
B) USD 3.382 billion
C) USD 2.123 billion
D) USD 6.813 billion

Answer : A

- ✓ Import of Textile, Apparel, and Handicrafts during April-October FY 25.
- ✓ Import of textiles, apparel, and handicrafts products during April-October 2024 was USD 5.425 billion.
- ✓ The imports have declined by 1% as compared to the same period last year.
- ✓ Man-made Textiles has the largest share in total imports with USD 1.859 billion. The total share in imports was 34% during April-October of FY25.
- ✓ In second place was cotton textile with an import value of USD 1.721 billion.
- ✓ In third place were readymade garments with an import of USD 1.721 billion.
- ✓ Percentage-wise the maximum growth was registered in Handloom products which grew by 56%.

Q. What was the total export of textiles and apparel during the April-October of FY 25?

- A) USD 30.718 billion
B) USD 87.124 billion
C) USD 55.358 billion
D) USD 21.358 billion

Answer : D

- ✓ Export of Textile, Apparel, and Handicrafts during April-October FY 25.
- ✓ The total exports of textiles, apparel, and handicraft were USD 21.358 billion during the April-October period of FY 2025.

- Q.** Which commodity has the highest share in the export of textile and apparel from India during April-October 2024-25?

B) Manmade Textiles

D) Ready Made Garments

- ✓ Share in Export during April-October FY 25.
- ✓ The top five export commodities in the textile, apparel, and handicrafts were as follows
- ✓ Ready Made Garments. The total export during the period was USD 8.733 billion. Share in total exports 41%. Growth as compared to last year same period 12%.
- ✓ Cotton Textiles- USD 7.082 billion. Share in total export 33%. Growth 1%
- ✓ Manmade Textiles- USD 3.105. Share in total export 15%. Growth rate of 5%.
- ✓ Silk products - USD 98 million. Share in total export 0.45 %. Growth rate of 40%.
- ✓ Wool and Woollen Textiles - USD 95 million. Share in total export around 0.4 %. Negative growth of 19 %.
- ✓ Major Export Markets for Indian Textiles, Apparel, and Handicrafts were the United States of America and the European Union.

Q. International Finance Corporation (IFC) has partnered with which of the following to invest \$ 400 million loan to aid the expansion of the latter's EV fleet, energy-efficient consumer goods (EECG), and women empowerment?

- A) Bharti AXA General Insurance B) Bajaj Finance
C) Kotak Mahindra Life Insurance D) Go Digit General Insurance

Answer : B

- ✓ International Finance Corporation (IFC) will partner with Bajaj Finance to invest \$400 million out of the \$1 billion fundraising to aid in the expansion of the latter's EV fleet, energy-efficient consumer goods (EECG), and women empowerment.
- ✓ The partnership will also boost Bajaj Finance's ability to fund and support more women-owned micro-enterprises and women micro-borrowers.
- ✓ IFC's \$400 million loan will enable Bajaj Finance to expand access to finance for customers opting to buy EVs, including 2-wheelers, 3-wheelers and 4-wheelers, and strengthen its presence in the EECG space.

Q. SEBI has proposed a minimum ticket size or investment limit of how many crore rupees for RBI-regulated originators and unregulated entities?

- A) Rs 3 crore B) Rs 5 crore
C) Rs 2 crore D) Rs 1 crore

Answer : D

- ✓ SEBI proposes Rs 1 cr minimum investment, mandatory demat form for securitized debt instruments
- ✓ Markets regulator Sebi has proposed a minimum ticket size or investment threshold of Rs 1 crore for the RBI-regulated originators and unregulated entities engaged in securitisation activities.
- ✓ The proposal also introduced limitations on the number of investors in private placements, allowing securitized debt instruments (SDIs) issued privately to be offered to a maximum of 200 investors.
- ✓ If this limit is exceeded, the issuance must be classified as a public issue.
- ✓ Public offers should remain open for a minimum of three days and a maximum of 10 days, with advertisement requirements aligned with Sebi's regulations for non-convertible securities

Q. SEBI has proposed to increase the limit for identifying high value debt listed entities (HVDLE) from the present Rs 500 crore to how many crores to reduce compliance burden?

- A) Rs 3,000 crore B) Rs 5,000 crore
C) Rs 2,000 crore D) Rs 1,000 crore

Answer : D

- ✓ SEBI proposes doubling threshold for 'High Value Debt Listed Entities' to Rs 1,000 cr.
- ✓ Markets regulator Sebi has proposed raising the threshold for identifying High Value Debt Listed Entities (HVDLEs) to Rs 1,000 crore from Rs 500 crore at present to reduce compliance burdens.
- ✓ Currently, an entity having outstanding value of listed non-convertible debt securities of Rs 500 crore and above are referred to as 'High Value Debt Listed Entities'.
- ✓ It has suggested a dedicated chapter within LODR (Listing Obligations and Disclosure Requirements) Regulations focused solely on corporate governance norms for HVDLEs distinguishing them from equity-listed entities.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Namo Drone Didi Scheme:

1. It aims to provide drones to Women SHGs for providing rental services to farmers for agriculture purposes.
2. It is completely funded by the central government.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ The Government has approved the Central Sector Scheme 'Namo Drone Didi' for providing Drones to the Women Self Help Groups (SHGs) under DAY-NRLM, with an outlay of Rs. 1261 Crores.
- ✓ The scheme aims to provide drones to 14500 selected Women SHGs during the period from 2024-25 to 2025-2026 for providing rental services to farmers for agriculture purposes (application of liquid fertilizers and pesticides for the present).
- ✓ Components of the operational guidelines are:
- ✓ The Scheme will be governed at the Central level by the Empowered Committee of the Secretaries of Department of Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare, Department of Rural Development, Department of Fertilizers, Ministry of Civil Aviation and Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- ✓ The Implementation and Monitoring Committee headed by the Additional Secretary, Department of Rural Development and having representation from all other stakeholders will be responsible for effective planning, implementation and monitoring of the scheme.
- ✓ Financial Assistance: A Central Financial Assistance @ 80% of the cost of drone and accessories/ancillary charges up to a maximum of ₹ 8.0 lakhs will be provided to the women SHGs for purchase of drones as a package.
- ✓ The Cluster Level Federations (CLFs) of SHGs/SHGs may raise the balance amount (total cost of procurement minus subsidy) as loan under National Agriculture Infra Financing Facility (AIF).
- ✓ Interest subvention @ 3% on the AIF loan will be provided to the CLFs/SHGs.
- ✓ The CLFs/SHGs shall also have the option to access loans from other sources/programmes/schemes of the Ministry of Rural Development.
- ✓ One of the members of the women SHGs will be selected for 15 day training consisting of mandatory drone pilot training and additional training for agriculture purposes for nutrient and pesticide application.
- ✓ The Lead Fertilizer Companies (LFCs) responsible for the States will be the implementing agencies of the scheme at the State level.
- ✓ The drones will be procured by the LFCs through a fair and transparent process and the ownership of drones will be placed with the CLF of SHGs or SHGs.
- ✓ The State Departments of Agriculture & State Mission Directors of DAY-NRLM will have a very strong convergence and they will take the ownership of the scheme for its successful implementation at the ground level with the help of the State Level Committee.
- ✓ The scheme will be monitored through an IT based Management Information System (MIS) i.e. Drone Portal which will act as end-to-end software for service delivery and monitoring, funds flow and disbursement of funds.

Q. Which of the following company has received final approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to launch its mutual fund operations?

- A) Aditya Birla Sun Life Mutual Fund B) Canara Robeco Mutual Fund
C) Mirae Asset Mutual Fund D) Unifi Capital

Answer : D

- ✓ Unifi Asset Management gets SEBI nod for mutual fund operations
- ✓ Unifi Asset Management Pvt Ltd, a wholly owned subsidiary of Unifi Capital, has received final approval from the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) to launch its mutual fund operations.
- ✓ Unifi Capital, founded in 2001, is a registered portfolio manager with assets under management (AUM) of approximately ₹27,000 crore (\$3.2 billion) across equity and debt platforms via its PMS and AIF offerings in India and abroad, as of October 31, 2024.
- ✓ Sarath Reddy, Founder of Unifi Capital, described the move as a strategic step in the company's growth.
- ✓ George Alexander, CEO of Unifi Mutual Fund

Q. Which of the following has directed Big Entertainment to pay Rs 26 crore fine for failing to settle penalties imposed in a case related to the illegal diversion of funds?

- A) Reserve Bank of India
- B) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
- C) Competition Commission of India (CCI)
- D) National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)

Answer : B

- ✓ SEBI issues Rs 26 crore demand notice to Reliance Big Entertainment
- ✓ Market regulator SEBI has directed Big Entertainment to pay Rs 26 crore fine for failing to settle penalties imposed in a case related to the illegal diversion of funds.
- ✓ Furthermore, the Securities and Exchange Board of India also issued a warning that if Reliance Big Entertainment Pvt Ltd (now Rbep Entertainment Pvt Ltd) fails to make the payment within 15 days of the notice issued on Thursday, their assets, including bank accounts, will be seized.
- ✓ The demand notice was issued after the entity failed to pay the Rs 25 crore fine imposed by the regulator earlier this year in August, when the markets watchdog had banned industrialist Anil Ambani and 24 others from the securities market for five years due to charges of fund diversion from Reliance Home Finance Limited (RHFL).
- ✓ Additionally, Sebi has imposed a penalty of Rs 25 crore on Ambani and restrained him from serving as a director or Key Managerial Personnel (KMP) in any listed company entity for five years.

Q. Which bank has set to borrow \$1.25 billion, India's largest dollar-denominated bank loan in 2024?

- A) HDFC Bank
- B) ICICI Bank
- C) State Bank of India
- D) Punjab National Bank

Answer : C

- ✓ SBI is set to raise up to \$1.25 billion, the largest dollar loan in India, for corporate needs in GIFT City.
- ✓ The State Bank of India, India's largest public sector bank, is planning to raise up to \$1.25 billion, marking the biggest dollar-denominated loan in the country's financial sector.
- ✓ The bank is looking for a five-year loan, which is being arranged by CTBC Bank, HSBC Holdings and Taipei Fubon Bank with an interest margin of 92.5 basis points at the risk-free Secured Overnight Financing Rate, reported Bloomberg on Friday.
- ✓ This loan will be used for general corporate purposes at its branch in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City)
- ✓ Apart from SBI, several other non-banking financing companies have also borrowed money in foreign currency.
- ✓ Recently, Chola mandalam Investment & Finance Co has sought to raise a \$300 million syndicated term facility.
- ✓ Even the Sydney branch of Union Bank of India is seeking \$125 million (\$81 million) for a three-year term, whereas Bank of Baroda is borrowing \$750 million.

- ✓ India's biggest banks, such as SBI, HDFC Bank, and ICICI Bank, were named as domestic systemically important banks (D-SIBs) by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Wednesday. SBI and HDFC Bank will report high buffer requirements from April 1, 2025.
- ✓ The State Bank of India will have to maintain an additional capital buffer of 0.80 per cent of its risk-weighted assets, an increase from its current 0.60 per cent. Meanwhile, HDFC Bank will increase the capital buffer to 0.40 per cent from 0.20 per cent earlier, according to the central bank.
- ✓ SBI was the first bank to be recognised as a D-SIB in 2015, followed by ICICI Bank in 2016 and HDFC Bank in 2017

Q. Which of the following has crossed Rs 3 lakh crore so far this financial year?

- A) Government e-Marketplace (GeM) B) Civil Registration System (CRS)
C) Aaykar Setu App D) ePathshala App

Answer : A

- ✓ Public procurement through GeM portal crosses Rs 3 trn so far this fiscal.
- ✓ The government's procurement through the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) portal has crossed Rs 3 lakh crore so far this financial year.
- ✓ In 2023-24, the portal handled procurement of Rs 4 lakh crore by government departments of centres and states and public sector enterprises.
- ✓ The Government e-Market (GeM) portal was launched on August 9, 2016, for online purchases of goods and services by all central government ministries and departments.
- ✓ The procurement by central organisations on the portal in October stood at around Rs 30,264 crore.
- ✓ The official said that since inception more than 9.7 lakh micro, small and medium enterprises have registered on GeM, receiving orders of over Rs 4.19 lakh crore or around 40 per cent of the total.
- ✓ South Korea's KONEPS is the largest such platform in the world. GeM stands at the second position. It is followed by Singapore's GeBIZ.

Q. Which Bank has classified Reliance Communications and its subsidiary, Reliance Telecom, as “fraud” accounts?

- A) Canara Bank B) Yes Bank
C) Kotak Mahindra Bank D) Indian Overseas Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ Canara Bank classifies RCom and its subsidiary as 'fraud' accounts
- ✓ State-owned Canara Bank has classified Reliance Communications and its subsidiary, Reliance Telecom, as “fraud” accounts, the company said in an exchange notification.
- ✓ According to the bank, the accounts were classified as fraudulent due to the non-utilisation of funds in accordance with the sanctioned terms, as well as the routing of the loan amount through Reliance Communications to Reliance Telecom for the purpose of settling liabilities to connected or related parties.
- ✓ Additionally, loans availed were invested in mutual funds and fixed assets, which were liquidated immediately to make payments to related and non-related parties.
- ✓ The accounts were reported as “fraud” by the lender to the Reserve Bank of India (RBI).

Q. Which of the following has introduced a Message Drafts feature to help users manage unfinished messages?

- A) Microsoft B) WhatsApp
C) Apple D) IBM

Answer : B

- ✓ WhatsApp brings 'Draft' indicator for managing unfinished messages.
- ✓ Meta-owned instant messaging platform WhatsApp has introduced a Message Drafts feature to help users manage unfinished messages.
- ✓ In a press release, WhatsApp stated that the feature is designed to provide an easy and efficient way to locate and complete messages left incomplete.
- ✓ With this update, WhatsApp will display a "Draft" indicator on any unsent message and move the relevant conversation to the top of the inbox

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- ✓ Sarath Reddy, Founder of Unifi Capital, described the move as a strategic step in the company's growth.
- ✓ George Alexander, CEO of Unifi Mutual Fund

Q. Tata Electronics is set to acquire a 60 per cent majority stake in Taiwanese contract manufacturer Pegatron's iPhone plant in which state?

- A) Karnataka B) Kerala
C) Andhra Pradesh D) Tamil Nadu

Answer : D

- ✓ Tata Electronics to buy 60% stake in Apple supplier Pegatron's iPhone plant in Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ Tata Electronics is set to acquire a 60 per cent majority stake in Taiwanese contract manufacturer Pegatron's iPhone plant in Tamil Nadu, forming a new joint venture (JV).
- ✓ Tata Electronics will hold 60 per cent of the JV and run its daily operations, while Pegatron will hold the remaining 40 per cent and provide technical support

Q. Public sector banks (PSBs) are ready to launch the credit risk assessment model for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs), with a loan amount between Rs 25 lakh and __ to be assessed by the model for different banks.

- A) Rs 1 crore B) Rs 3 crore
C) Rs 2 crore D) Rs 5 crore

Answer : D

- ✓ Public sector banks (PSBs) are ready to launch the credit risk assessment model for micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- ✓ With a loan amount between Rs 25 lakh and Rs 5 crore to be assessed by the model for different banks.
- ✓ Boi, Punjab & Sind Bank, Canara Bank and Indian Bank are planning to launch this model on 25 November
- ✓ Six other PSBs - BOB, UBI, UCO Bank, CBI, PNB and IOB - are expected to launch on Nov 30
- ✓ Indian Bank and SBI will assess loan up to Rs.5 crore through this model

- ✓ Initially, 9 PSBs such as BOB, Canara Bank, BOM and others will allow loan only up to Rs.25 lakh.
- ✓ Bank of India will offer loan up to Rs.1 crore
- ✓ Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) will get collateral-free loans of upto Rs 100 crore through a new credit assessment model by PSU banks.

Q. Which bank has launched PNB Palaash debit card, a new Debit card variant made from recycled Pvc plastic?

A) Punjab National Bank	B) Indian Overseas Bank
C) Kotak Mahindra Bank	D) Canara Bank

Answer : A

- ✓ PNB Launches Eco-Friendly Palaash Debit Card.
- ✓ Punjab National Bank (PNB), the nation's leading public sector bank, has launched – “PNB Palaash Debit Card”, a new Debit Card variant made from recycled PVC plastic (rPVC) as part of their sustainability initiative.
- ✓ This eco-friendly card uses materials that would otherwise end up in landfills, thereby reducing environmental harm.

Q. Which Insurance company has introduced the industry's first 'Increasing Income' feature in its regular pay annuity product?

A) ICICI Prudential Life Insurance	B) Aviva Life Insurance Company India
C) Bharti AXA Life Insurance	D) Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance

Answer : A

- ✓ ICICI Prudential Life Insurance launches 'Increasing Income' feature for annuity product
- ✓ ICICI Prudential Life Insurance has introduced the industry's first 'Increasing Income' feature in its regular pay annuity product, ICICI Pru Guaranteed Pension Plan Flexi.
- ✓ This feature offers a 5% annual increase in the annuity pay-out, helping retirees manage inflation and maintain their standard of living.

Q. How much loan has been provided by the Asian Development Bank for the Livability Improvement Project of Uttarakhand?

A) \$280 million	B) \$168 million
C) \$320 million	D) \$200 million

Answer : D

- ✓ ADB approves \$200 million for Uttarakhand Livability Improvement Project.
- ✓ Asian Development Bank (ADB) has sanctioned a \$200 million loan to finance the Uttarakhand government's Livability Improvement Project, which aims to upgrade and strengthen its urban infrastructure and make it climate resilient.
- ✓ An agreement was recently signed between the Government of India and the Asian Development Bank representative in New Delhi.
- ✓ Uttarakhand Livebality Improvement Project is implemented by the Government of Uttarakhand and co-financed by the Asian Development Bank and the European Investment Bank.
- ✓ The total cost of the Uttarakhand Livability Improvement Project is \$465.9 million, of which the State government will provide \$74.9 million, the European Investment Bank \$191 million, and the ADB \$200 million.
- ✓ The Livability Improvement Project seeks to enhance the quality of life and climate resilience by upgrading the state's water supply, sanitation, drainage, flood management, urban mobility, and other urban services.

- Q.** India's medical device market is valued at approximately \$14 billion and is expected to grow to \$30 billion by which year?
- A) 2030 B) 2035
- C) 2040 C) 2047

- ✓ Scheme for Strengthening the Medical Device Industry launched by Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
- ✓ It is a comprehensive scheme which targets critical areas of the medical device industry and is expected to make India self-reliant in the sector
- ✓ India's medical device market is valued at approximately \$14 billion and is expected to grow to \$30 billion by 2030.
- ✓ Features of the Scheme
- ✓ Total Outlay: 500 crore
- ✓ Components: It consists of five sub-schemes namely:
- ✓ Common Facilities for Medical Devices Clusters: aims to enhance infrastructure by creating shared facilities, including R&D labs, design and testing centers, and animal labs etc.
- ✓ Marginal Investment Scheme for Reducing Import Dependence: aims at localized production of key components, raw materials etc.
- ✓ Capacity Building and Skill Development for Medical Devices: offers financial support for running various courses to develop skilled technical workforce.
- ✓ Medical Device Clinical Studies Support Scheme: provide financial aid for animal studies, human trials, and clinical performance evaluations.
- ✓ Medical Device Promotion Scheme: supports industry associations and export councils for organizing conferences, conducting studies and surveys.
- ✓ Challenges faced by the Medical device Industry: lack of infrastructures like R&D labs, design and testing center; high import dependence for high-end devices, low capital investment, inverted duty structure

- Q.** Where was Bengaluru's first digital population clock inaugurated?
- A) Bangalore University
 - B) Indian Institute of Science (IISc)
 - C) National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS)
 - D) Institute for Social Economic Change (ISEC)

- ✓ Bengaluru's first digital population clock was inaugurated at Institute for Social Economic Change (ISEC).
- ✓ It provides real-time population estimates for Karnataka and India.
- ✓ The project is a joint effort of ISEC and the Union Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW).
- ✓ The clock updates Karnataka's population every 1 minute 10 seconds and India's every 2 seconds.
- ✓ It aims to raise awareness about population dynamics and support research.
- ✓ Similar clocks will be installed at 18 Population Research Centres in India.
- ✓ Equipped with satellite connection, advanced software, and tools, it will enhance demographic studies and policy analysis.

- Q.** Who is the only Indian to be included in the first Fortune 100 Most Powerful Person in Business List?

A) Satya Nadella

B) Sundar Pichai

C) Shantanu Narayen

D) Mukesh Ambani

Answer : D

- ✓ Mukesh Ambani in 1st Fortune 100 Most Powerful Person in Business List.
- ✓ The influential American Fortune magazine has released its first 100 Most Powerful People in Business list. Elon Musk, the chief executive officer (CEO) and founder of Tesla and SpaceX tops the list, with Mukesh Ambani of India ranked 12th.
- ✓ The list includes six Indian-born Americans- Microsoft CEO and Chairman Satya Nadella (3rd rank), Alphabet (Google) CEO Sundar Pichai (10th rank), Adobe CEO and chair Shantanu Narayen (52), YouTube CEO Neal Mohan (69 rank), Khosla Ventures managing partner and founder Vinod Khosla(74 rank), and Tarang Amin CEO and founder of e.l.f. Beauty at 94th place.
- ✓ Mary Barry, CEO and Chairman of American Auto giant General Motors, ranked 9th in the list, is the highest-ranked women's business leader.
- ✓ The first Fortune 100 Most Powerful People in Business includes leaders from 40 industries, some in their 30s and some in their 90s. It includes founders of new businesses like Elon Musk and disruptors and innovators.
- ✓ Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) Mukesh Ambani, with an estimated \$100 billion of wealth, is the only Indian businessman on the list. He has been ranked the 12th most powerful business leader in the world.
- ✓ RIL is India's biggest private sector company, with diversified business interests in petrochemicals, entertainment, telecom, retail etc.

Q. Who is the highest-ranked woman in the first Fortune 100 Most Powerful Person in Business List?

A) Mary Barry

B) Alice Walton

C) Julia Koch

D) Judy Love

Answer : A

Q. Who has been ranked as the most powerful business people in the world by the first Fortune 100 Most Powerful Person in Business List?

A) Jensen Huang

B) Elon Musk

C) Satya Nadella

D) Warren Buffett

Answer : B

- ✓ Top 15 Most Powerful Business People in the World
- ✓ Number 1. - Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla and SpaceX (American)
- ✓ Number 2- Jensen Huang, CEO and founder of Chip-making company NVIDIA(American)
- ✓ Number 3- Satya Nadella, CEO and Chairman of Microsoft (Indian-born American).
- ✓ Number 4- Warren Buffett, CEO and Chairman of Berkshire Hathaway (American)
- ✓ Number 5- Jamie Dimon, CEO and Chairman of JP Morgan Chase (American)
- ✓ Number 6- Tim Cook, CEO of Apple (American)
- ✓ Number 7-Mark Zuckerberg, Founder, CEO and Chairman of Meta (Facebook), an American citizen.
- ✓ Number 8- Sam Altman, Ceo and co-founder of OpenAI (American)
- ✓ Number 9- Mary Barra, CEO and Chairman, General Motors (American)
- ✓ Number 10- Sundar Pichai, CEO of Alphabet (Google), (Indian-born American citizen).
- ✓ Number 11-Jeff Bezos, Chairman and Founder of Amazon (American).
- ✓ Number 12- Mukesh Ambani, CMD Reliance Industries Limited, India.
- ✓ Number 13- Brian Moynihan, CEO and Chairman, Bank of America (American).
- ✓ Number 14-Ren Zhengfei, CEO and Founder of Huawei (China)
- ✓ Number 15- Jane Fraser, CEO of Citigroup (American).

Q. Fortune multimedia company, which publishes the 100 Most Powerful Person in Business, is a company of which country?

- A) Japan
- B) Russia
- C) United States
- D) United Kingdom

Answer : C

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs):

1. A failure of any of these banks can lead to systemic and significant disruption to essential economic services across the country and can cause an economic panic.
2. In order to be listed as a D-SIB in India, a bank needs to have assets that exceed 10 percent of the national GDP.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ State Bank of India, HDFC Bank and ICICI Bank have again been named as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs) by the Reserve Bank of India.
- ✓ About Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs):
- ✓ D-SIB means that the bank is too big to fail.
- ✓ According to the RBI, some banks become systemically important due to their size, cross-jurisdictional activities, complexity, and lack of substitutes and interconnection.
- ✓ A failure of any of these banks can lead to systemic and significant disruption to essential economic services across the country and can cause an economic panic.
- ✓ As a result of their importance, the government is expected to bail out these banks in times of economic distress to prevent widespread harm.
- ✓ Additionally, D-SIBs follow a different set of regulations in relation to systemic risks and moral hazard issues.
- ✓ Due to this perception, these banks enjoy certain advantages in funding.
- ✓ The system of D-SIBs was adopted in the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, where the collapse of many systemically important banks across various regions further fueled the financial downturn.
- ✓ How are D-SIBs determined?
- ✓ Since 2015, the RBI has been releasing the list of all D-SIBs.
- ✓ They are classified into five buckets, according to their importance to the national economy.
- ✓ In order to be listed as a D-SIB, a bank needs to have assets that exceed 2 percent of the national GDP.
- ✓ The banks are then further classified on the level of their importance across the five buckets.
- ✓ Right now, there are three D-SIBs in India—SBI, HDFC Bank, and ICICI Bank.
- ✓ ICICI Bank and HDFC Bank are in bucket one, while SBI falls in bucket three, with bucket five representing the most important D-SIBs.
- ✓ What regulations do these banks need to follow?
- ✓ Due to their economic and national importance, the banks need to maintain a higher share of risk-weighted assets as Tier-I equity.
- ✓ SBI, since it is placed in bucket three of D-SIBs, has to maintain Additional Common Equity Tier 1 (CET1) at 0.60 percent of its Risk-Weighted Assets (RWAs).

- ✓ ICICI and HDFC, on the other hand, have to maintain Additional CET1 at 0.20 percent of their RWA due to being in bucket one of D-SIBs.

Q. Which scheme has been launched by the government of India to provide loans to meritorious students to pursue higher education in India?

- A) PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme B) PM-USHA
C) SHREYAS D) SWANATH

Answer : A

- ✓ Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved a new central sector scheme, 'PM Vidyalaxmi', on 6 November 2024.
- ✓ The scheme aligns with the objective of the National Education Policy 2020, which calls for providing financial assistance to meritorious students to pursue higher studies in public or private higher educational Institutions in India.
- ✓ The Department of Higher Education under the Union Ministry of Education will implement the PM Vidyalaxmi scheme.
- ✓ The department will also manage the unified portal "PM-Vidyalaxmi". The eligible students will have to apply for educational loans and interest subvention on the portal.
- ✓ Features of the PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme
- ✓ Students admitted to eligible public or private sector higher educational institutions will be eligible for collateral-free, guarantor-free loans from banks and financial institutions.
- ✓ The loan amount will cover the tuition fees and other expenses of the student.
- ✓ Under the scheme, loans up to Rs 7.5 lakhs will be eligible for a credit guarantee of 75% of the outstanding loan default amount.
- ✓ This means the government will reimburse the bank for 75% of the outstanding loan amount if the student who has taken the loan defaults

Q. How much interest subvention will be provided for loans up to Rs 10 lakhs under the PM Vidyalaxmi scheme to eligible students?

- A) 7% B) 3%
C) 5% D) 4%

Answer : B

- ✓ Interest Subvention under the PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme
- ✓ Under the PM Vidyalaxmi scheme, an interest subvention (subsidy) of 3 per cent will be borne by the government for loans up to Rs 10 lakhs, provided to eligible students during the moratorium period (the period during which the student does not have to pay back the loan installment).
- ✓ Students whose family annual income is less than Rs 8 lakhs per annum and are not a beneficiary of other government scholarships or interest subvention schemes. Will be eligible.
- ✓ The government aims to provide interest subvention to one lakh students per year.
- ✓ The allocation for the interest subvention for 2024-25 to -2030-31 is Rs 3600 crore.
- ✓ The students who are enrolled in government educational institutions and pursuing professional /technical courses will be given preference.
- ✓ The government will reimburse the banks and financial institutions through E-vouchers and Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) wallets.
- ✓ Eligible Higher Educational Institutions
- ✓ Under the PM Vidyalaxmi scheme, top-ranked public or private higher educational institutions will be eligible, as per the National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF). The eligibility criteria are as follows:
- ✓ Top 100 NIRF-ranked higher educational institutions in the overall category, category-specific and domain-specific, will be eligible.

- ✓ All central government institutions.

Q. How much amount has been allocated by the government of India for the interest subvention under the PM Vidyalaxmi scheme for the 2024-25 to 2030-31 period?

- A) Rs 3600 crore
B) Rs 4600 crore
C) Rs 1600 crore
D) Rs 2800 crore

Answer : A

Q. With reference to PM Vidyalaxmi Scheme, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.
2. It is applicable to educational institutions which are determined by the National Institutional Ranking Framework rankings.
3. Under this scheme any student who gets admission in quality Higher Education Institution (QHEIs) will get collateral free loan.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 Only B) 2 and 3 Only
C) All three D) None

Answer : B

- ✓ The union cabinet approved the PM Vidyalaxmi scheme, which seeks to provide financial support to meritorious students in their pursuit of higher education.
- ✓ It is a Central Sector Scheme.
- ✓ Features
- ✓ Under this scheme any student who gets admission in quality Higher Education Institution (QHEIs) will be eligible to get collateral free, guarantor free loan from banks and financial institutions to cover full amount of tuition fees and other expenses related to the course.
- ✓ The scheme will be administered through a simple, transparent and student-friendly system that will be inter-operable and entirely digital.
- ✓ It will be applicable to the top quality higher educational institutions of the nation, as determined by the NIRF rankings - including all HEIs, government and private, that are ranked within the top 100 in NIRF in overall, category-specific and domain specific rankings; state government HEIs ranked in 101 - 200 in NIRF and all central government governed institutions.
- ✓ This list will be updated every year using the latest NIRF ranking.
- ✓ Loan provision
- ✓ For loan amounts up to ₹ 7.5 lakhs, the student will also be eligible for a credit guarantee of 75% of outstanding default. This will give support to banks in making education loans available to students under the scheme.
- ✓ In addition to the above, for students having an annual family income of up to ₹ 8 lakhs, and not eligible for benefits under any other government scholarship or interest subvention schemes, 3 percent interest subvention for loan up to ₹ 10 lakhs will also be provided during moratorium period.
- ✓ The interest subvention support will be given to one lakh students every year. Preference will be given to students who are from government institutions and have opted for technical/ professional courses.
- ✓ An outlay of ₹ 3,600 Crore has been made during 2024-25 to 2030-31.
- ✓ The Department of Higher Education will have a unified portal “PM-Vidyalaxmi” on which students will be able to apply for the education loan as well as interest subvention, through a simplified application process to be used by all banks.

- ✓ Payment of interest subvention will be made through E-voucher and Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) wallets.
- ✓ Hence only statements 2 and 3 are correct.

Q. Which of the following has slapped a fine of Rs 50 lakh on promoter and former MD of Eros International Media Sunil Arjan Lulla in a case related to the violation of regulatory norms?

- A) Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)
- B) Competition Commission of India (CCI)
- C) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- D) Central Information Commission (CIC)

Answer : A

- ✓ Sebi slaps Rs 50 lakh fine on Lulla for violating mkt norms in Eros matter.
- ✓ Capital markets regulator Sebi has slapped a fine of Rs 50 lakh on promoter and former MD of Eros International Media Sunil Arjan Lulla in a case related to the violation of regulatory norms.
- ✓ In June 2023, Sebi passed an interim order, wherein the regulator prohibited five entities, including Eros International and its Managing Director (MD) Sunil Lulla from securities markets in a case on the possible diversion of funds based on prima facie findings.

Q. Which of the following has agreed to extend Rs 15,000 crore loan to the Andhra Pradesh government for the construction of the capital Amaravati?

- A) World Bank
- B) ADB
- C) AIIB
- D) IMF

Answer : A

- ✓ Andhra Pradesh Chief Minister N Chandrababu Naidu, World Bank has agreed to extend Rs 15,000 crore loan to the state government for the construction of the capital Amaravati and its work will start from December.
- ✓ Addressing a press conference here, Naidu, thanking Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the Centre has agreed to release Rs 12,500 crore towards the construction works of Polavaram project.

Q. According to the International Monetary Fund, India is likely to become the 4th largest economy in the world by which year?

- A) 2025-26
- B) 2026-27
- C) 2027-28
- D) 2029-30

Answer : A

- ✓ IMF predicts India to become the 4th largest economy in FY 2025
- ✓ According to the recently published International Monetary Fund (IMF) report, India is expected to overtake Japan to become the world's fourth-largest economy in the financial year 2025.
- ✓ Currently, India is the world's 5th largest economy in terms of its gross domestic product (GDP) at market price in US dollar terms. India follows April-March as the financial year.
- ✓ Currently, the United States is the world's largest economy, followed by China, Germany, Japan and India.
- ✓ Here is the list of the top 10 economies in the FY2025 .
- ✓ No.1 USA
- ✓ According to the IMF, the United States of America is expected to be the world's largest economy, with an estimated nominal gross domestic product (GDP) of \$29,840 billion. The IMF expects the US real GDP to grow by 2.8 % in 2024 and 2.2% in 2025.

- ✓ Recently, the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) granted approval to One97 Communications Limited, Paytm's parent company, to onboard new users onto its UPI platform.

Q. Partha Pratim Sengupta took charge as Managing Director and CEO of which bank?

- A) Kotak Mahindra Bank
- B) Indian Overseas Bank
- C) Punjab National Bank
- D) Bandhan Bank

Answer : D

- ✓ Partha Pratim Sengupta takes charge as MD, CEO of Bandhan Bank.
- ✓ Partha Pratim Sengupta assumed charge as new MD&CEO of private lender Bandhan Bank.
- ✓ Ratan Kumar Kesh, who appointed as interim MD&CEO of Bandhan Bank after retirement of its founder Chandra Sekhar Ghosh, will resume his role as executive director and chief operating officer, with the joining of Sengupta
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had approved Sengupta's appointment as MD&CEO of Bandhan Bank and asked him to join by November 10 for a tenure of three years
- ✓ Bandhan Bank
- ✓ Founded : 2015
- ✓ Founders : Chandra Shekhar Ghosh
- ✓ Headquarters : Kolkata, West Bengal
- ✓ Chairman : Dr. Anup Kumar Sinha
- ✓ MD & CEO : Partha Pratim Sengupta
- ✓ Tagline : Aapka Bhalai, Sabki Bhalai

Q. Which bank has collaborated with National e-Governance Services Ltd (NeSL) to introduce an e-Bank Guarantee (e-BG) facility?

- A) Indian Overseas Bank
- B) Kotak Mahindra Bank
- C) Punjab & Sind Bank
- D) Canara Bank

Answer : C

- ✓ Punjab & Sind Bank launches e-Bank Guarantee facility.
- ✓ Punjab & Sind Bank has collaborated with National e-Governance Services Ltd (NeSL) to introduce an e-Bank Guarantee (e-BG) facility.
- ✓ This new system replaces traditional paper-based BGs with e-stamping and e-signatures, enhancing security and transparency, thus saving time and reducing fraud.
- ✓ The initiative aims to improve ease of business for all parties involved.
- ✓ Punjab & Sind Bank
- ✓ Founded : 1908
- ✓ Headquarters : New Delhi
- ✓ Non-Exe Chairman : Charan Singh
- ✓ MD & CEO : Swarup Kumar Saha

Q. What is the total gold reserves of India with RBI?

- A) 510.46 metric tons
- B) 854.73 metric tons
- C) 324.01 metric tons
- D) 1000 metric tons

Answer : B

- ✓ According to the latest report of Reserve Bank of India (RBI), India's total gold reserves with Reserve Bank of India (RBI) is 854.73 metric tonnes.
- ✓ A significant portion of these reserves, 510.46 metric tonnes, is stored domestically within India.
- ✓ The remaining gold reserves are kept abroad, of which 324.01 metric tonnes are kept safe in the Bank of England and the Bank for International Settlements (BIS).

Q. Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) is a health coverage scheme for which age group?

- A) Only those under 60 years of age
- B) All individuals aged 70 and above
- C) Only those under 65 years of age
- D) Families with an annual income below a certain threshold

Answer : B

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the expanded Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) scheme.
- ✓ The scheme will cover all individuals aged 70 and above, regardless of their socio-economic status.
- ✓ Each eligible senior citizen will receive a benefit cover of ₹5 lakh per year in empanelled hospitals across India.
- ✓ This expansion is part of a ₹12,850 crore health initiative aimed at benefiting 60 million senior citizens. Senior citizens from families already under AB-PMJAY can access an additional ₹5 lakh cover.
- ✓ Those not covered by the scheme will also receive up to ₹5 lakh annually on a family basis.
- ✓ The expansion will be supported by an outlay of ₹3,437 crore.

Q. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set a minimum net worth of Rs____ for entities seeking authorization as a Central Counterparty (CCP).

- A) Rs 100 crore
- B) Rs 200 crore
- C) Rs 500 crore
- D) Rs 300 crore

Answer : D

- ✓ RBI sets Rs 300 cr networth criteria for central counterparty authorisation.
- ✓ The Reserve Bank of India entity seeking authorisation or recognition as a Central Counterparty (CCP) should have a minimum networth of Rs 300 crore at the time of submitting its application.
- ✓ CCP means a system provider by way of novation interposes between system participants in the transactions admitted for settlement. CCP becomes the buyer to every seller and the seller to every buyer for the purpose of effecting settlement of their transactions.

A) Uttar Pradesh B) Bihar
C) Rajasthan D) Punjab

- ✓ Uttar Pradesh became the first state in India to adopt an Agrivoltaic project. Agrivoltaic systems, also known as solar farming, allow farmers to generate electricity while growing crops.
- ✓ In this system, solar panels are installed on agricultural land using Photovoltaic (PV) technology.

- Uttar Pradesh became the first state in India to adopt an Agrivoltaic project, also known as solar farming.
- India's first PPP Green waste processing plant to be set up in Indore.
- Maharashtra is set to establish India's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) university, aiming to drive AI education, research, and innovation.
- Tata Steel becomes India's first to develop hydrogen transport pipes.
- India's first indigenous surgical tele-robotic system, SSI Mantra.
- Pixxel, a Bengaluru-based space-tech company, has made history by launching India's first private satellite constellation, named Firefly.
- India's first Organic Fisheries Cluster launched in Sikkim.
- Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin inaugurated India's first glass bridge over the sea in Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu.
- India's first Integrated Waste Management City-cum-Learning Centre is set to come up in Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur by September 2025.
- India's first Ferret Research Facility, GARBH-INi-DRISHTI, was inaugurated at the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) in Faridabad, Haryana.
- India's first modern, self-sufficient gaushala with a state-of-the-art Compressed Biogas (CBG) plant was launched in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh.
- Uttar Pradesh government is developing India's inaugural night safari in Lucknow.
- World's first high-altitude para sports centre dedicated to training and nurturing para athletes in the country will be established in Leh, Ladakh.
- IndiaFirst Life has become the first Indian life insurer to commence operations in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).
- India launches world's first mobile-launched hybrid rocket, RHUMI-I.
- Tata Asset Management Private Limited (TAMPL) Launched India's 1st Tourism Index Mutual Fund.
- India's first coal gasification pilot project launched in Jharkhand.
- Kerala's Kozhikode becomes India's first UNESCO 'City of Literature
- India's first indigenous bomber UAV aircraft, the FWD-200B, developed by Flying Wedge Defence, an Indian defence and aerospace company, was unveiled recently.
- Indian Army and the Punit Balan Group joined hands to inaugurate the nation's first Constitution Park in Pune
- Adani Group's Vizhinjam Port in Kerala has received approval from the shipping ministry to operate as India's first transshipment port
- SJVN Limited has commissioned India's first multipurpose (heat and power) green hydrogen pilot project at the 1,500 MW Nathpa Jhakri Hydro Power Station at Jhakri, Himachal Pradesh.
- Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has launched India's first medical devices calibration facility on wheels.

- India's first Artificial Intelligence based Film 'TRAH' trailer launched
- India's 1st Battery Energy Storage GigaFactory will be Launched in J&K
- India's first integrated oil palm processing unit in Arunachal Pradesh started operation by one of India's largest oil palm development companies, 3F Oil Palm.
- India's first Indoor athletic centre inaugurated in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- India's First Research IIT Satellite Campus will be in Ujjain.
- India's first spy satellite built by Tata Advanced Systems Ltd (TASL) will be launched in a SpaceX rocket by April and will be used by the armed forces to obtain secret information.

Q. Which Indian state recently secured GI tags for Nolen Gurer Sandesh and Baruipur guavas?

- A) Odisha
- B) Bihar
- C) West Bengal
- D) Assam

Answer : C

- ✓ West Bengal has recently received Geographical Indication (GI) tags for seven traditional products.
- ✓ This recognition includes popular items like 'Nolen Gurer Sandesh' and Baruipur guavas
- ✓ The seven newly tagged products include:
- ✓ Nolen Gurer Sandesh
- ✓ Kamarpukur's White Bonde
- ✓ Murshidabad's Chhanabora
- ✓ Bishnupur's Motichur Laddoo
- ✓ Radhunipagal Rice
- ✓ Malda's Nistari Silk Yarn

GI TAG IN NEWS 2024-25

- Warangal Chapata Chilli, also known as Tomato Chilli, has been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag, recognizing its unique qualities and regional significance in Telangana.
- Kannadippaya, a traditional tribal handicraft from Kerala, has been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- Kumbakonam betel leaf, grown in the fertile Cauvery river basin of Thanjavur, has been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) Tag by the Government of India.
- The Saudagari block print, a traditional textile art form, has been officially granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- This craft is practised by artisans in Jamalpur, Ahmedabad, and has been preserved for nearly 300 years
- A consignment of 30 tonnes of Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged jaggery from Muzaffarnagar, Uttar Pradesh, has been shipped to Bangladesh.
- The famous Chanderi and Maheshwari sarees from here are highly popular and have been awarded the GI tag.
- The Government of India has set a target of 10,000 Geographical Indication (GI) tags for the Indian products by 2030.
- According to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) 605 Indian products have been issued GI tags till date.
- Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO) from Nicobar district in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands was recently awarded the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- Marble mined in Gujarat's Ambaji has recently been awarded the Geographical Indication, or GI tag, by the Central Government.
- GEOGRAPHICAL INDICATIONS (GI) :-

- GI tags are issued as per the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999. This tag is issued by the Geographical Indication Registry under the Department of Industry Promotion and Internal Trade, Ministry of Commerce and Industry.
- Darjeeling Tea was the first Indian product to get the geographical indication tag in 2004.
- The second GI tag in India was given to Aranmula Kannadi (Handicraft) which is a mirror and made in Kerala.
- A GI is registered for an initial period of ten years, which must be renewed after 10 years.

Q. Which of the following statements correctly describes a semi-cryogenic rocket engine?

- A) It uses both fuel and oxidizer in a cryogenic state.
- B) It uses Liquid Oxygen (LOX) as an oxidizer and refined kerosene (RP-1) as fuel.
- C) It operates only at extremely low temperatures for both propellants.
- D) It is not used in space exploration due to its low efficiency

Answer : B

- ✓ ISRO has achieved a breakthrough in developing a semi-cryogenic engine (liquid oxygen/kerosene engine) with a high thrust of 2,000 kN (kilonewtons).
- ✓ The first successful hot test of the Engine Power Head Test Article (PHTA) was conducted at the ISRO Propulsion Complex, Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ This engine will be used in the semi-cryogenic booster stage of the Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3), enhancing India's space launch capabilities.

ISRO IN NEWS 2024-25

- ✓ ISRO recently faced a setback in its mission to position the NVS-02 satellite in the desired orbit due to thruster failure, but is working on alternative strategies to utilise the satellite in its current elliptical orbit for the NavIC navigation system.
- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to mark milestone with its 100th launch. Scheduled for January 29, 2025, the GSLV-F15 mission will deploy the NVS-02 satellite from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre.
- ✓ Union Cabinet approved the establishment of the Third Launch Pad (TLP) at Satish Dhawan Space Centre of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) at Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ The government of India has appointed V. Narayanan as the 11th chairman of ISRO and secretary of the Department of Space (DOS).
- ✓ He will succeed the current chairman S.Somanth
- ✓ ISRO's upcoming 100th mission, the NVS-02 satellite, is set for January 2025.
- ✓ This achievement will be highlighted by a Geosynchronous Launch Vehicle (GSLV) mission, following Monday's successful PSLV-C60 mission, which marked the 99th launch from the Sriharikota spaceport.
- ✓ ISRO and European Space Agency (ESA) have signed an agreement to cooperate on activities related to astronaut training, mission implementation, and research experiments, including the upcoming Axiom-4 mission.
- ✓ ISRO has successfully launched its critical space docking mission (SpaDex Mission). The PSLV-C60 rockets carrying two satellites on board were launched from ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Center SHAR, Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ SpaDex mission is a technology demonstrator project of ISRO. It carries two small spacecraft SDX01 (the Chaser) and SDX02 (the Target), each weighing 220 kg.
- ✓ The two spacecraft will be deployed into a 470 km Low Earth Circular Orbit (LEO) at 55° inclination.
- ✓ ISRO successfully launched the European Space Agency (ESA) Probe 3 Spacecraft from the First Launch Pad, Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC-SHAR), Sriharikota Andhra Pradesh, on 5 December 2024.
- ✓ The ESA Probe 3 was launched onboard ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) C-59.

- ✓ Elon Musk's company, Space X, successfully launched the New Space India Limited (NSIL) GSAT-20, also known as the GSAT-N2 satellite, on 19 November 2024.
- ✓ ISRO and NASA are planning to launch a new satellite called NISAR in early 2025 that will help keep track of Earth's surface on land and ice covered areas.
- ✓ It is a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) observatory jointly developed by NASA and ISRO.
- ✓ ISRO has launched India's first analog space mission in Leh, Ladakh.
- ✓ ISRO's Earth Observation Satellite-8 (EOS-8) is expected to be launched by the Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV)-D3 on August 15 from Sriharikota in Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla & Prasanth Nair selected by ISRO for the upcoming International Space Station (ISS). This mission, known as Axiom Mission-4.
- ✓ Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the ISRO's commercial arm NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) signed an agreement on Saturday to grant assistance for launching the Nepal-built Munal satellite
- ✓ Education Ministry sets up a 7 member high level committee to reform the exam system , committee chaired by former ISRO chairman K Radhakrishnan.
- ✓ ISRO successfully tested a new liquid rocket engine at its Propulsion Complex in Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The PSLV-C58 rocket, in its 60th mission, successfully deployed payload XPoSat into Low Earth Orbit.
- ✓ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)
- ✓ Founded : 15 August 1969
- ✓ HQ : Bangalore, Karnataka
- ✓ Founder / 1st Chairman : Vikram Sarabhai
- ✓ 11th Chairman : V. Narayanan
- ✓ Aryabhata India's first satellites Launched on 19 April 1975.
- ✓ GSAT-1 India's first commercial satellite.
- ✓ SLV-3 was India's first experimental satellite launch vehicle.
- ✓ Ariane Passenger PayLoad Experiment, (APPLE) first communication satellite in India 19 June 1981.
- ✓ Udupi Ramachandra Rao : satellite Man of India

Q. What is the primary focus of the Abel Prize?

- A) Recognizing achievements in medical research.
- B) Rewarding contributions to environmental science.
- C) Recognizing pioneering achievements in mathematics.
- D) Honoring scientific achievements in physics

Answer : C

- ✓ The prestigious Abel Prize for mathematics was recently awarded to Japanese mathematician Masaki Kashiwara, a specialist in algebraic analysis, representation theory, and sheaf theory.
- ✓ **About Abel Prize:**
- ✓ The Abel Prize recognises pioneering scientific achievements in mathematics.
- ✓ It is named after Norwegian mathematician Niels Henrik Abel (1802-29), who in his short life made pioneering contributions to multiple fields.
- ✓ The prize was established by the Norwegian Parliament in 2002, on Abel's 200th anniversary.
- ✓ The Abel Prize is awarded and administered by the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters on behalf of the Norwegian government.
- ✓ The recipients are chosen by an expert committee appointed by the Academy under the advice of the International Mathematical Union (IMU) and the European Mathematical Society (EMS).
- ✓ First awarded in 2003, the Abel Prize is often considered to be an equivalent of the Nobel Prize, which does not have a category for mathematics. It has been modelled as such.
- ✓ The prize includes a monetary award of 7.5 million kroner (roughly \$720,000) and a glass plaque designed by Norwegian artist Henrik Haugan

Q. DRDO has developed the medium-range surface-to-air missile (MRSAM) in collaboration with which country?

- A) Russia
- B) Israel
- C) Japan
- D) United States

Answer : B

- ✓ The Eastern and the Southern commands of the Indian Army, under the supervision of the Defence and Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), successfully conducted four user trials of the medium-range surface-to-air missile (MRSAM) ballistic missile system.
- ✓ The missile has been developed jointly by India and Israel for the use of the Indian Armed Forces.
- ✓ The test was conducted on Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha on April 3 and 4, 2025.
- ✓ The medium-range surface-to-air missile system has been developed jointly by DRDO and the Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI). The MR-SAM system is an extension of the LR SAM (long-range surface-to-air missile system) developed by the DRDO and the IAI jointly for the Indian Navy.
- ✓ The LRSAM system is based on the Barak-8 missile platform developed by the IAI. It is basically for the Naval forces and is an anti-ship missile
- ✓ The MR SAM missile is being manufactured by the government of India's defence company, Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL), based in Hyderabad

Q. What is the range of the DRDO-developed medium-range surface-to-air missile (MRSAM)?

- A) 30 Km
- B) 40 Km
- C) 60 Km
- D) 70 Km

Answer : D

- ✓ Specification of Missile
- ✓ It is a ballistic missile that is designed against air-based threats.
- ✓ The Missile has a range of 70 km.
- ✓ It can engage multiple targets.
- ✓ The length of the missile is 4.5 meters, and it weighs 275 kg.
- ✓ The missile can be launched from the ship or the land.

DRDO IN NEWS 2024-25

- ✓ Indian Navy in collaboration with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully conducted the flight test of the indigenously developed Naval Anti-Ship Missile -Short Range (NASM-SR) on 25 February 2025.
- ✓ The missile was launched from the Indian Navy's Sea King Mk 42B helicopter from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur in Odisha on 25th February 2025
- ✓ DRDO has successfully conducted three successive flight-trials of the Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) from Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- ✓ DRDO recently showcased a model of the indigenous Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS) on its tableau during the 76th Republic Day parade.
- ✓ It is a 155mm, 52-calibre howitzer.
- ✓ The ATAGS boasts an impressive range of 48 km, placing it among the longest-range towed artillery systems globally.
- ✓ Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a Rs. 2,960 crore contract with Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) for the supply of Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missiles (MRSAM) to the Indian Navy.
- ✓ Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted the maiden flight-test of Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha on November 12, 2024.
- ✓ DRDO, along with researchers of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Delhi has developed Light Weight Bullet Proof Jackets named ABHED (Advanced Ballistics for High Energy Defeat).

- ✓ DRDO has carried out a successful maiden flight test of Long Range Glide Bomb (LRGB), GAURAV from Su-30 MK-I platform of the Indian Air Force (IAF).
- ✓ DRDO has commissioned a Bengaluru-based firm to indigenously develop a receiver chip to acquire and disseminate Indian time for Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) developed by ISRO.
- ✓ DRDO has sanctioned seven new projects for the private sector under the Technology Development Fund scheme.
- ✓ DRDO has taken up a preliminary study on the design and development of an indigenous conventional submarine under Project-76
- ✓ Medium Range-Microwave Obscurant Chaff Rocket (MR-MOCR) developed by the Jodhpur Laboratory of the Research DRDO was formally handed over to the Indian Navy at a function held in New Delhi
- ✓ DRDO chairman Samir V Kamat gets one-year extension.
- ✓ DRDO hands over nine defence tech projects to IIT-Bhubaneswar
- ✓ DRDO successfully tested the next-generation Supersonic Missile-Assisted Release of Torpedo (SMART) system on 1 May 2024 from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha.
- ✓ Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) is reported to be testing a prototype of its DURGA-2 (Directionally Unrestricted Ray Gun Array) system.
- ✓ DRDO successfully tested the Indigenous Technology Cruise Missile (ITCM) from Chandipur, Odisha.
- ✓ Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) carried out successful trials of the Man-Portable Anti-Tank Guided Missile (MPATGM) Weapon System at Pokhran Field Firing Range, Rajasthan
- ✓ Recently, Strategic Forces Command and DRDO successfully tested the new generation ballistic missile Agni-Prime off the coast of Odisha.
- ✓ DRDO successfully conducted two flight tests of the Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) missile.
- ✓ DRDO successfully conducted four flight trials of the high-speed expendable aerial target 'ABHYAS' recently.
- ✓ Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO)
- ✓ Founded : 1 January 1958
- ✓ Headquarters : New Delhi
- ✓ Motto : "Strength's Origin is in Knowledge"
- ✓ Chairman : Sameer V Kamat

Q. Who became the first African woman to serve as the Secretary General of the Commonwealth?

A) Patricia Scotland	B) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala
C) Ellen Johnson Sirleaf	D) Shirley Botchwey

Answer : D

- ✓ Shirley Botchwey was appointed as the 7th Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations on April 1, 2025, becoming the first African woman to hold this prestigious position.
- ✓ "Commonwealth Games Federation Rebrands as 'Commonwealth Sport' on Commonwealth Day 2025".
- ✓ The 2026 Commonwealth Games are scheduled to be held in Glasgow, Scotland.

Q. Which institution successfully completed the training of the first batch of Cyber Commandos in India?

A) IIT Madras	B) NIT Trichy
C) IIT Kanpur	D) IIT Mumbai

Answer : A

- ✓ The first batch of Cyber Commandos was trained by the IIT Madras Pravartak Technologies Foundation, focusing on advanced cybersecurity techniques to combat the rising threats of cybercrime.

- ✓ This initiative, supported by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs, aims to enhance the capabilities of law enforcement officers across India in addressing digital threats

IIT IN NEWS 2024-25

- Coal India joins hands with IIT Hyderabad for R D in clean coal tech.
- DRDO and IIT Hyderabad unveiled India's largest metal 3D printing machine for rocket components. It was developed at the DRDO-Industry-Academia Centre of Excellence (DIA-CoE) at IIT Hyderabad.
- IIT Bombay has partnered with the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) to develop an "Optical Transceiver Chipset for High-Bandwidth 6G Wireless Links."
- IIT Madras has announced a collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare on Project VISTAAR (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources).
- IIT-Madras has successfully commissioned Asia's largest shallow wave basin at its Discovery campus in Thaiyur.
- IIT Madras, in collaboration with the startup TuTr, completed India's first 410-meter Hyperloop test track, marking a significant step forward in vacuum-based train technology.
- Indian Institute of Technology Bombay (IIT Bombay) have developed water-pollutant detecting device called 'AroTrack'.
- IIT Madras Partners with IDBI To Launch Cybersecurity Lab
- The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) partners with IIT Roorkee and Mandi to boost 6G standardization, connectivity.
- TCS And IIT Bombay Collaborate To Create India's First Semiconductor Chip Imaging Tool.
- Alliance of Digital India Foundation (ADIF) and IIT Guwahati incubation center sign MoU to boost startup ecosystem
- Experimental Licence Module for 100 5G Labs' launched at IIT Madras
- President of India Draupadi Murmu launched India's first domestic gene therapy for cancer at IIT Bombay.
- French aerospace and defence firm Starburst Accelerator SARLhas partnered with the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IIT Madras) to set up an innovative hub for start-ups with €100 million in funding support.
- IIT Madras has developed an indigenous electric standing wheelchair called 'NeoStand,' claimed to be India's most customizable wheelchair for the benefit of wheelchair users
- Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) and the Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee (IIT Roorkee) have collaborated to establish a Centre of Excellence and Industry Accelerator in the automotive and electric vehicle (EV) sector.
- Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IIT Guwahati) transferred swine fever vaccine technology to BioMed Pvt. Ltd.
- Uttar Pradesh government will sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with IIT Roorkee for better disaster management in the state.
- Indian Institute of Technology Kanpur (IIT-K) has successfully established and tested India's first Hypervelocity Expansion Tunnel Test Facility .
- IREDA has entered into an agreement with IIT Bhubaneswar to promote innovation and research in the renewable energy sector.
- IIT Madras to open new campus at Kandy in Sri Lanka.
- ArcelorMittal and ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India materials and engineering resources being deployed to construct Asia's first Hyperloop testing facility at IIT Madras, Chennai, India

Q. Which university is set to become the first English university to establish a campus in in GIFT City by 2026?

- A) University of Glasgow
- B) Cardiff University
- C) University Of Surrey
- D) Coventry University

Answer : D

- ✓ Coventry University to open first English university campus in GIFT City by 2026
- ✓ Coventry University is set to become the first English university to establish a campus in India's Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City), with student admissions expected as early as 2026.

GIFT CITY IN NEWS 2024-25

- Coventry University to open first English university campus in GIFT City by 2026.
- Axis Bank has become the first Indian bank to execute an aircraft financing transaction through its International Banking Unit at GIFT City IFSC
- Bank of Maharashtra has received RBI approval to open its first international branch at GIFT City IFSC in Gujarat.
- HDFC Bank has become the first domestic bank to execute a gold forward deal from GIFT City, Gujarat.
- Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) has recently received the ISO 27001 certification.
- University of San Diego (USD) is planning to establish a campus in GIFT City, Gujarat, India. This will be the first American university to have a campus in GIFT City.
- Singapore is actively exploring the possibility of establishing a "data embassy" in India's Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City).
- Queen's University Belfast (QUB) will become the first UK university to open a campus in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) in India.
- After Australia, two United Kingdom universities Queen's University Belfast and Coventry University plan international campuses in Gujarat's GIFT City.
- Australia's Deakin University and the University of Wollongong are the two international universities being opened in the GIFT City .
- Deakin University in Australia was the first international university to open a campus in India, in Gujarat's GIFT City.
- About the GIFT City
- The Gujarat Financial Tech (GIFT) City is a multi-service special economic zone situated between Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar in Gujarat.
- The Gujarat Government has developed GIFT City.
- India's first and only International Financial Service Center is in GIFT City.
- GIFT City has been developed as a Smart City and aims to be a Global Financial hub like Singapore in Asia.
- India's first international stock exchange, India International Exchange (IFSC) Limited (India INX), has been set up in GIFT City.
- Chairman of GIFT City: Hasmukh Adhia

Q. Who has been shortlisted for the International Booker Prize for 2025?

A) K.S. Venkataramani	B) Kanda Puranam
C) K.C. Kanda	D) Banu Mushtaq

Answer : D

- ✓ Heart Lamp' Becomes 1st Kannada Title Shortlisted For International Booker Prize 2025.
- ✓ Banu Mushtaq's collection of Kannada stories in translation, Heart Lamp, was shortlisted on 8 April 2025 for the International Booker Prize.
- ✓ The book, among the six featured in this year's shortlist, made history as the first Kannada-language book to be shortlisted.
- ✓ Heart Lamp, translated by Deepa Bhashti, is a collection of 12 short stories written by Banu Mushtaq between 1990 and 2023.
- ✓ Earlier, an English translation of a collection of her short stories, Haseena and Other Stories, won the English PEN translation award for the year 2024.
- ✓ That was also translated by Deepa Bhashti

- ✓ Wind Turbines: Use rare earth elements like neodymium, dysprosium.
- ✓ Electric Vehicles (EVs): Rely on lithium, cobalt, nickel for batteries.
- ✓ Energy Storage Systems: Use lithium-ion batteries.
- ✓ Also used in electronics, defence, aerospace, and medical technologies.
- ✓ Legal and Regulatory Framework
- ✓ 30 critical minerals were identified by a Ministry of Mines committee in 2022.
- ✓ List of India's 30 Critical Minerals: Antimony, Beryllium, Bismuth, Cobalt, Copper, Gallium, Germanium, Graphite, Hafnium, Indium, Lithium, Molybdenum, Niobium, Nickel, PGE, Phosphorous, Potash, REE, Rhenium, Silicon, Strontium, Tantalum, Tellurium, Tin, Titanium, Tungsten, Vanadium, Zirconium, Selenium, and Cadmium.
- ✓ 24 minerals added to Part D of Schedule I of the MMDR Act, 1957, granting the Central Government exclusive auctioning powers.
- ✓ A Centre of Excellence for Critical Minerals (CECM) will regularly review the mineral list and advise policy
- ✓ **International Cooperation**
- ✓ KABIL (Khanij Bidesh India Ltd) signed agreements with:
- ✓ CAMYEN SE (Argentina) for lithium exploration over 15,703 hectares.
- ✓ Critical Minerals Office, Australia for lithium and cobalt projects.
- ✓ Top Global Producers of Critical Minerals: Chile, Indonesia, Congo, China, Australia, and South Africa.
- ✓ About the National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM)
- ✓ The National Critical Mineral Mission (NCMM) is a strategic initiative by the Ministry of Mines aimed at ensuring long-term availability, security, and processing of critical minerals that are vital for clean energy technologies, economic development, and national security.
- ✓ It aligns with India's commitments to net-zero emissions by 2070 and reducing the emissions intensity of GDP by 45% by 2030 (from 2005 levels).

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Polar Orbit (PO):

1. It is a type of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) with an altitude typically ranging between 200 km to 1,000 km.
2. Unlike equatorial orbits, satellites in a polar orbit travel from one pole to the other rather than from west to east.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ SpaceX successfully launched a private astronaut crew on a historic polar-orbiting mission aboard a Falcon 9 rocket from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.
- ✓ **About Polar Orbit**
- ✓ A Polar Orbit (PO) is a type of Low Earth Orbit (LEO) that ranges between 200 km to 1,000 km in altitude.
- ✓ Unlike equatorial orbits, satellites in a polar orbit travel from one pole to the other rather than from west to east.
- ✓ A deviation of up to 10 degrees from the exact North-South trajectory is still classified as a polar orbit.

Q. Shirley Botchwey, who has assumed office as the 7th Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations, belongs to which country?

- A) Ethiopia
B) Ghana
C) Nigeria
D) Rwanda

Answer : B

- ✓ Shirley Botchwey has become the first African woman to assume the office of the Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations on 1 April 2025.
- ✓ She replaced Patricia Scotland of Dominica, who incidentally was the first woman to hold the post of the Secretary General of the Commonwealth of Nations.
- ✓ Shirley Botchwey was appointed as the next Secretary General at the biennial Commonwealth Heads of Government (CHOGM) meeting in Apia, Samoa in 2024.
- ✓ She has been elected for a four-year term.
- ✓ The Secretary General can have a maximum of two terms of four years.
- ✓ Shirley Botchwey is from the African country of Ghana.
- ✓ **About the Commonwealth of Nations**
- ✓ Members - 56 countries.
- ✓ Four countries - Mozambique, Rwanda, Gabon, and Togo were never members of the British Empire.
- ✓ Headquarters: London, United Kingdom
- ✓ Head of the Commonwealth - British Monarch .
- ✓ Glasgow to host the 2026 Commonwealth Games.

Q. Who has been conferred the 2025 Gold Mercury Award for Peace & Sustainability?

- A) Gedun Drupa
B) Gedun Gyatso
C) Sonam Gyatso
D) Tenzin Gyatso

Answer : D

- ✓ The Tibetan spiritual leader Tenzin Gyatso, famous as the 14th Dalai Lama, was conferred the prestigious Gold Mercury Award for Peace and Sustainability 2025.
- ✓ The award was bestowed on the 90-year-old Dalai Lama at his residence in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, on 31st March 2025.
- ✓ The award was presented by Nicolas De Santis, President and Secretary General of Gold Mercury International, to the Dalai Lama.
- ✓ **About the Dalai lama**
- ✓ The 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, was born on 6 July 1935 to a farming family in a village in Tibet. The Dalai Lama is the King and spiritual leader of the Tibetan people.
- ✓ At the age of 2 years, he was recognised as the 14th Dalai lama.
- ✓ In 1989, he was honoured with the Nobel Peace Prize.
- ✓ About the Gold Mercury International Award
- ✓ The Gold Mercury International Award was instituted by Gold Mercury International in 1961.
- ✓ The Gold Mercury Awards honors individuals, Heads of State, global CEOs, companies, and organisations that demonstrate vision and foresight in eight critical areas of global governance.

Q. The Tiger Triumph exercise is held between India and which country's armed forces?

- A) United States
B) United Kingdom
C) France
D) Australia

Answer : A

- ✓ The 4th edition of the India-United States(US) Tri-Service Tiger Triumph exercise commenced in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh, on 1 April 2025. The third edition of the Tiger Triumph was also held in Visakhapatnam in March 2024.
- ✓ The 4th edition of the Tiger Triumph exercise will be held in Visakhapatnam and the Bay of Bengal from 1 -13 April 2025.
- ✓ Last month, in March 2025, the Indian Navy participated in the five-nation Sea Dragon exercise hosted by the US Navy off the Guam coast in the western Pacific Ocean.
- ✓ The exercise will focus on developing-
- ✓ interoperability for conducting HADR operations;
- ✓ formulation of Standard Operating Procedures, to establish a Combined Coordination Center (CCC) that would enable rapid and smooth coordination between Indian and US Joint Task Forces during exercises and crisis/contingencies.

Q. Which Indian city will host the 12th Men's Hockey Asia Cup 2025?

A) Guwahati	B) Lucknow
C) Ahmedabad	D) Rajgir

Answer : D

- ✓ 12th Men's Asia Cup Hockey 2025 to be hosted by Rajgir, Bihar.
- ✓ The ancient city of Rajgir in Bihar will host the 12th edition of the Men's Asia Cup Hockey tournament from 29 August to 7 September 2025.
- ✓ It will be the second time that Rajgir will host a prestigious continental-level hockey tournament.
- ✓ The city hosted the 8th Women's Asian Champions Trophy in November 2024, which was won by India, defeating 2024 Paris Olympic silver medalist China in the final.
- ✓ Bihar also recently hosted the SepakTakraw World Cup 2025, where India, for the first time won a gold medal at a major Sepaktakraw event.
- ✓ It is the second time that India is hosting the Men's Asia Cup Hockey Tournament, having hosted the 7th edition in Chennai in 2007.
- ✓ The Tournament is a qualifying event for the 2026 FIH Men's Hockey World Cup.
- ✓ The World Cup will be co-hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands.
- ✓ About Men's Asia Cup
- ✓ South Korea is the most successful team in the tournament, having won it five times.
- ✓ India has won the title three times -2003, 2007, and in 2017.

Q. Which Japanese mathematician was recently awarded the 2025 Abel Prize?

A) Hiroyoshi Takegawa	B) Masaki Kashiwara
C) Shinichi Mochizuki	D) Koshi Matsumoto

Answer : B

- ✓ Japanese mathematician Masaki Kashiwara was honored with the 2025 Abel Prize, making him the first Japanese recipient of this prestigious award.
- ✓ A professor at Kyoto University, Kashiwara was recognized for his groundbreaking contributions to algebraic analysis and representation theory, particularly for the development of the theory of D-modules and the discovery of crystal bases.

Q. Which Indian cricketer has been appointed as the brand ambassador of L&T Finance Ltd.?

A) Virat Kohli	B) Jasprit Bumrah
C) Rohit Sharma	D) Shubman Gill

Answer : B

- ✓ Jasprit Bumrah has been announced as the brand ambassador of L&T Finance Ltd.
- ✓ This strategic partnership aims to enhance LTF's brand presence across India and connect with a wide range of customers

Q. Which international agreement does the Protection of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill, 2025, aim to implement?

- A) Geneva Convention B) New York Convention
C) Warsaw Convention D) Cape Town Convention

Answer : D

- ✓ The Rajya Sabha recently passed the Protection of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill, 2025, which seeks to implement international conventions on the leasing of aviation equipment.
- ✓ About Protection of Interests in Aircraft Objects Bill, 2025:
- ✓ The bill aims to implement international agreements, particularly the Convention on International Interests in Mobile Equipment (commonly known as the Cape Town Convention of 2001) and its Protocol on Aircraft Equipment.
- ✓ India became a signatory to these agreements in 2008.
- ✓ These international standards are designed to secure the rights over high-value mobile assets such as aircraft, helicopters and engines, thereby ensuring greater legal clarity and uniformity across the aviation industry.
- ✓ The bill empowers the central government to make rules to implement the provisions of the Convention and the Protocol.
- ✓ The legislation designates the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA) as the registry authority for the purposes of the convention.

Q. Which state will benefit from the Kosi Mechi Intra-State Link Project approved by the Cabinet?

- A) Uttar Pradesh B) West Bengal
C) Bihar D) Jharkhand

Answer : C

- ✓ The Kosi Mechi Intra-State Link Project, approved by the Cabinet under the PMKSY-AIBP, is set to benefit the state of Bihar.
- ✓ The project, with central support of Rs. 3,652.56 crore, aims to divert surplus water from the Kosi River for irrigation purposes.
- ✓ It will cover 2,10,516 hectares across Bihar's Araria, Purnea, Kishanganj, and Katihar districts, enhancing agricultural productivity.
- ✓ This initiative aligns with the broader objectives of the PMKSY to improve irrigation access and water resource management in the region, significantly impacting Bihar's agricultural sector.

Q. What is the theme for the 2025 International Day of Yoga (IDY)?

- A) Yoga for Global Peace B) Harmony Through Yoga
C) Yoga for One Earth, One Health D) Breath of Life with Yoga

Answer : C

- ✓ The theme for the 2025 International Day of Yoga (IDY) is "Yoga for One Earth, One Health," as announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ This theme emphasizes holistic health, focusing on the connection between personal well-being and environmental sustainability.
- ✓ Celebrated annually on June 21 since 2015, IDY was established by the UN in 2014, with each year's theme highlighting the diverse benefits of yoga.

- ✓ The 2025 theme underscores the role of yoga in fostering both individual health and global ecological balance.

Q. In which country is the Indian Air Force participating in the multinational air exercise INIOCHOS-25?

- A) France
- B) Greece
- C) USA
- D) Israel

Answer : B

- ✓ The Indian Air Force (IAF) is participating in the prestigious biennial multinational air exercise INIOCHOS-25 hosted by the Hellenic Air Force in Greece.
- ✓ The exercise is taking place at Andravida Air Base from 31 March to 11 April 2025.
- ✓ It includes participation from 15 nations, including the USA, Israel, France, Italy, Poland, Qatar, and the UAE.

Q. Who inaugurated Asia's largest intercollegiate technology and entrepreneurship festival?

- A) PM Narendra Modi
- B) Defence Minister Rajnath Singh
- C) CDS General Anil Chauhan
- D) ISRO Chairman S. Somanath

Answer : C

- ✓ Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) General Anil Chauhan inaugurated Asia's largest intercollegiate technology and entrepreneurship festival, Techkriti 2025, at IIT Kanpur on 28 March 2025.
- ✓ The theme for this edition is "Panta Rhei" (Everything Flows), symbolizing the continuous evolution of technology and innovation

Q. Who is the author of the debut book titled "Drive to Victory"?

- A) Sanjana Ganesan
- B) Karun Chandhok
- C) Jonathan Wilson
- D) Boria Majumdar

Answer : B

- ✓ Karun Chandhok debuts 'Drive to Victory', a book on Formula One.
- ✓ Former Formula One driver Karun Chandhok has come up with debut book 'Drive to Victory', introducing young fans to the fast-paced world of F1, the pinnacle of single-seater motorsports.
- ✓ Chandhok, the second Indian to drive in F1, is currently a renowned commentator working for Sky Sports in the UK and travels to races worldwide

Q. Which company successfully launched the Fram2 mission, marking the first human spaceflight to orbit the Earth over its poles?

- A) NASA
- B) Blue Origin
- C) SpaceX
- D) Roscosmos

Answer : C

- ✓ SpaceX successfully launched the Fram2 mission, achieving the historic milestone of the first-ever human spaceflight to orbit the Earth from pole to pole.
- ✓ The mission was carried out using the SpaceX Crew Dragon Resilience spacecraft atop a Falcon 9 rocket from Kennedy Space Center

Q. Which company will supply 156 Light Combat Helicopters under a ₹62,700 crore defence contract?

- A) Boeing
- B) Lockheed Martin
- C) Airbus
- D) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited

Answer : D

- ✓ Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) has been contracted to deliver 156 Light Combat Helicopters (LCHs) under a ₹62,700 crore deal.
- ✓ These helicopters include 66 for the Indian Air Force and 90 for the Army.
- ✓ The indigenous LCH Prachand is capable of operating above 5,000 meters and incorporates 65% local components, supporting over 250 MSMEs

Q. In which city is the traditional Saudagari block print craft practised and recently awarded a GI tag?

- A) Jaipur
- B) Ahmedabad
- C) Mumbai
- D) Lucknow

Answer : B

- ✓ The Saudagari block print, a traditional textile art form, has been officially granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- ✓ This craft is practised by artisans in Jamalpur, Ahmedabad, and has been preserved for nearly 300 years.
- ✓ The art involves intricate hand-carved wooden block prints on fabric using natural dyes, with designs deeply rooted in Gujarat's cultural heritage.

Q. Which country plans to classify crypto assets as financial products under its Financial Instruments and Exchange Act?

- A) Japan
- B) South Korea
- C) France
- D) Germany

Answer : A

- ✓ Japan's Financial Services Agency (FSA) is set to revise the Financial Instruments and Exchange Act to officially recognize crypto assets as legal financial products.
- ✓ This move aims to bring crypto under the purview of insider trading laws, ensuring the protection against the misuse of confidential information

Q. The Lok Sabha recently passed a bill to establish Tribhuvan Sahkari University in which state?

- A) Punjab
- B) Uttar Pradesh
- C) Gujarat
- D) Haryana

Answer : C

- ✓ Lok Sabha passed a bill to establish Tribhuvan Sahkari University in Anand, Gujarat.
- ✓ The university is named after Tribhuvandas Patel, a pioneer of India's cooperative movement.
- ✓ Tribhuvandas Kishibhai Patel was an Indian independence activist, lawyer, and politician.
- ✓ He was a follower of Mahatma Gandhi and involved in movements like civil disobedience and rural development.
- ✓ He founded Kaira District Cooperative Milk Producers' Union Ltd. (KDCMPUL) in 1946.

Q. The Future Circular Collider (FCC) is a proposed \$30 billion project by which organization?

- A) European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN)
- B) Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)
- C) China National Space Administration (CNSA)
- D) Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)

Answer : A

- ✓ The Future Circular Collider (FCC) is a proposed \$30 billion project by the European Organization for Nuclear Research (CERN). It involves a 91 km circular tunnel beneath the Swiss-French border to accelerate and collide particles at record energies.
- ✓ Phase 1 (~2040) aims to generate Higgs bosons in large numbers, while Phase 2 (~2070) will collide protons at extreme energies

Q. Which state government has recently launched “First Free Fine Rice Scheme” through ration shops?

- A) Maharashtra
- B) Telangana
- C) Gujarat
- D) Punjab

Answer : B

- ✓ The Telangana government launched a scheme to distribute fine rice for free to the poor through ration shops.
- ✓ Chief Minister A Revanth Reddy formally launched the scheme in Huzurnagar, Suryapet district, on Ugadi festival.
- ✓ 6 kilograms of fine rice per person per month will be given free of cost through the Public Distribution System (PDS).

Q. Which state in India has the largest number of railway stations on which a solar power plant has been established as of February 2025?

- A) Maharashtra
- B) Assam
- C) Odisha
- D) Rajasthan

Answer : D

- ✓ Rajasthan, with 275 railway stations, leads the country in having the largest number of railway stations with installed solar power plants. This information was given by the Union Minister of Railways, Ashwini Vaishnaw, in the Lok Sabha on 2nd April 2025.
- ✓ According to the government of India, during the financial year 2024-25, 25 gigawatt (GW) of renewable energy was added in the country, of which 6 GW was solar energy.
- ✓ The total installed solar power capacity in the country has increased to 21 GW as of 31st March 2025.

Q. The Indian Railway plans to establish 20 GW of solar power plants on its vacant land by which year?

- A) 2026
- B) 2027
- C) 2028
- D) 2030

Answer : D

- ✓ The Indian Railways has set a plan target to achieve 100 % electrification by 2025-26.
- ✓ Railways have a target to become net-zero carbon emitters by 2030.
- ✓ The railway expects to meet its power demand through renewable energy with a mix of solar and wind energy.

- ✓ The railway will meet its renewable energy demand through a long-term power purchase agreement with various independent power producers.
- ✓ It will also install solar power plants on the rooftops of its stations and utilise its vacant lands.
- ✓ The Indian railways plans to install solar plants of 20 GW solar power plant by utilising its vacant land by 2030.

Q. Which place is known for the betel leaf that received a Geographical Indication (GI) Tag?

- A) Madurai
B) Coimbatore
C) Madurai
D) Kumbakonam

Answer : D

- ✓ The Kumbakonam betel leaf, grown in the fertile Cauvery river basin of Thanjavur, has been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) Tag by the Government of India.
- ✓ This recognition highlights the unique taste and aroma of the betel leaf cultivated in regions like Kumbakonam, Thiruvaiyaru, and Papanasam.
- ✓ The GI Tag helps protect the product from commercial misuse, ensures authenticity, and boosts the economic prospects of local farmers

Q. Which Indian airline is the first to adopt the Aviator Revenue Management system?

- A) Air India
B) IndiGo
C) Star Air
D) SpiceJet

Answer : C

- ✓ Star Air has become the first Indian airline to implement the Aviator Revenue Management system, aimed at maximizing passenger revenue.
- ✓ This system helps in optimizing pricing strategies and improving revenue efficiency.
- ✓ Based in Bengaluru, Star Air operates a fleet of 9 Embraer aircraft and plans to expand it to 25 by 2027.

Q. Which instrument of Chandrayaan-3 became the first to measure in situ temperatures near the Moon's south pole?

- A) RAMBHA-LP B) ILSA
C) ChaSTE D) LIBS

Answer : C

- ✓ Chandrayaan-3's Surface Thermophysical Experiment (ChaSTE) became the first instrument to measure in situ temperatures near the moon's south pole.
- ✓ It successfully penetrated lunar soil and deployed a thermal probe, achieving what two previous missions—ESA's Philae (2014) and NASA's InSight HP3 (2018)—could not.
- ✓ This experiment provided crucial data on lunar surface temperatures, strengthening evidence of water ice deposits.
- ✓ **How ChaSTE Works**
- ✓ ChaSTE's thermal probe was integrated into the Vikram lander of Chandrayaan-3, which landed on August 23, 2023.
- ✓ The probe is equipped with 10 temperature sensors placed 1 cm apart along its length, near the nose-tip.

Q. Which traditional tribal handicraft from Kerala was recently awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag?

- A) Aranmula Kannadi B) Kasaragod Saree
C) Kannadippaya D) Nilavilakku

Answer : C

- ✓ Kannadippaya, a traditional tribal handicraft from Kerala, has been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- ✓ **What is Kannadippaya?**
- ✓ "Kannadippaya" (meaning 'mirror mat') originates from its distinct reflective design.
- ✓ It is woven using reed bamboo's soft inner layers, which give it remarkable thermal properties—it provides warmth in winter and a cooling effect in summer.
- ✓ Kannadippaya is the first tribal handicraft from Kerala to receive a GI tag.

Q. Which state is associated with the Warangal Chapata Chilli that recently received a GI tag?

- A) Telangana
B) Andhra Pradesh
C) Karnataka
D) Maharashtra

Answer : A

- ✓ The Warangal Chapata Chilli, also known as Tomato Chilli, has been granted a Geographical Indication (GI) tag, recognizing its unique qualities and regional significance in Telangana.
- ✓ This GI tag is expected to benefit around 20,000 farmers in the Warangal region by enhancing their income and boosting demand in domestic and international markets.
- ✓ The chilli is known for its bright red colour, mild pungency, and use as a natural colouring agent.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Exercise INDRA, recently seen in the news:

1. It is an India - Russia bilateral naval exercise.
2. The exercise is being conducted in two phases—harbour phase from March 28 to 30 at Chennai, and Sea phase from March 31 to April 2 in Bay of Bengal.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ India and Russia have commenced a six-day naval exercise, 'Indra', off the coast of Chennai, involving sophisticated maritime drills and live weapon firings.
- ✓ **About Exercise INDRA:**
- ✓ It is an India - Russia bilateral naval exercise.
- ✓ Since its inception in 2003, Exercise Indra has epitomised the long-term strategic relationship between the Indian and Russian navies.
- ✓ The 14th edition of the Indian - Russia bilateral naval exercise, INDRA, is being conducted in two phases: The harbour phase, which was held from March 28 to 30, and the sea phase and will continue until April 2 in the Bay of Bengal.
- ✓ It is witnessing participation of Russian naval ships -- Pechanga, Rezkiy, and Aldar Tsydenzhapov.
- ✓ The Indian Navy has deployed its warships Rana, Kuthar, and maritime patrol aircraft P8I.

Q. Heard and McDonald Islands, recently in news, are located in which of the following oceans?

- A) Indian Ocean B) Arctic Ocean
C) Atlantic Ocean D) Pacific Ocean

Answer : A

- ✓ The US President imposed a 10% tariff on imports from the Heard and McDonald Islands, despite the islands having no known exports to the US.

- ✓ About Heard and McDonald Islands
- ✓ The Heard and McDonald Islands are a remote sub-Antarctic volcanic island group, located in the southern Indian Ocean, about 4,100 km southwest of Perth (Australia) and 1,600 km north of Antarctica.
- ✓ The islands are part of a UNESCO World Heritage Site (since 1997) due to their pristine sub-Antarctic ecosystem, managed as a strict nature reserve (IUCN Category Ia).

Q. Which is the first European country to announce its withdrawal from the International Criminal Court?

- A) Croatia
B) Austria
C) Hungary
D) Estonia

Answer : C

- ✓ Hungary first European country to withdraw from the ICC.
- ✓ Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban announced on 3rd April 2025, that his country is withdrawing from the International Criminal Court (ICC).
- ✓ Hungary is the first European country to withdraw from the International Criminal Court, which was established in 2002.
- ✓ Context of Hungary's decision
- ✓ The decision to withdraw from the ICC was announced by Viktor Orbán in the presence of the visiting Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, who is on a four-day official visit to Hungary.
- ✓ The ICC has issued an arrest warrant against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for his alleged war crimes in Gaza.
- ✓ Hungary, being the founder member of the ICC and a signatory to the 1998 Rome Statute, was under an obligation to arrest Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.
- ✓ With Hungary's decision to withdraw from the ICC, the country is under no obligation to arrest Benjamin Netanyahu.
- ✓ However, there will be no effect on the proceedings against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in the ICC.
- ✓ Hungary's decision was welcomed by Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu.
- ✓ Hungary is considered to be one of Israel's strongest European allies, and many Hungarians hold a strong pro-Israel sentiment.
- ✓ About Hungary
- ✓ It is a landlocked central European country.
- ✓ It is also called "the Land of Magyars."
- ✓ It is a member of the European Union and of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO).
- ✓ Capital: Budapest
- ✓ Currency: Forint
- ✓ Prime Minister: Viktor Orban

Q. How many countries are members of the International Criminal Court?

- A) 138
B) 189
C) 167
D) 125

Answer : D

- ✓ **About the International Criminal Court**
- ✓ Established in 2002 under the provisions of the 1998 Rome Statute.
- ✓ The ICC was set up to prosecute individuals accused of genocide, war crimes, aggression, and crimes against humanity.
- ✓ Unlike the International Court of Justice (ICJ), the ICC is not part of the United Nations.
- ✓ The ICJ is the Judicial organ of the United Nations, which hears disputes between countries.
- ✓ In the ICC, independent Prosecutors can file a case.

- ✓ Members - 125 countries, including Hungary.
- ✓ India, Russia, the United States, China, Ukraine, and Israel are some of the prominent countries that are not members of the ICC.
- ✓ Headquarters: The Hague, Netherlands

Q. Where is the headquarters of the International Court of Justice located?

- A) The Hague
B) Paris
C) Washington D. C.
D) New York

Answer : A

Q. Which state is launching the 'Zero Poverty – P4 Policy' initiative as part of its Swarna Andhra-2047 vision?

- A) Tamil Nadu
B) Andhra Pradesh
C) Karnataka
D) Telangana

Answer : B

- ✓ Andhra Pradesh is set to launch the 'Zero Poverty – P4 Policy' initiative on Ugadi (March 30, 2025) as part of its ambitious Swarna Andhra-2047 vision.
- ✓ This poverty eradication program aims to eliminate poverty in the state by 2047 through a unique Public, Private, People Partnership (P4) model.
- ✓ The initiative focuses on empowering underprivileged families, referred to as 'Bangaru Kutumbam,' with housing, sanitation, water, energy, and entrepreneurship opportunities.

Q. Which country has honoured Prime Minister Narendra Modi with its highest civilian award, Mitra Vibhushana?

- A) Mauritius
B) Maldives
C) Thailand
D) Sri Lanka

Answer : D

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been honoured with the highest state honour of Sri Lanka, 'Mitra Vibhushana', by the Sri Lankan President Anura Kumara Disanayake in Colombo on 5th April 2025.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi is on a three-day official visit to Sri Lanka from 4-6 April 2025.
- ✓ He arrived in Sri Lanka from Thailand, where he attended the 6th BIMSTEC summit meeting held in Bangkok on 4th April 2025.
- ✓ **About the Mitra Vibhushana Award**
- ✓ The Mitra Vibhushana was instituted by the government of Sri Lanka in 2008
- ✓ It is conferred on a foreign Head of State/Government.
- ✓ The design of the Award includes Dharma Chakra, Sun and Moon, Navarathna, and Pun Kalasha.
- ✓ The majority population of Sri Lanka follows Buddhism, and the design of the Mitra Vibhushana award reflects the Buddhist Heritage of Sri Lanka

Q. In which Indian state is the festival of Rongali Bihu primarily celebrated?

- A) West Bengal
B) Odisha
C) Meghalaya
D) Assam

Answer : D

- ✓ Rongali Bihu, also known as Bohag Bihu, is a significant festival in Assam, marking the Assamese New Year and the beginning of the agricultural season.
- ✓ It is a vibrant celebration of spring, harvest, and Assamese identity, culture, and community spirit.

Q. Bharani Festival is mainly celebrated in which state?

- A) Kerala
B) Karnataka
C) Telangana
D) Odisha

Answer : A

- ✓ The Kodungalloor Bharani is a vibrant annual festival held at the Sree Kurumba Bhagavathy Temple in Kodungalloor, Thrissur, Kerala during the Malayalam month of Meenam (March–April).
- ✓ It celebrates the birth of Goddess Bhadrakali, who, according to legend, emerged from Lord Shiva's third eye to destroy the demon Darika.
- ✓ The festival is marked by the intense presence of Oracles (called Komaram or Velichappadu) dressed in red attire who perform sacred rituals

Q. Which country is set to host the 2035 FIFA Women's World Cup?

- A) Australia
B) United Kingdom
C) Canada
D) Germany

Answer : B

- ✓ United Kingdom, including England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland, is the sole valid bidder for the 2035 FIFA Women's World Cup.
- ✓ FIFA is expected to confirm the UK's bid next year. This event will mark the UK's first World Cup since 1966, highlighting its significant role in international football.
- ✓ The 2027 Women's World Cup will take place in Brazil with 32 teams participating

Q. What is the main objective of the MoU signed between RailTel, Lamrin Tech Skills University, Punjab, and National Skill Development Corporation?

- A) To develop railway infrastructure B) To enhance railway safety measures
- C) To promote railway tourism D) To Boost Railway Skill Development

Answer : D

- ✓ The MoU signed between RailTel, Lamrin Tech Skills University (LTSU), and the National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) aims to boost railway skill development.
- ✓ The partnership focuses on creating specialized diplomas and certifications tailored to the railway industry's needs.
- ✓ It includes curriculum design, training labs, internships, and placement support.
- ✓ RailTel contributes industry insights, LTSU provides the necessary infrastructure, and NSDC facilitates collaboration and funding, ensuring comprehensive skill development for the railway sector.

Q. What is the primary objective of establishing 728 Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) under the Union Government's initiative?

- A) Education to tribal children B) Skill development for urban youth
C) Vocational training for rural women D) Literacy programs for adults

Answer : A

- ✓ The Eklavya Model Residential Schools (EMRS) initiative by the Union Government is focused on providing quality education to tribal children, particularly in blocks with a high percentage of Scheduled Tribe (ST) populations.
- ✓ This program aims to bridge educational gaps by offering facilities similar to those of Navodaya Vidyalayas, tailored to the unique needs of tribal students.

- ✓ The establishment of 728 EMRSs will benefit approximately 3.5 lakh tribal students across India, promoting inclusive education and empowering tribal communities through access to quality learning environments

Q. Which company launched a Sports Scholarship Initiative to support young Indian athletes?

A) Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited B) Indian Oil Corporation

C) Reliance Industries limited D) Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited

Answer : A

- ✓ Bharat Petroleum Corporation Limited (BPCL) launched a Sports Scholarship Initiative aimed at supporting Indian athletes aged 13–25.
- ✓ This initiative provides monthly stipends and sports kits to athletes across various sports, including cricket, hockey, and tennis

Q. Which country launched the nuclear-powered submarine Perm, armed with the Zircon hypersonic cruise missile?

A) China

B) United States

C) Russia

D) France

Answer : C

- ✓ The Perm, a nuclear-powered submarine equipped with the Zircon hypersonic cruise missile, was launched from the Sevmash shipyard in Severodvinsk, Russia.
- ✓ This submarine belongs to the Yasen-M class and is set to join the Pacific Fleet in 2026.
- ✓ It is the first Yasen-class submarine to carry hypersonic missiles, highlighting Russia's strategic naval advancements.

Q. What is the name of the mobile-based application used to track Anganwadi Centres across India?

A) NUTRI App

B) POSHAN Tracker

C) Mid Day Meal

D) Nutrition Watch

Answer : B

- ✓ The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD) announced that all Anganwadi Centres in India are now registered on the POSHAN Tracker mobile application.
- ✓ POSHAN Tracker is a mobile-based tool that tracks real-time attendance, growth, and nutrition services at Anganwadi Centres and replaces manual records with auto-generated monthly reports.
- ✓ It supports 24 languages and improves transparency, efficiency, and accountability in delivering nutrition services.
- ✓ The app is part of Mission Saksham Anganwadi and POSHAN 2.0 (Prime Minister's Overarching Scheme for Holistic Nutrition), which merges Anganwadi services, POSHAN Abhiyaan, and the Scheme for Adolescent Girls (14–18 years) to fight malnutrition.

Q. Who has been honoured with the prestigious 2025 Fred Darrington Award for Excellence in Art and Culture?

A) Manas Kumar Sahoo

B) Manisha Swarnkar

C) Sudarsan Pattnaik

D) Nitish Bharti

Answer : C

- ✓ Renowned Sand artist and sculptor of Odisha, Sudarsan Pattnaik, has become the first Indian to win the prestigious Fred Darrington Award for Excellence in Art and Culture at the SandWorld's International Sand Art Festival in Weymouth, Dorset, England.
- ✓ Sudarsan won the award for his 10-meter-tall sand sculpture of Lord Ganesha.
- ✓ The annual Sandworld International Sand Art Festival was held in Weymouth in the southern English county of Dorset, from 5-9 April 2025
- ✓ About Sudarsan Pattnaik
- ✓ Sudarsan Pattnaik was born in the beach town of Puri in the state of Odisha in 1977.
- ✓ Sudarsan Pattnaik, since childhood, was attracted to sand sculpting. He uses natural sand to create beautiful sculptures that convey a social message, like climate change, plastic pollution, or a symbol of peace, like Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, etc
- ✓ He has won numerous national and International awards.
- ✓ Awards
- ✓ He was honored with India's fourth-highest civilian award, Padma Shri, in 2014.
- ✓ He won the 2024 Golden Sand Master Award in Saint Petersburg, Russia, for his 12-foot sculpture of Lord Jagannath.

Q. Who inaugurated India's first vertical lift railway sea bridge at Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu?

- A) Draupadi Murmu B) Narendra Modi
C) Nitin Gadkari D) Rajnath Singh

Answer : B

- ✓ 1st vertical lift railway sea bridge inaugurated in Rameswaram.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the newly built Pamban bridge, which is India's first vertical railway sea bridge, at Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu on 6th April 2025.
- ✓ The Prime Minister also inaugurated and laid the foundation stone, and dedicated to the nation various rail and road projects worth over Rs 8,300 crore in Rameswaram.
- ✓ **Newly Built Pamban Bridge**
- ✓ The newly built Pamban bridge has been built adjacent to the old Pamban bridge.
- ✓ It replaces the 110-year-old Pamban Bridge, which was decommissioned in 2022.
- ✓ Features of the new Bridge
- ✓ It is the country's first vertical railway sea bridge.
- ✓ It is 2.08 Km long, connecting Rameswaram, located in Pamban Island in Palk Strait, to Mandapam town in mainland Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The bridge has been built by Rail Vikas Nigam Ltd (RVNL) of the Indian Railways at a cost of over Rs 700 crore.
- ✓ The bridge has a 'vertical lift span' of 72.5 metres in the middle, which can lift upwards 17 metres so that the ship can pass underneath.

Q. India's first vertical lift railway sea bridge in Rameswaram can vertically lift upto –?

- A) 23 meters
B) 32 meters
C) 27 meters
D) 17 meters

Answer : D

- ✓ The bridge has a 'vertical lift span' of 72.5 metres in the middle, which can lift upwards 17 metres so that the ship can pass underneath.

Q. What is the total length of India's first vertical lift railway sea bridge at Rameswaram in Tamil Nadu?

- A) 2.08 km
- B) 3.07 km
- C) 4.05 km
- D) 6.02 km

Answer : A

- ✓ It is 2.08 Km long, connecting Rameswaram, located in Pamban Island in Palk Strait, to Mandapam town in mainland Tamil Nadu

Q. What was the theme of the 6th BIMSTEC Summit?

- A) Building a Better Bay
- B) BIMSTEC: One Region, One Future
- C) BIMSTEC: Prosperous, Resilient, and Open
- D) Enhancing Connectivity for Shared Prosperity

Answer : C

- ✓ The 6th BIMSTEC Summit was held in Bangkok, Thailand, from April 2 to April 4, 2025.
- ✓ The theme was "BIMSTEC: Prosperous, Resilient, and Open", focusing on economic integration, disaster resilience, and regional security.
- ✓ Adoption of the Bangkok Vision 2030, a strategic roadmap for regional prosperity.
- ✓ Signing of the Maritime Transport Cooperation Agreement to boost trade and connectivity.
- ✓ Approval of the Rules of Procedure for BIMSTEC Mechanisms for efficient operations.
- ✓ Endorsement of the Eminent Persons Group Report for BIMSTEC's future direction.
- ✓ Focus on disaster response, with a joint statement addressing recent earthquakes in Myanmar and Thailand.
- ✓ Bangladesh officially became the new Chair of BIMSTEC for the next two years.
- ✓ It received the leadership from Thailand, the previous Chair.
- ✓ The Summit meeting was attended by the leaders of the seven member countries of BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) - India, Thailand, Myanmar, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Bhutan.
- ✓ Initiative to strengthen people-to-people ties
- ✓ India will host the BIMSTEC Athletics Meet in 2025.
- ✓ India will host 1st BIMSTEC Games in 2027;
- ✓ India will host the BIMSTEC Traditional Music Festival.
- ✓ About BIMSTEC
- ✓ Established as BIST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand Economic Cooperation) in 1997.
- ✓ Later in 1997, it was renamed BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) when Myanmar joined it.
- ✓ Members - India, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Myanmar.
- ✓ Secretariat - Dhaka, Bangladesh
- ✓ Summit Meeting
- ✓ 1st Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand in 2004
- ✓ 2nd in New Delhi in 2008
- ✓ 3rd in Naypyidaw, Myanmar in 2014
- ✓ 4th in Kathmandu, Nepal in 2018
- ✓ 5th was a virtual meeting hosted by Sri Lanka in 2022
- ✓ 6th summit meeting hosted by Thailand in 2025.

Q.

1. It was released by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only

Answer : A

- ✓ India has been ranked 10th in the world with significant private investments in Artificial Intelligence (AI) in 2023, according to the 2025 Technology and Innovation Report.
- ✓ About Technology and Innovation Report:
- ✓ It was released by the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD).
- ✓ It seeks to address issues in science, technology and innovation that are topical and important for developing countries in a comprehensive way with an emphasis on policy-relevant analysis and conclusions.
- ✓ The 2025 edition of the report, entitled: Inclusive artificial intelligence for development, aims to guide policymakers through the complex Artificial Intelligence (AI) landscape and support them in designing science, technology and innovation policies that foster inclusive and equitable technological progress.
- ✓ The report estimates that up to 40 percent of global jobs could be affected by AI.
- ✓ India and China are the only developing countries in the world with significant private investments in AI in 2023.
- ✓ The US leads the world in terms of private investment in AI, at 67 billion US dollars in 2023, or 70 percent of global AI private investment. China was in second position, with 7.8 billion US dollars, and India in tenth position, with 1.4 billion dollars.
- ✓ India ranked 36th in 2024 out of 170 nations on the Readiness for Frontier Technologies Index, improving its position from 48th in 2022.

Q.

- A) 24th

Answer : B

- ✓ India ranked 10th globally for private AI investments in 2023, with a total of \$1.4 billion, making it one of only two developing countries, alongside China, in the top 10.
- ✓ The United States secured the 1st position, contributing 70% of global AI funding with investments totaling \$67 billion.

Q.

- ## A) Our Planet, Our Health

Answer : C

- ✓ Every year on April 7, World Health Day is observed to increase global awareness of a varied range of health-related concerns.
- ✓ About World Health Day 2025:
- ✓ World Health Day is observed on April 07 every year.

- ✓ This day marks the anniversary of the founding of the World Health Organization (WHO) in 1948 and has been celebrated since 1950.
- ✓ The theme for World Health Day 2025 is 'Healthy beginnings, hopeful futures.'

Q. With reference to the Women and Men in India 2024: Selected Indicators and Data, consider the following statements:

1. It was published by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India.
2. In the 2024 general elections, female voter turnout surpassed male turnout.
3. In the financial sector, women own more than one-third of all bank accounts and contribute to more than one-third of total deposits.

Select the correct answer using the code given below:

A) 1 and 2 only	B) 1 and 3 only
C) 2 and 3 only	D) 1, 2, and 3

Answer : D

- ✓ Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India, recently released the 26th edition of its publication titled “Women and Men in India 2024: Selected Indicators and Data”.
- ✓ **About Women and Men in India 2024: Selected Indicators and Data:**
- ✓ It was published by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI), Government of India.
- ✓ **Highlights of the 2024 Report:**
- ✓ Gender Parity Index (GPI) for enrolments at the primary and higher secondary was higher in FY24 than in FY23 and FY22, meaning more girls are being enrolled now.
- ✓ At upper primary and elementary levels, the enrolment numbers were more or less the same for boys and girls.
- ✓ The Labour Force Participation Rate (LFPR) for women aged 15 and above improved significantly, rising from 49.8% in 2017-18 to 60.1% in 2023-24.
- ✓ In the financial sector, women own 39.2% of all bank accounts and contribute to 39.7% of total deposits, with their presence most prominent in rural areas, where they account for 42.2% of account holders.
- ✓ Female participation in the capital market is also growing, but overall numbers are small.
- ✓ Between March 2021 and November 2024, the number of DEMAT accounts surged from 33.26 million to 143.02 million. Of these, the number of women account holders rose from 6.67 million in 2021 to 27.71 million in 2024.
- ✓ A Rising percentage of female-headed proprietary establishments across manufacturing, trade, and other services sectors over the years 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24 has been observed.
- ✓ The number of male and female voters grew from 173.2 million in 1952 to 978 million in 2024, with an increasing share of females.
- ✓ In the 2024 general elections, female voter turnout (65.8%) surpassed male turnout, even as it dipped slightly from 67.2% in 2019.
- ✓ Female entrepreneurship is also on the rise. The number of startups recognized by DPIIT with at least one woman director rose sharply from 1,943 in 2017 to 17,405 in 2024.

Q. In which year was the original Waqf Act, later amended by the Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024, enacted?

A) 1995	B) 2001
C) 1984	D) 2013

Answer : A

- ✓ The original Waqf Act was enacted in 1995 to regulate and manage Waqf properties across India.
- ✓ It provided the legal framework for the establishment of Waqf Boards, registration of Waqf properties, and resolution of related disputes.
- ✓ Over time, the need for more transparency, better governance, and inclusive representation led to several amendments.
- ✓ The Waqf (Amendment) Bill, 2024 builds upon the 1995 Act by refining definitions, regulating property disputes more fairly, integrating technology through a central portal, and promoting gender and community representation.

Q. What was the primary objective of the ChaSTE instrument on the Chandrayaan-3 mission?

- A) To search for seismic activity on the moon
- B) To measure temperatures in the moon's south pole
- C) To collect lunar rock samples for return missions
- D) To test communication systems for future lunar bases

Answer : B

- ✓ Chandra's Surface Thermophysical Experiment (ChaSTE) was designed as the first instrument to directly measure temperatures near the moon's south pole.
- ✓ Integrated into the Vikram lander of Chandrayaan-3, it utilized a rotation-based deployment mechanism, which allowed it to penetrate the lunar soil effectively—up to 10 cm.
- ✓ Equipped with multiple temperature sensors, ChaSTE recorded variations in thermal properties at different depths.

Q. What is India's rank in terms of the largest railway networks in the world?

- A) 5th
- B) 2nd
- C) 3rd
- D) 4th

Answer : D

- ✓ India holds the position of having the 4th largest railway network globally, with a vast expanse of over 65,000 km in route length.
- ✓ This extensive network plays a crucial role in transporting billions of passengers and tons of freight annually, serving as the backbone of India's economic and social infrastructure.
- ✓ The Indian Railways also contributes to employment and environmental sustainability while aiming to be a global leader in rail-based logistics and mobility by adopting innovations like KAVACH, automatic signalling, and plans for net-zero emissions by 2030.

Q. What is the current sex ratio at birth as of 2023-24?

- A) 930
- B) 918
- C) 945
- D) 910

Answer : A

- ✓ The sex ratio at birth has improved from 918 in 2014-15 to 930 in 2023-24.
- ✓ This progress is largely attributed to the Beti Bachao Beti Padhao Scheme, which was launched in 2015 to address the declining child sex ratio.
- ✓ The scheme promotes gender equality, girl empowerment, and mindset changes towards the value of girls in society.

- Q.** What is the name of the vessel on which the first tri-services all women circumnavigation sailing expedition Samudra Pradakshina to Seychelles has been launched in April 2025?
- A) IASV Triveni
 - B) IASV Vagsheer
 - C) IASV Vagir
 - D) IASV Khanderi

Answer : A

- ✓ All Women's Tri Service Samudra Pradakshina flagged off from Mumbai.
- ✓ The first tri-service all-women global circumnavigation expedition "Samudra Pradakshina" on board the IASV (Indian Army Sailing Vessel) Triveni was flagged off from Mumbai on 7 April 2025.
- ✓ The expedition was flagged off by Lieutenant General AK Ramesh, Commandant, College of Military Engineering, from the Indian Naval Watermanship Training Centre, Colaba, Mumbai.
- ✓ The expedition will sail to Seychelles and come back to Mumbai, covering the 4,000 nautical mile journey in 55 days.
- ✓ Last year ,the Indian Navy succesfully launched its all women second Navika Sagar Parikrama expedition to circumnavigate the globe on board the Indian Naval Sailing Vessel Tarini or INSV Tarini.
- ✓ **Crew Member of the IASV Triveni**
- ✓ The 12 crew members of IASV Triveni have been drawn from the Indian Armed Forces- Indian Army, Indian Navy, and Indian Air Force.
- ✓ All the crew members were given rigorous training at the Army Adventure Nodal Centre for Blue Water Sailing in Marve, Mumbai.
- ✓ The Army Adventure Nodal Centre for Blue Water Sailing comes under the Indian Army's College of Military Engineering, Pune.
- ✓ **Mission of the Crew**
- ✓ The all women crew on board the IASV Triveni will sail to Seychelles,situated in the western Indian Ocean near Africa and come back to Mumbai, covering the 4,000 nautical mile journey in 55 days.
- ✓ The IASV Triveni is expected to dock at Colaba, Mumbai, on 30 May 2025.

- Q.** Consider the following statements regarding INS Varsha, recently seen in the news:

1. It is a strategically designed submarine base to house India's nuclear-powered submarines.
2. It is located in Kochi, Kerala.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ India is preparing to operationalise INS Varsha, a dedicated naval base for nuclear-powered submarines, on the eastern coast near Rambilli in Andhra Pradesh by 2026.
- ✓ About INS Varsha:
- ✓ It is a strategically designed submarine base to house India's nuclear-powered submarines, both ballistic missile (SSBNs) and attack (SSNs) variants.
- ✓ The high-security facility, part of the long-planned Project Varsha, is designed to support India's growing fleet of nuclear submarines and enhance the survivability of its sea-based deterrent.

- ✓ The new base will be located near the coastal village of Rambilli, approximately 50 kilometers from Eastern Naval Command headquarters in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

Q. The Digital Threat Report 2024, recently seen in the news, primarily focuses on cybersecurity risks in which sector?

- A) Education and Research
- B) Manufacturing and Retail
- C) Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance
- D) Energy and Infrastructure

Answer : C

- ✓ The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology recently launched the Digital Threat Report 2024 for the Banking, Financial Services, and insurance (BFSI) sector.
- ✓ **About Digital Threat Report 2024:**
- ✓ It is a collaborative effort by SISA (Strategic Information Services Agreement), a global cybersecurity company, in collaboration with the Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT-In, Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology) and CSIRT-Fin.
- ✓ It offers an in-depth analysis of the growing cybersecurity risks in India's Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI) sector.

Q. What is POEM-4 recently seen in the news?

- A) A deep-sea mining initiative by India
- B) A climate change monitoring satellite
- C) A space research platform developed by ISRO
- D) A quantum computing mission launched by DRDO

Answer : C

- ✓ POEM-4 re-entered the Earth's atmosphere and impacted the Indian Ocean, as monitored by ISRO's IS4OM (System for Safe and Sustainable Space Operations Management).
- ✓ **What is POEM-4?**
- ✓ POEM-4, or PSLV Orbital Experiment Module-4, is a space research platform developed by ISRO that utilizes the spent fourth stage (PS4) of the PSLV rocket as an orbiting experimental module in space.
- ✓ It is part of the SpaDeX (Space Docking Experiment) mission and represents the fourth deployment of the POEM series, following POEM-3.
- ✓ It is part of the SpaDeX (Space Docking Experiment) mission and represents the fourth deployment of the POEM series, following POEM-3.
- ✓ POEM-4 has a three times larger payload capacity than its predecessor, POEM-3, marking a major advancement in reusing upper rocket stages for scientific research.
- ✓ Total of 24 payloads were hosted on POEM-4: 14 payloads from ISRO and 10 payloads from non-government entities (NGEs) including start-ups and academic institutions.
- ✓ **Launch and Mission Details**
- ✓ POEM-4 was launched on December 30, 2024, aboard PSLV-C60, which also carried twin SPADEX satellites to a 475 km altitude.
- ✓ After satellite deployment, the PS4 upper stage was reconfigured as POEM-4 and continued in a nearby orbit, serving as an experimental platform.
- ✓ POEM-4 was then de-orbited by restarting its engine and brought to a circular orbit at 350 km altitude with a 55.2° inclination.

Q. Which ministry of the government of India is the nodal ministry for Poshan Pakhwada Initiative?

- A) Ministry of Road Transport and Highways
- B) Ministry of Corporate Affairs
- C) Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs
- D) Ministry of Women and Child Development

Answer : D

- ✓ The government of India has launched the nationwide 7th edition of Poshan Pakhwada on 8th April 2025. The duration of the 7th edition of Poshan Pakhwada is from 8th April to 22nd April 2025.
- ✓ The 7th edition of Poshan Pakhwada was formally launched by the Union Minister of State for Women and Child Development, Smt. Savitri Thakur at a function in New Delhi.
- ✓ Poshan Pakhwada is part of the Poshan Abhiyaan programme of the central government, which focuses on raising public awareness and promoting community participation in addressing malnutrition amongst pregnant women, lactating mothers, adolescent girls, and children under the age of six years.
- ✓ The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development is the nodal body for implementing the Poshan Pakhwada.
- ✓ The themes of the 7th edition of Poshan Pakhwada are;
- ✓ Focus on the First 1000 Days of Life,
- ✓ Increase awareness about the Beneficiary/Citizen Module of Poshan Tracker,
- ✓ Management of Malnutrition through CMAM (community-based management of acute malnutrition), and
- ✓ Healthy Lifestyle to Address Obesity in Children.
- ✓ About Poshan Abhiyaan
- ✓ It was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 8th March, 2018 in Jhunjhunu district of Rajasthan.
- ✓ Objectives of Poshan Abhiyan
- ✓ Prevent and reduce stunting in 0-6 years children,
- ✓ Prevent and reduce under-nutrition in 0-6 years children,
- ✓ Reduce the prevalence of anaemia among 6-59 months children,
- ✓ Reduce the prevalence of anaemia among women and adolescent Girls in the age group of 15-49 years,
- ✓ Reduce low birth weight.

Q. Which country has proposed the creation of a Global Climate Council ahead of COP30?

- A) Brazil
- B) Germany
- C) India
- D) Canada

Answer : A

- ✓ Brazil has put forward a significant proposal to establish a Global Climate Council under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).
- ✓ This initiative comes in anticipation of COP30, which is scheduled to be held in November 2025 in Belem, a city in northern Brazil.

Q. In which capital city was President Droupadi Murmu honored with the “City Key of Honor”?

- A) Paris
- B) Lisbon
- C) Rome
- D) Berlin

Answer : B

- ✓ President Droupadi Murmu was honored with the highest distinction of the city — “City Key of Honor” — in Lisbon.

- ✓ The award was presented at the historic Câmara Municipal de Lisboa (City Hall) in a grand ceremony.
- ✓ Lisbon's Mayor Carlos Moedas handed her the symbolic key to the city, recognizing her as an honorary citizen.

Q. What is the theme of Poshan Pakhwada 2025 being observed by the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS)?

- A) Poshan Se Samridh Bharat
- B) Swachh Jal, Swasth Bharat
- C) Shuddh Jal aur Swachhta Se Swasth Bachpan
- D) Har Ghar Jal, Har Ghar Poshan

Answer : C

- ✓ The Ministry of Jal Shakti's Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) is actively participating in the 7th edition of Nutrition Fortnight from 8 to 23 April 2025.
- ✓ This initiative aligns with the Ministry of Women and Child Development's "Saksham Anganwadi" scheme.
- ✓ The theme is "Shuddh Jal aur Swachhta Se Swasth Bachpan", and the tagline is "Purn Poshan Ki Shuruwaat, Shuddh Jal aur Swachhta Ke Saath", emphasizing the role of clean water in child health and nutrition

Q. Padma Shri Ram Sahay Pandey, who recently passed away, was associated with which traditional folk dance?

- A) Ghoomar
- B) Rai
- C) Garba
- D) None of the above

Answer : C

- ✓ Renowned Rai folk dancer and Padma Shri awardee Ram Sahay Pandey passed away on 8 April 2025 at the age of 92 in Sagar district, Madhya Pradesh, after a prolonged illness.
- ✓ He dedicated his life to the traditional Rai folk dance of Bundelkhand and played a key role in giving it national and international recognition

Q. India will buy how many Rafale Marine fighter aircraft from France?

- A) 30
- B) 26
- C) 20
- D) 15

Answer : B

- ✓ Govt approves 26 Rafale M fighter aircraft for the Indian Navy.
- ✓ The total deal, worth over Rs 63,000 crore, is the largest ever fighter aircraft deal of the government of India.
- ✓ In September 2016, India and France signed a Rs 59,000 crore contract for the purchase of 36 Rafale aircraft for the Indian Air Force.
- ✓ The Rafale aircraft has been deployed by the Indian Air Force at its Ambala (Haryana) and Hasimara (West Bengal) bases.

Q. Which company manufactures Rafale Marine fighter aircraft?

- A) Dassault Aviation
- B) Boeing
- C) Lockheed Martin
- D) Textron Aviation

Answer : A

- ✓ The focus areas of the project include optimizing costs, enhancing customer experience, and integrating advanced technologies, all while maintaining its strengths in core business areas

Q. Who received the 'City Key of Honour' from the Mayor of Lisbon during a visit to Portugal in April 2025?

- A) Narendra Modi
- B) S. Jaishankar
- C) Rajnath Singh
- D) Droupadi Murmu

Answer : D

- ✓ During an official visit to Portugal on April 7, 2025, the President of India, Droupadi Murmu, was awarded the prestigious 'City Key of Honour' by the Mayor of Lisbon.
- ✓ This recognition came as India and Portugal marked 50 years of diplomatic relations, highlighting the strengthening cultural, technological, and economic ties between the two nations

Q. Which country launched the Digital Threat Report 2024 for the BFSI sector to enhance cybersecurity resilience?

- A) United States
- B) United Kingdom
- C) India
- D) Australia

Answer : C

- ✓ India launched the Digital Threat Report 2024 to bolster the cybersecurity framework of its Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI) sector.
- ✓ This initiative is a collaborative effort by CERT-In under MeitY, CSIRT-Fin, and cybersecurity firm SISA.
- ✓ Released on April 7, 2025, the report outlines emerging cyber threats, including AI-driven attacks and sector-wide vulnerabilities, while emphasizing the importance of unified defence strategies

Q. Under the new Immigration and Foreigners Act, 2025, what is the maximum penalty for violations such as overstaying or using a fake passport?

- A) ₹1 lakh and 3 years imprisonment
- B) ₹5 lakh and 5 years imprisonment
- C) ₹10 lakh and imprisonment
- D) ₹50,000 and deportation

Answer : C

- ✓ The Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025, signed into law on April 8, 2025, modernizes India's immigration framework by consolidating four outdated laws: the Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920; the Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939; the Foreigners Act, 1946; and the Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act, 2000.
- ✓ Bureau of Immigration: Establishes a centralized body to oversee visa issuance, entry, stay, and exit of foreigners.
- ✓ Stricter Penalties: Violations like using fake passports or overstaying visas can result in fines up to ₹10 lakh and imprisonment.
- ✓ Enhanced Monitoring: Hotels, universities, and hospitals must report details of foreigners to authorities.
- ✓ Streamlined Visa Processes: E-visas remain available for citizens of 167 countries, with visa-on-arrival options for Japan, South Korea, and UAE nationals.

Q. Which is the nodal ministry for implementing the Poshan Pakhwada initiative?

- A) Ministry of Women and Child Development
- B) Ministry of Social Justice
- C) Ministry of Finance
- D) Ministry of Home Affairs

Answer : A

- ✓ The Ministry of Women and Child Development is celebrating the 7th edition of Poshan Pakhwada from April 8th to 22nd, 2025.
- ✓ It aims to raise awareness about nutrition and promote healthy eating habits through public participation and involvement.
- ✓ The themes include focusing on the first 1000 days of life, promoting the Beneficiary/Citizen Module of Poshan Tracker, managing malnutrition through Community-Based Management of Acute Malnutrition (CMAM), and addressing obesity in children.

Q. Which country has recently unveiled the world's first 3D-printed train station?

- A) Japan
- B) Australia
- C) France
- D) India

Answer : A

- ✓ Japan's West Japan Railway Company has built the world's first 3D-printed train station in Arida city, called Hatsushima station, in less than six hours.
- ✓ The project highlights a breakthrough in fast and sustainable construction using 3D Printing technology.
- ✓ 3D Printing, also known as Additive Manufacturing, creates 3D objects by adding material layer by layer from a digital design.

Q. Where was the 9th edition of the Global Technology Summit 2025 held?

- A) New Delhi
- B) Chennai
- C) Hyderabad
- D) Bengaluru

Answer : A

- ✓ The 9th edition of the three-day Global Technology Summit was inaugurated in New Delhi by the External Affairs Minister Dr S Jaishankar on 10 April 2025.
- ✓ The Global Technology Summit, to be held from 10-12 April 2025, is India's flagship dialogue on geo-technology
- ✓ The summit aims to create a new framework of engagement that addresses concerns of all stakeholders without hindering technological progress and innovation.
- ✓ The Global Technology Summit is co-organised by the Ministry of External Affairs with New Delhi based think tank Carnegie India. It is an annual dialogue that was first held in December 2016.
- ✓ The theme of the 9th Global Technology Summit is "Sambhavna".
- ✓ The 9th summit will focus on the use of possibilities (sambhavna) of the use of emerging technologies to drive inclusive growth, strengthen digital governance, and deepen cross-border partnerships.
- ✓ This year, around 150 speakers from 40 countries, including Australia, France, Germany, the United States, the United Kingdom, Japan, Netherlands, Brazil, the United Arab Emirates, Nigeria, the Philippines, and the European Union.
- ✓ **About Carnegie India**
- ✓ Carnegie India is a non-government, non-profit think tank and policy research group that was established in 2016.

- ✓ It was set up by the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a think tank of the United States of America.
- ✓ Headquarters: New Delhi

Q. What was the theme of the 9th edition of the Global Technology Summit 2025?

- A) Sambhavna
- B) Minds to Innovate
- C) Igniting Young
- D) Integrated Approach

Answer : A

- ✓ The theme of the 9th Global Technology Summit is "Sambhavna".
- ✓ The 9th summit will focus on the use of possibilities (sambhavna) of the use of emerging technologies to drive inclusive growth, strengthen digital governance, and deepen cross-border partnerships

Q. Where was the 3rd BIMSTEC Agriculture Ministerial Meeting 2025 held?

- A) Kathmandu, Nepal
- B) Bangkok, Thailand
- C) Dhaka , Bangladesh
- D) New Delhi, India

Answer : A

- ✓ 3rd BIMSTEC Agriculture Ministerial Meeting held in Kathmandu Nepal.
- ✓ The 3rd BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Agriculture Ministerial Meeting was held in Kathmandu, Nepal, on 10th April 2025.
- ✓ At the sidelines of the meeting, India signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Nepal to further cooperation in Agriculture.
- ✓ The first BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Agriculture Ministerial Meeting was held in Myanmar on 12 July 2019, and the second was held in India on 10 November 2022.
- ✓ The Agricultural Ministers meeting took place days after the 6th BIMSTEC Summit meeting was held in Bangkok, Thailand on 4th April 2025. It was attended by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and leaders of BIMSTEC member countries.
- ✓ Agriculture and Food Security, which includes fisheries and livestock, is one of the seven areas of cooperation of BIMSTEC.
- ✓ All the seven member countries of BIMSTEC- India, Nepal, Bhutan, Thailand, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Myanmar were represented by their Agriculture minister and senior officials of the Agriculture department.
- ✓ Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Union Minister for Agriculture & Farmers' Welfare and Rural Development, led the Indian delegation.
- ✓ Shivraj Singh Chouhan proposed the establishment of the 'BIMSTEC Centre of Excellence for Agriculture Cooperation in India'

Q. India signed an MoU with which country for advance cooperation in the field of agriculture, focusing on sustainability and improved farming systems?

- A) Malaysia
- B) Indonesia
- C) Argentina
- D) Nepal

Answer : D

- ✓ **MoU with Nepal**
- ✓ During his visit to Kathmandu, Shivraj Singh Chouhan also met Nepal's Minister for Agriculture and Livestock Development, Ram Nath Adhikari.
- ✓ Both countries signed an MoU to advance cooperation in the field of agriculture, focusing on sustainability and improved farming systems.

- ✓ The MoU will focus on enhancing crop productivity, improving post-harvest management, strengthening agri-marketing systems, and promoting climate-resilient and sustainable agricultural practices.
- ✓ Later, Shivraj Singh Chouhan also met the Nepali Prime Minister KP Sharma Oli in Kathmandu.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the sixth BIMSTEC Summit meeting in Bangkok, Thailand, on 4th April 2025.
- ✓ Bangladesh will hold the post for the next two years, and it will also host the 7th BIMSTEC summit meeting.
- ✓ **About BIMSTEC**
- ✓ Established as BIST-EC (Bangladesh, India, Sri Lanka, and Thailand Economic Cooperation) in 1997.
- ✓ Later in 1997, it was renamed BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) when Myanmar joined it.
- ✓ Members - India, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Thailand, and Myanmar.
- ✓ Secretariat - Dhaka, Bangladesh
- ✓ Secretary General : Indra Mani Pandey from India.
- ✓ **Summit Meeting**
- ✓ 1st Summit held in Bangkok, Thailand in 2004
- ✓ 2nd in New Delhi in 2008
- ✓ 3rd in Naypyidaw, Myanmar in 2014
- ✓ 4th in Kathmandu, Nepal in 2018
- ✓ 5th was a virtual meeting hosted by Sri Lanka in 2022
- ✓ 6th summit meeting hosted by Thailand in 2025.
- ✓ 7th summit meeting hosted by Bangladesh in 2026.

Q. India signed MoU with which country for cooperation in the field of scientific research?

- A) United States
- B) United Kingdom
- C) Italy
- D) Germany

Answer : C

- ✓ India & Italy sign MoU for cooperation in the field of scientific research.
- ✓ An MoU has been signed between India and Italy to further cooperation in the field of scientific research.
- ✓ The 13th Ministerial meeting of the India-UK Economic and Financial Dialogue was held in London, United Kingdom.
- ✓ Also, the 4th India-Japan Joint Working Group Meeting on Tourism Cooperation was held in New Delhi.
- ✓ **India and Italy Sign MoU on Scientific Research**
- ✓ India and Italy have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for cooperation in the field of scientific research on 11 April 2025.
- ✓ The MoU was signed during the visit of the Italian Minister of University and Research, Ms. Anna Maria Bernini, to India.
- ✓ She met the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology, Dr Jitendra Singh.
- ✓ Both Ministers discussed cooperation in quantum technologies, artificial intelligence, biotechnology, and other emerging sectors.
- ✓ Both countries agreed to implement the 2025–2027 Executive Programme for Scientific and Technological Cooperation, which aims to further collaboration in critical technologies like artificial intelligence (AI) and digitalization.

Q. Where was the 4th India-Japan Joint Working Group on Tourism Cooperation held?

- A) Mumbai
- B) Tokyo
- C) New Delhi
- D) Hyderabad

Answer : C

- ✓ India and Japan held the 4th Joint Working Group (JWG) Meeting on Tourism Cooperation in New Delhi on 10th April 2025.
- ✓ The meeting focused on enhancing the tourism ties between the two countries.
- ✓ The Indian delegation was led by Mugdha Sinha, Director General, Union Ministry of Tourism.
- ✓ The Japanese side was led by Haraikawa Naoya, Commissioner, Japan Tourism Agency
- ✓ **Focus of the Meeting**
- ✓ The meeting focused on enhancing the tourism ties between the two countries, promoting Indian Buddhist sites in Japan and improving air connectivity, and encouraging Japanese student visits to the country.

Q. Where was the 13th ministerial meeting of the India-United Kingdom Economic and Financial Dialogue held?

- A) New Delhi
- B) London
- C) Kolkata
- D) Chennai

Answer : B

- ✓ The 13th ministerial meeting of the India-United Kingdom Economic and Financial Dialogue was held in London on 8th April 2025.
- ✓ The Indian delegation was led by Union Minister of Finance and Minister for Corporate Affairs Nirmala Sitharaman.
- ✓ The United Kingdom delegation was led by the United Kingdom's Chancellor of the Exchequer, Rachel Reeves.
- ✓ The Indian delegation included Finance Secretary Ajay Seth, Chairman of the International Financial Services Center Authority (IFSCA), K Rajaram, and other senior officials of the Finance Ministry.
- ✓ RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra attended the meeting virtually.
- ✓ The meeting was held to further collaboration in the financial services sector, FinTech, the Digital economy, and between the respective regulatory bodies. The next meeting will be held in India in 2026.

Q. Who launched the unified health insurance scheme of the Odisha government in Odisha?

- A) Narendra Modi
- B) Draupadi Murmu
- C) Jagat Prakash Nadda
- D) Amit Shah

Answer : C

- ✓ Union Minister for Health and Family Welfare, Jagat Prakash Nadda, launched a unified health insurance scheme of the Odisha government in Cuttack, Odisha, on 11 April 2025.
- ✓ The Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY) of the central government was formally launched in the state as part of the unified insurance scheme.
- ✓ The minister also launched the newly introduced Ayushman Vayo-Vandana Yojana in the state.
- ✓ The Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi, Deputy Chief Minister Pravati Parida, and other dignitaries were present on the occasion of the launch of the unified health insurance scheme.

Q. Which state health insurance scheme of the Odisha government has been merged with the Ayushman Bharat-Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB-PMJAY)?

- A) Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana B) Suraksha Jan Arogya Yojana
C) Nandu Jan Arogya Yojana D) Rakshak Jan Arogya Yojana

Answer : A

- ✓ Roll out of AB-PMJAY and merger of the Gopabandhu scheme
- ✓ In January 2025, the Odisha government signed an agreement with the National Health Authority, which implements the AB-PMJAY scheme, to implement the scheme in the state. Odisha was the 34th State/Union Territory to join the AB-PMJAY scheme.
- ✓ Recently, Delhi became the 35th state/Union Territory to join the AB-PMJAY scheme.
- ✓ The previous Naveen Patnaik-led Biju Janata Dal government in Odisha had refused to join the AB-PMJAY and instead launched its health insurance scheme, Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana.
- ✓ After the BJP government came to power in the state in 2024 renamed the Biju Swasthya Kalyan Yojana into Gopabandhu Jan Arogya Yojana.
- ✓ With the launch of the AB-PMJAY in the state, the Gopabandhu scheme has been merged with the AB-PMJAY.
- ✓ Benefits of the Unified Health Insurance Scheme
- ✓ It will provide health insurance coverage to around 1.3 crore families and 3.52 crore people of the state.
- ✓ Free medical treatment, including hospitalisation up to Rs 5 lakh per year for each beneficiary.
- ✓ Additional Rs 5 lakh coverage for women members of the family.
- ✓ Every beneficiary will be issued a personal health card, replacing the earlier system of separate cards for male and female family members.

Q. Who is eligible under the Ayushman Vayo-Vandana Yojana?

- A) Senior citizen of 65 years and above.
B) Senior citizen of 63 years and above.
C) Senior citizen of 70 years and above.
D) Senior citizen of 72 years and above.

Answer : C

- ✓ Jagat Prakash Nadda also launched the Ayushman Vayo-Vandana Yojana, which provides health insurance benefits to senior citizens of 70 years and above, irrespective of their socio-economic status.
- ✓ The Ayushman Vayo-Vandana Yojana is part of the AB-PMJAY scheme, which was launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 29 October 2024.

Q. The BM-04, recently developed by DRDO, is a type of:

- A) Surface-to-air missile B) Intercontinental ballistic missile
C) Short-range ballistic missile D) Anti-tank guided missile

Answer : C

- ✓ India unveiled the BM-04 missile at a defense exhibition in Hyderabad last month. This next-generation short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) reflects India's focus on enhancing its conventional counterforce capabilities.
- ✓ **About BM-04 Missile**
- ✓ The BM-04 is India's latest short-range ballistic missile (SRBM) developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO). Unveiled at the Vigyan Vaibhav 2025 defense exhibition in Hyderabad, it represents a significant advancement in India's missile technology.
- ✓ Features:

- ✓ Size: The BM-04 is 10.2 meters long, 1.2 meters in diameter and weighs 11,500 kg.
- ✓ Range: The missile has a two-stage solid-fuel propulsion system; it can engage targets located at a maximum distance of up to 1,500 km, with a 500 kg conventional warhead, and has a 30-meter circular error probability (CEP).

Q. Which of the following ministries is responsible for the implementation of the PM-POSHAN Scheme?

- A) Ministry of Women and Child Development
- B) Ministry of Health and Family Welfare
- C) Ministry of Education
- D) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment

Answer : C

- ✓ The Government of India has approved a 9.5% hike in material cost under the PM-POSHAN scheme, resulting in an additional central expenditure of ₹954 crore for the financial year 2025–26, effective from May 1, 2025.
- ✓ **About PM-POSHAN Scheme**
- ✓ The PM-POSHAN Scheme, formerly known as the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, is a Centrally Sponsored Scheme implemented by the Ministry of Education.
- ✓ It aims to provide one hot cooked meal per school day to 11.20 crore children studying in Balvatikas (pre-primary), and Classes 1 to 8 across 10.36 lakh government and government-aided schools.
- ✓ The scheme addresses twin objectives:
- ✓ Enhancing nutritional status of school-going children.
- ✓ Improving enrollment, retention, and attendance in schools, especially among disadvantaged children.
- ✓ The revised material cost per student per day is:
- ✓ ₹6.78 for Balvatika and Primary students (up from ₹6.19).
- ✓ ₹10.17 for Upper Primary students (up from ₹9.29).
- ✓ These rates represent the minimum mandatory contribution. However, States and Union Territories can contribute more from their budgets to provide meals with higher nutritional value.
- ✓ **Nutritional norms under PM-POSHAN include:**
- ✓ For Balvatika and Primary classes: 20g pulses, 50g vegetables, and 5g oil.
- ✓ For Upper Primary classes: 30g pulses, 75g vegetables, and 7.5g oil.
- ✓ The Labour Bureau under the Ministry of Labour supplies data on inflation for the items in the PM-POSHAN meal basket. This data is based on the Consumer Price Index – Rural Labourers (CPI-RL), calculated from 600 sample villages across 20 States.
- ✓ POSHAN Abhiyan is managed by the Ministry of Women and Child Development and aims to improve nutrition among adolescent girls, pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children (0–6 years).
- ✓ Mission POSHAN 2.0, launched in 2021, merged POSHAN Abhiyan and the Supplementary Nutrition Programme to streamline efforts under one unified framework.
- ✓ **Funding Pattern under POSHAN Abhiyan:**
- ✓ 60:40 between Centre and States/UTs with legislature.
- ✓ 90:10 for the Northeastern and Himalayan States.
- ✓ 100% central funding for UTs without legislature

Q. 'Sunbird', recently seen in the news, is best described as which of the following?

- A) A nuclear fusion-powered rocket
- B) A solar-powered surveillance drone
- C) A high-altitude weather balloon
- D) A satellite-based early warning system

Answer : A

- ✓ Sunbird is a nuclear fusion-powered rocket being developed by Pulsar Fusion, a British startup, to revolutionise interplanetary travel.
- ✓ **About Sunbird**
- ✓ Sunbird could potentially reach speeds of up to 805,000 km/h, which is faster than the Parker Solar Probe (692,000 km/h), currently the fastest human-made object.
- ✓ This technology, if successful, could enable missions to Pluto in just 4 years and cut travel time to Mars by nearly half.
- ✓ It aims to revolutionize interplanetary travel by drastically reducing travel time to distant planets like Mars and Pluto.
- ✓ An orbital demonstration is scheduled for 2027, marking a major milestone in space propulsion technology

Q. The term 'Blue Washing' refers to:

- A) overexploitation of marine resources
- B) practice of portraying polluting industries as environmentally friendly
- C) disposal of untreated industrial waste into oceans
- D) use of desalinated water in polluting industries to reduce freshwater use

Answer : B

- ✓ The Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) has recently introduced a new category of industries called the 'Blue Category', which falls under Essential Environmental Services (EES).
- ✓ **What is Blue Washing?**
- ✓ 'Blue Washing' refers to the practice of portraying polluting industries as environmentally friendly by categorising them under less polluting or cleaner industry labels.
- ✓ This term is now used to describe the reclassification of highly polluting Waste-to-Energy (WTE) incineration industries by the Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB) into the new 'Blue Category'.
- ✓ **Blue Category**
- ✓ The 'Blue Category' is introduced as part of a subset of EES activities like composting, biogas plants, sewage treatment, and material recovery facilities.
- ✓ Waste-to-Energy (WTE) incineration, previously under the 'Red Category' with a PI of 97.6, is now reclassified as a 'Blue Category' industry.
- ✓ **About Pollution Index (PI)**
- ✓ The Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) introduced a Pollution Index (PI) to categorise industries based on pollution levels.
- ✓ PI is calculated on the basis of emissions (air pollutants), effluents (water pollutants), hazardous waste, and resource consumption.
- ✓ PI ranges from 0 to 100, with industries classified as:
- ✓ White Category (0–20): Least polluting
- ✓ Green Category (21–40)
- ✓ Orange Category (41–59)
- ✓ Red Category (60–100): Most polluting

Q. The Sarhul festival is mainly celebrated by the tribes of which one of the following States?

- A) Himachal Pradesh
- B) Sikkim
- C) Assam
- D) Jharkhand

Answer : D

- ✓ The Sarhul Festival, celebrated by Adivasi communities in Jharkhand and the Chotanagpur region, marks the arrival of spring and the new year.

- ✓ **Meaning:** Sarhul means “worship of the Sal tree” and signifies the union of the Sun and the Earth, which is essential for life.
- ✓ **Nature worship:** The Sal tree is considered sacred, believed to be the abode of Sarna Maa, the village deity.

Q. What is the primary objective of ‘Operation Brahma’, recently seen in the news?

- A) To offer military support in earthquake relief operations in Nepal.
- B) To assist in flood relief operations in the Indian state of Kerala.
- C) To support recovery efforts following a volcanic eruption in Indonesia.
- D) To provide humanitarian assistance to Myanmar after an earthquake.

Answer : D

- ✓ After a devastating earthquake ravaged Myanmar recently, India initiated its relief and rescue efforts in the country under the banner 'Operation Brahma'.
- ✓ **About Operation Brahma:**
- ✓ It is India's humanitarian mission launched in response to the devastating 7.7-magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar on March 28, 2025.
- ✓ The massive earthquake that devastated Myanmar and neighbouring Thailand killed over 1,600 people and caused widespread destruction.
- ✓ Two Indian naval ships, INS Satpura and INS Savitri, were dispatched carrying 40 tonnes of humanitarian aid to the port of Yangon.

Q. Which of the following statements correctly describes a semi-cryogenic rocket engine?

- A) It uses both fuel and oxidizer in a cryogenic state.
- B) It uses Liquid Oxygen (LOX) as an oxidizer and refined kerosene (RP-1) as fuel.
- C) It operates only at extremely low temperatures for both propellants.
- D) It is not used in space exploration due to its low efficiency

Answer : B

- ✓ ISRO has achieved a breakthrough in developing a semi-cryogenic engine (liquid oxygen/kerosene engine) with a high thrust of 2,000 kN (kilonewtons).
- ✓ The first successful hot test of the Engine Power Head Test Article (PHTA) was conducted at the ISRO Propulsion Complex, Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ This engine will be used in the semi-cryogenic booster stage of the Launch Vehicle Mark-3 (LVM3), enhancing India's space launch capabilities.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding CARTOSAT-3:

1. It is a third-generation agile advanced Earth observation satellite developed by ISRO.
2. It replaces the IRS (Indian Remote Sensing) series and has high-resolution imaging capabilities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ ISRO's CARTOSAT-3 Images Reveal Earthquake Damage in Myanmar.
- ✓ **Why in the News?**

- ✓ ISRO's Earth observation satellite, CARTOSAT-3, captured high-resolution images of the destruction caused by the 7.7-magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar on March 28, 2025.
- ✓ The post-disaster imagery (March 29) was compared with pre-event data (March 18) to assess the damage in Mandalay and Sagaing.
- ✓ **About CARTOSAT-3**
- ✓ CARTOSAT-3 is a third-generation agile advanced Earth observation satellite developed by ISRO.
- ✓ It replaces the IRS (Indian Remote Sensing) series and has high-resolution imaging capabilities.
- ✓ Launched aboard the Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV-C47).



BEST MCQ WITH FACTS

MARCH 2025

Q. Kirsty Coventry of Zimbabwe has been elected as the 10th President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). She is associated with which sports?

- A) Boxing
- B) Tennis
- C) Badminton
- D) Swimming

Answer : D

- ✓ Kirsty Coventry of Zimbabwe has been elected as the 10th President of the International Olympic Committee (IOC).
- ✓ She will succeed Thomas Bach on 23rd June 2025 which is also the Olympic Day.
- ✓ Kirsty Coventry is the first woman and African to be elected as the President of the IOC.
- ✓ Election to elect a new President of the IOC was held during the 144th IOC Session held in Costa Navarino, Greece, on 20 March 2025.
- ✓ The term of the IOC President is eight years. The President is eligible for re-election once for a period of four years.
- ✓ Thus Kirsty Coventry will be in office till 2033.
- ✓ About Kirsty Coventry
- ✓ Kirsty Coventry is a former swimmer who represented Zimbabwe in international sporting events.
- ✓ A five time Olympian, Kirsty won seven medals - two gold, four silver, one bronze.
- ✓ She won gold at the 2004 Athens and 2008 Beijing Olympics.
- ✓ She has won golds in the Commonwealth and African Games.

Q. Where is the headquarters of the International Olympic Committee?

- A) London, United Kingdom
- B) Paris, France
- C) Geneva, Switzerland
- D) Lausanne, Switzerland

Answer : D

- ✓ About IOC
- ✓ The International Olympic Committee was founded in 1894 in Paris, France. Pierre de Coubertin of France is considered to be the father of the modern Olympics.
- ✓ The IOC organises the Summer and Winter Olympics.
- ✓ The headquarters of the IOC was later moved from Paris to Lausanne, Switzerland
- ✓ Currently Nita Ambani of India is an IOC Member.
- ✓ 10th President : Kirsty Coventry (Zimbabwe)

Q. Who has been elected as the first female president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC)?

- A) Katie Ledecky
- B) Kirsty Coventry
- C) Claire Curzan
- D) Kaylee McKeown

Answer : B

- ✓ Zimbabwean Kirsty Coventry became the first woman and African to be elected president of the International Olympic Committee.
- ✓ Kirsty Coventry is a former swimmer who represented Zimbabwe in international sporting events

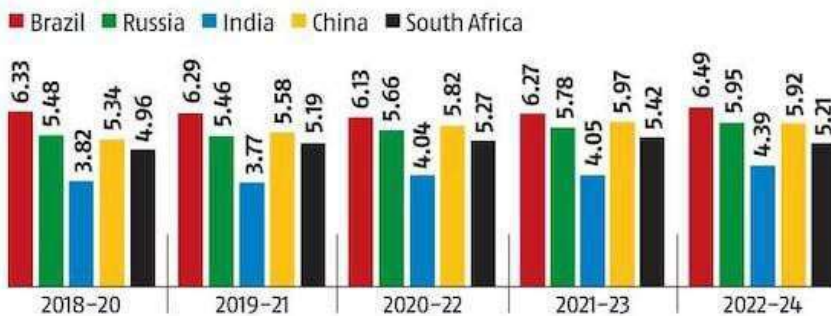
Q.

- A) 126th
B) 120th
C) 118th
D) 115th

Answer : C

- ✓ India is ranked 118th out of 147 countries in the World Happiness Report 2025, showing slight improvement from the 126th position in 2023.
- ✓ The World Happiness Report 2025.
- ✓ India ranked 118th out of 147 countries, while Finland topped the list for the eighth consecutive year
- ✓ Published by the Wellbeing Research Centre, University of Oxford.
- ✓ Released in collaboration with Gallup, UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network, and an independent editorial board.
- ✓ The report uses six key indicators:
 - ✓ GDP per capita – economic strength of a country.
 - ✓ Healthy life expectancy – average life span in good health.
 - ✓ Social support – availability of help from family or friends.
 - ✓ Freedom – perceived freedom to make life choices.
 - ✓ Generosity – willingness of people to help others.
 - ✓ Perception of corruption – trust in public institutions.
- ✓ Key Summary of Report:
 - ✓ New entries into the top 10 include Costa Rica (6th) and Mexico (10th).
 - ✓ The United States and United Kingdom dropped to 24th and 23rd positions respectively due to rising loneliness and discontent.
 - ✓ Global Ranking – Top 5 Nations: Finland (Topper – 1st), Denmark (2nd) , Iceland (3rd), Sweden (4th) and Netherlands (5th).
 - ✓ Bottom 3 Nations: Afghanistan (147th), Sierra Leone, and Lebanon.
- ✓ India's Ranking and Statistics:
 - ✓ India ranked 118th out of 147 countries.
 - ✓ Score improved from 4.054 (2021-23) to 4.389 (2022-24).
 - ✓ Ranked below Pakistan (109) and Nepal (92).

REPORT CARD



HOW THE NEIGHBOURS FARED



Note: Scores have been calculated on a three-year average.

Source: World Happiness Report 2025

- ✓ Tata Communications launched Vayu, an AI-powered cloud solution designed to provide cost-effective, flexible, and intelligent enterprise cloud services.
- ✓ Vayu integrates Infrastructure-as-a-Service (IaaS), Platform-as-a-Service (PaaS), AI capabilities, security, cloud connectivity, and professional services into a single unified ecosystem.

Q. Which sport has been re-included for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics after unanimous approval by the International Olympic Committee?

- A) Tennis
B) Badminton
C) Boxing
D) Wrestling

Answer : C

- ✓ Boxing receives official IOC nod for Los Angeles 2028 Olympic Games
- ✓ Boxing has been reinstated for the 2028 Los Angeles Olympics after unanimous approval by the International Olympic Committee.

Q. Who has been chosen for the 2024 Maharashtra Bhushan Award by the Maharashtra government?

- A) Anish Kapoor
B) Ram Sutar
C) Subodh Gupta
D) Ravinder Reddy

Answer : B

- ✓ Veteran Sculptor Ram Sutar has been chosen for the highest civilian award of the Maharashtra government 'Maharashtra Bhushan' 2024 .
- ✓ Accomplishment of Ram Sutar
- ✓ He designed the world's tallest statue 'The Statue of Unity' in Kevadia Gujarat.
- ✓ Awards and Honours for Ram Sutar
- ✓ Ram Sutar was honoured with India's third highest civilian award Padma Bhushan in 2018.
- ✓ He was honoured with the country's fourth highest civilian award Padma Shri in 1999.
- ✓ He also received the 2016 Tagore Award for cultural harmony in 2016.
- ✓ About the Maharashtra Bhushan Award
- ✓ The Maharashtra Bhushan Award was instituted by the Maharashtra government in 1995.
- ✓ It is the highest civilian award in Maharashtra and is given to a resident of Maharashtra.
- ✓ The winners of the award are selected by a committee headed by the Chief Minister.
- ✓ The award winner is honoured with a memento and a cash prize of Rs 25 lakhs

Q. Who has won the men's singles title of the 2025 All England Open Badminton Championship?

- A) Shi Yu Qi
B) Lee Chia-Hao
C) Viktor Axelsen
D) Anders Antonsen

Answer : A

- ✓ Shi Yu Qi of China and An Se-young of South Korea respectively won the men's and women's singles titles at the All England Open Championships 2025 in Birmingham, England.
- ✓ Second All-England title for Shi Yu Qi and An Se-young.
- ✓ World no.1 player Shi Yu Qi of China won his second All England Badminton Championship title by defeating Chinese Taipei's (Taiwan) Lee Chia-Hao in the final 21-17, 21-19.
- ✓ Shi Yu Qi won the singles title earlier in 2018.

Q. An Se-young who won the women's singles title of the 2025 All England Open Badminton Championship belongs to which country?

- A) China
B) Thailand
C) Singapore
D) South Korea

Answer : D

- ✓ In the women's section, world no.1 An Se-young of South Korea defeated the Chinese Wang Zhiyi in a three-game final 13-21, 21-18, 21-18 to win her second All-England single's title.
- ✓ An Se-young won her first All England Open singles title in 2023.
- ✓ All England Open Badminton Championship 2025

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Samarth Incubation Programme, recently seen in the news:

1. It was launched by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT).
2. The primary objective is to help startups in areas like 5G, artificial intelligence (AI), and Internet of Things (IoT).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : B

- ✓ The Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DoT) recently launched the 'Samarth' incubation programme.
- ✓ About Samarth Incubation Programme:
- ✓ It was launched by the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DoT), an autonomous Telecom R&D centre of the Department of Telecommunication (DoT), Government of India.
- ✓ Objective: To support startups in the areas of telecom software, cybersecurity, 5G and 6G technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT) applications, and quantum technologies.
- ✓ The program aims to encourage the development of sustainable and scalable business models, offer access to cutting-edge resources, and help startups bridge the gap from ideation to commercialisation.
- ✓ C-DoT has selected Software Technology Parks of India (STPI) as the implementation partner.
- ✓ The program, which will be delivered in a hybrid mode, has a maximum cohort size of 18 startups per program, with a total of 36 startups across two cohorts of six months each.
- ✓ The applications, under 'Samarth' are open to Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) recognised startups.
- ✓ Selected startups will get a grant of up to Rs 5 lakh each, access to office space for six months at the C-DoT campus, access to C-DoT lab facilities, and mentorship from C-DoT technical leaders and industry experts

Q. How much cash prize has BCCI announced for the Indian winning team of ICC Champions Trophy 2025?

- A) ₹20 Crore B) ₹37 Crore
C) ₹45 Crore D) ₹58 Crore

Answer : D

- ✓ The Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) has announced a cash prize of ₹58 Crore for the Indian cricket team after winning the ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

- ✓ This reward is nearly three times the prize money received from the International Cricket Council (ICC), which was approximately ₹19.45 Crore.

Q. Which is the author of the book titled "Living with Birds"?

- A) Uzma Jalaluddin
- B) Hafsah Faizal
- C) Mohsin Hamid
- D) Asad Rahmani

Answer : D

- ✓ 'Living with Birds': Asad Rahmani's memoir captures birding legacy.
- ✓ Living with Birds, his autobiography, reveals a lot, not only about Indian birds and their conservation during the last half-century but also about a bygone era of field ornithology

Q. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah has been elected as the first woman President of which country?

- A) Nigeria
- B) Namibia
- C) Ethiopia
- D) Egypt

Answer : B

- ✓ Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah elected 5th & first female President of Namibia.
- ✓ Namibia made history when it elected its first woman president, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah.
- ✓ The President is directly elected by the people, and the term of the President is five years.
- ✓ About Namibia
- ✓ Capital: Windhoek
- ✓ Currency: Namibian Dollar

Q. Vinod Kumar Shukla is the recipient of the 59th Jnanpith Award 2024. Which of the following books has not been written by him?

- A) Naukar ki Kameez
- B) Deewar mein ek Khidki Rehti Thi
- C) Khilega to Dekhenge
- D) Vishw Mithok Sarit Sagar

Answer : D

- ✓ Eminent Hindi poet and writer Vinod Kumar Shukla of Chhattisgarh has been selected for the prestigious 59th Jnanpith Award 2024.
- ✓ Vinod Kumar Shukla is the first from Chhattisgarh and the 12th eminent Hindi writer to receive the prestigious award.
- ✓ About Vinod Kumar Shukla and His Work
- ✓ His first poetry collection 'Lagbhag Jai Hind' was published in 1971. He has also written novels- 'Naukar ki Kameez', "Deewar mein ek Khidki Rehti Thi" and "Khilega to Dekhenge".
- ✓ His novel Naukar ki Kameez was made into a film by noted filmmaker Mani Kaul in 1999.

Q. What does the Jnanpith Award prize consist of?

- A) Cash prize of ₹12 lakh, a citation and a bronze replica of Goddess Saraswati.
- B) Cash prize of ₹21 lakh, a citation and a bronze replica of Goddess Saraswati.
- C) Cash prize of ₹15 lakh, a citation and a bronze replica of Goddess Saraswati.
- D) Cash prize of ₹11 lakh, a citation and a bronze replica of Goddess Saraswati.

Answer : D

- ✓ Jnanpith Award prize consist of Cash prize of ₹11 lakh, a citation and a bronze replica of Goddess Saraswati.

- ✓ About the Jnanpith Award
- ✓ The Jnanpith Award is given by the Bharatiya Jnanpith Trust.
- ✓ The Award carries a cash prize of Rs 11 lakhs, a citation, and a statue of Vagdevi(Goddess Saraswati).
- ✓ The award is given to an Indian Citizen only.
- ✓ Since the 18th award, The award is given for a lifetime of work of an author.
- ✓ The award is given for work in the Indian language and English.
- ✓ Once a language gets the awards it is not eligible for the award for the next two years.
- ✓ The first Janapith winner was eminent Malayalam writer G S Kurup in 1965.
- ✓ The first woman to get the Jnanpith Award- Ashapura Devi (Bangla) in 1976.

Q. What is the name of the recently launched government of India's initiative to promote Indian Biotech startups?

- A) BioSaarthi
B) Darwinbox
C) Mindtickle
D) AppiVa Software

Answer : A

- ✓ The government of India has launched the BioSaarthi initiative to support Indian Biotech startups to expand their domestic and global reach and business.
- ✓ The BioSaarthi initiative was unveiled by the Union Minister for State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh in a function organised in New Delhi on 21 March 2025.
- ✓ The function was organised to celebrate the 13th Foundation Day of the Biotechnology Industry Research Assistance Council (BIRAC).

Q. Who won the Stockholm Water Prize 2025?

- A) Jacob Bear B) Paul Witherspoon
C) Gunter Blochl D) Yuan Daoxian

Answer : C

- ✓ Gunter Blossl, a renowned hydrologist, won the 2025 Stockholm Water Prize for his research on flood risks and climate change impacts.
- ✓ The Stockholm Water Prize is a prestigious global award recognizing achievements in water science, management, and protection.
- ✓ It is presented by the Stockholm Water Foundation in collaboration with the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences.
- ✓ Established in 1991 during the Stockholm Water Festival, it highlights Sweden's commitment to clean water.

Q. Who is the author of the book titled "AI Valley: Microsoft, Google, and the Trillion-Dollar Race to Cash In on Artificial Intelligence"?

- A) Gary Rivlin
B) Leo Tolstoy
C) Jane Austen
D) Elsa Morante

Answer : A

- ✓ AI Valley: Microsoft, Google, and the Trillion-Dollar Race to Cash In on Artificial Intelligence : by Gary Rivlin

Q. How many days did Sunita Williams spend in space in 2025?

- A) 278 days B) 286 days
C) 267 days D) 291 days

Answer : B

- ✓ NASA astronaut Sunita Williams returned to Earth on March 19 after spending 286 days (nine months) in space.
- ✓ Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore traveled 121,347,491 miles during their mission, spent 286 days in space, and completed 4,576 orbits around Earth.
- ✓ Sunita Williams logged the second-most time in space by a US astronaut.
- ✓ Although Wilmore and Williams' 286-day stay exceeds the typical six-month ISS rotation, it ranks only sixth among US records for single-mission duration.
- ✓ NASA astronaut Sunita Williams now holds the record for total spacewalking time by a woman astronaut, with 62 hours and 6 minutes outside of station, and is fourth on the all-time spacewalk duration list.
- ✓ The Crew-9 mission was the fourth flight of the Dragon spacecraft named Freedom. It also previously supported NASA's SpaceX Crew-4, Axiom Mission 2, and Axiom Mission 3.
- ✓ Peggy Whitson holds the record for the most cumulative spacewalking time by a woman, having logged 60 hours and 21 minutes during her 10 spacewalks, a record surpassed by Sunita Williams in 2025.
- ✓ Peggy Whitson previously held the record for the most cumulative spacewalking time by a woman, with a total of 60 hours and 21 minutes.
- ✓ In 2025, Sunita Williams broke Whitson's record, logging 62 hours and 6 minutes of spacewalking time.
- ✓ Sunita Williams currently holds the record for the most cumulative spacewalking time by a woman, with 62 hours and 6 minutes.

Q. World Tuberculosis Day is observed annually on which date?

- A) March 24 B) April 7
C) December 1 D) May 31

Answer : A

- ✓ March 24 is observed as World Tuberculosis (TB) Day to raise awareness about TB and efforts to eliminate it.
- ✓ Why in the News?
- ✓ The 2025 theme is "Yes, We Can End TB: Commit, Invest, and Deliver."
- ✓ The President of India commended the National TB Elimination Programme (NTEP) for its public awareness initiatives and significant reduction in TB cases over the past decade.
- ✓ India aims to eliminate TB by 2025, ahead of the global target of 2030 set by the WHO End TB Strategy.
- ✓ Key Highlights of TB in India
- ✓ Declining TB Incidence: Tuberculosis incidence in India has dropped to below 200 per lakh (2022) from 237 per lakh (2015), marking a 16% decline.
- ✓ Reduction in TB Mortality: TB-related deaths have decreased by 18% since 2015, now at 23 per lakh population.

Q. Which company has launched the second indigenous frigate 'Tavasya'?

- A) Hindustan Shipyard Limited B) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders
C) Goa Shipyard Limited D) Cochin Shipyard Limited

Answer : C

- ✓ 'Tavasya', the last of the four Krivak-class stealth frigates, was launched at Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL) on March 22, 2025.
- ✓ The second frigate of Project 1135.6, 'Tavasya,' built by Goa Shipyard Limited, was launched on March 22, 2025.

- ✓ The launch highlights India's commitment to Aatmanirbharta and advances in indigenous defence production.
- ✓ About Tavyasa:
- ✓ What it is: A Krivak-class stealth frigate designed for multi-dimensional naval combat.
- ✓ Project under: Built under Project 1135.6 Additional Follow-on Ships.
- ✓ Built by: Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL), with technology transfer from Russia.
- ✓ Aim: To strengthen India's maritime security and promote self-reliance in shipbuilding.
- ✓ Key Features:
- ✓ Length: 8 meters; Width: 15.2 meters; Displacement: 3600 tons.
- ✓ Speed: Up to 28 knots.
- ✓ Advanced sensors, sonar, and BrahMos missile system.
- ✓ Indigenous torpedo launchers and auxiliary control systems.
- ✓ Capable of surface, sub-surface, and air combat operations.
- ✓ Named after Bhima's mace, symbolizing strength and resilience.
- ✓ About Project 1135.6:
- ✓ What it is: A bilateral India-Russia naval project for stealth frigate construction with technology transfer.
- ✓ Aim: To enhance the Indian Navy's combat fleet with advanced stealth warships.
- ✓ Ships Built Under Project 1135.6:
- ✓ Two frigates built in Russia: INS Tushil (commissioned Dec 2024), Tamal (commissioning June 2025).
- ✓ Two frigates being built in India: Tripur (launched July 2024), Tavyasa (launched March 2025).

Q. Where will the annual FATF Private Sector Collaborative Forum 2025 Meeting take place ?

A) Mumbai	B) Chennai
C) Hyderabad	D) Bengaluru

Answer : A

- ✓ Mumbai, financial capital of India will host the 2025 Private Sector Collaborative Forum (PSCF) meeting of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) from 25-27th March 2025.
- ✓ The Private Sector Collaborative Forum of the FATF is an annual meeting which seeks to foster collaboration between the FATF and the civil society & private sector to fight against money laundering & terrorist financing other financial crimes.
- ✓ The 2024 FATF Private Sector Collaborative Forum Meeting was held in Vienna, Austria in April 2024 and was hosted by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
- ✓ Host of the 2025 PSCF Meeting
- ✓ The 2025 PSCF is being organised by the apex global anti money laundering organisation FATF.
- ✓ It is being hosted by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in collaboration with the Department of Revenue, Union Ministry of Finance.
- ✓ The 2025 PSCF will be officially inaugurated by the FATF President Ms. Elisa de Anda Madrazo on 26th March 2025.
- ✓ The event will be presided by the RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra. During the PSCF meeting the Indian delegation will be led by Vivek Aggarwal, Additional Secretary (Revenue), Union Ministry of Finance.

Q. Where is the headquarters of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) located?

A) Geneva, Switzerland	B) Paris, France
C) Madrid, Spain	D) Berlin, Germany

Answer : B

- ✓ About Financial Action Task Force (FATF)
- ✓ The Financial Action Task Force was set up by the Group of Seven (G-7) countries at its 1989 Summit meeting held in Paris, France.

- ✓ It will be co-hosted by the Indian Navy with the Tanzania Peoples' Defence Force.
- ✓ Participants of the Aikeyme Maritime exercise
- ✓ The Aikeyme Maritime exercise co-hosted by India and Tanzania will also see the participation of South Africa, Kenya, Eritrea, Comoros, Djibouti, Madagascar, Mauritius, Seychelles, and Mozambique.
- ✓ Under the Indian Ocean (IOC) Ship initiative, an Indian Naval Ship INS Sunayna will be deployed in the Southwestern Indian Ocean region.

Q. From which state in India was the first consignment of GI-Tagged Dalle Chilly exported to the Solomon Islands?

A) Sikkim	B) Assam
C) Nagaland	D) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer : A

- ✓ The successful export of 15,000 kg of GI-Tagged Dalle Chilly from Sikkim to the Solomon Islands highlights the unique identity and quality of this chilli, which is tied to its geographical origin.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Vertically-Launched Short-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (VLSRSAM), recently seen in the news:

1. It was indigenously developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
2. It has a range of around 200km.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only	B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2	D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ India successfully flight tested the vertically launched short range surface to air missile (VL-SRSAM) from a defence test facility off the Odisha coast recently.
- ✓ About Vertically-Launched Short-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (VLSRSAM):
- ✓ It is an indigenously developed Short-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (SRSAM).
- ✓ It is developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- ✓ It is a quick reaction missile capable of neutralising various aerial threats at close ranges, including sea-skimming targets.
- ✓ Initially designed for the Indian Navy for a strike range of 40 km, it can now attack targets up to 80 km.
- ✓ The missile is now being developed for use by the Indian Air Force to protect its air bases.
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ Having a diameter of 178 mm and a wingspan of 508 mm, the missile is 3.93 metres long.
- ✓ It weighs around 170 kg and uses solid propellant.
- ✓ With a maximum speed of Mach 4.5, the weapon system can reach an altitude of 16 km.

Q. GSAT-18 is primarily used for:

A) earth observation	B) navigation services
C) communication services	D) weather forecasting

Answer : C

- ✓ GSAT-18 Satellite and Economic Concerns Raised by PAC.
- ✓ Why in the News?

- ✓ The Public Accounts Committee (PAC) has raised concerns over the economic viability of GSAT-18 due to the underutilisation of six transponders until 2027.
- ✓ The committee has recommended that the Department of Space should exercise greater financial prudence in planning satellite projects involving public funds.
- ✓ The report highlighted a revenue loss of ₹117 crore due to the idle transponders.
- ✓ About GSAT-18
- ✓ GSAT-18 is a communication satellite launched by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on October 5, 2016.
- ✓ Launch Vehicle: Heavy-duty Ariane-5 VA-231 rocket from Kourou, French Guiana.
- ✓ Weight: 3,404 kg at liftoff.
- ✓ Mission Life: 15 years (until 2032).
- ✓ Orbit: Injected into Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO).
- ✓ Satellite Control: Managed by ISRO's Master Control Facility (MCF) in Hassan, Karnataka.
- ✓ Key Features of GSAT-18
- ✓ Transponders: 48 communication transponders across Upper Extended C-band, Normal C-band, and Ku-band
- ✓ Services: Provides television, telecommunication, VSAT, and digital satellite news gathering
- ✓ Fleet enhancement: It strengthens ISRO's operational fleet of 14 telecommunication satellites
- ✓ Backup role: It ensures continuity of communication services by replacing ageing satellites

Q. Which of the following is a key upgrade in the Tejas Mk1A fighter jet?

- A) Passive Electronically Scanned Array (PESA) radar
- B) Russian-built avionics system
- C) Conventional hydraulic flight controls
- D) Advanced Self-Protection Jammer Pod

Answer : D

- ✓ GE Aerospace has begun delivering F404-IN20 jet engines to Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) for the Tejas LCA Mk1A fighter jets after a delay.
- ✓ The first engine was shipped from GE's facility on March 26, 2025, and is expected to arrive in India in April.
- ✓ HAL aims to deliver 12 Tejas Mk1A jets in 2025, with production ramping up to 24 jets per year.
- ✓ The Indian Air Force (IAF) currently operates 31 fighter squadrons, far below the sanctioned 42.5 squadrons, highlighting the urgency of these deliveries.
- ✓ About Tejas LCA Mk1A
- ✓ Tejas LCA Mk1A is an upgraded variant of India's indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, developed by HAL.
- ✓ It features over 40 improvements over the Mk1 variant, enhancing its combat capabilities, survivability, and operational efficiency.
- ✓ Key Upgrades in Tejas Mk1A
- ✓ Advanced Avionics: Equipped with Active Electronically Scanned Array (AESA) radars:

Q. The Nag Anti-Tank Missile System (NAMIS) has been developed by:

- A) DRDO
- B) HAL
- C) ISRO
- D) BEL

Answer : A

- ✓ Defence Ministry Signs ₹2,500 Crore Contracts for NAMIS and Light Vehicles.
- ✓ About Nag Anti-Tank Missile System (NAMIS)
- ✓ Developed By:

- ✓ Defence Research and Development Laboratory (DRDL), DRDO
- ✓ Production by Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL)
- ✓ Key Features:
- ✓ NAMIS is a tracked version of the Nag Anti-Tank Guided Missile (ATGM) mounted on a BMP-2 chassis.
- ✓ Third-generation 'fire-and-forget' missile that locks onto targets using an Imaging Infrared (IIR) Seeker before launch.
- ✓ Designed to destroy heavily armored enemy tanks, including those equipped with composite and reactive armor.
- ✓ Range: 500 meters to 4 km.
- ✓ Other Versions of Nag ATGM:
- ✓ Helina (Helicopter-Launched Version):
- ✓ Successfully tested in 2018.
- ✓ Developed for Rudra and Light Combat Helicopters (LCHs).

Q. As of March 2024, which country became the latest member to join NATO?

- A) Finland
- B) Sweden
- C) Ukraine
- D) Georgia

Answer : B

- ✓ NATO Clarifies Statement on Missing U.S. Soldiers in Lithuania.
- ✓ NATO clarified its earlier statement regarding the status of four missing U.S. soldiers in Lithuania, emphasising that "the search is ongoing."
- ✓ Initial confusion arose when NATO Secretary-General Mark Rutte suggested that the soldiers had died. Still, later, NATO stated that Rutte was referring to unverified news reports rather than confirming their fate.
- ✓ The soldiers were part of the U.S. Army's 1st Brigade, 3rd Infantry Division, conducting training exercises near Pabradė, Lithuania, close to the Belarus border.
- ✓ North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO)
- ✓ Formation : 4 April 1949
- ✓ Headquarters : Brussels, Belgium
- ✓ Secretary General : Mark Rutte (Netherlands)
- ✓ Total Member : 32 (Sweden)
- ✓ Established by the Washington treaty.

Q. On which day is the Universal Acceptance Day observed worldwide?

- A) 26 March
- B) 27 March
- C) 28 March
- D) 30 March

Answer : C

- ✓ Every year since 2023, 28th March is annually observed worldwide as Universal Acceptance Day.
- ✓ The day is observed to promote a multilingual and inclusive internet where all valid domain names and email addresses work seamlessly.
- ✓ The first Universal Acceptance Day was observed on 28 March 2023, and since then, it has been celebrated every year.
- ✓ The theme of the 2025 Universal Acceptance Day is Connecting the Unconnected - Building a Multilingual Internet for Viksit Bharat.

Q. Which Indian origin American has been confirmed as the Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) of the United States?

- A) Harmeet Dhillon
B) Kash Patel
C) Sriram Krishnan
D) Jay Bhattacharya

Answer : D

- ✓ Dr Jay Bhattacharya confirmed as Director of NIS of the United States.
- ✓ United States of America's Senate has confirmed the appointment of Indian-origin American scientist Dr Jay Bhattacharya as the new Director of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).
- ✓ Dr Jay Bhattacharya was nominated by Donald Trump as the 18th NIH Director after being elected as the 47th President of the US in November 2024
- ✓ The 100-member Senate is the upper house of the Federal legislature known as the Congress.
- ✓ The 435-member House of Representatives is the lower house of Congress.
- ✓ The Republican Party, of which Donald Trump is a member, has a majority in both the Senate and the House of Representatives.

Q. Which Indian origin American has been appointed as the Senior White House Policy Advisor on Artificial Intelligence by American President Donald Trump?

- A) Vivek Ramaswamy B) Sriram Krishnan
C) Kash Patel D) Harmeet Dhillon

Answer : B

- ✓ Indian origin American in the 2nd Donald Trump Administration .
- ✓ Vivek Ramaswamy- He along with Elon Musk leads the newly established Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE). He was born in the United States and his parents migrated from Palakkad in Kerala.
- ✓ Sriram Krishnan- Senior White House Policy Advisor on Artificial Intelligence (AI). He was born in Chennai and is an Indian-American entrepreneur and venture capitalist.
- ✓ Kash Patel- Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation. He took his oath on the Bhagavad Gita.
- ✓ He was born in the United States, and his Gujarati parents migrated from East Africa to the United States.
- ✓ Harmeet Dhillon- Assistant Attorney General for Civil Rights. She was born in Chandigarh and migrated to the United States with her surgeon father.
- ✓ Jay Bhattacharya- Director of the National Institutes of Health. He was born in Kolkata, West Bengal and migrated to the United States.

Q. The Gene Bank initiative, aimed at conserving 10 lakh crop germplasm for future food and nutritional security, is part of which theme of the Union Budget 2025-26?

- A) Green Growth B) Agricultural Resilience
C) Sustainable Development D) Investing in Innovations

Answer : D

- ✓ The Government of India has announced the establishment of the Second National Gene Bank to conserve 10 lakh crop germplasm for ensuring future food and nutritional security.
- ✓ This initiative is part of the “Investing in Innovations” theme of the Union Budget 2025-26.

Q. What is the new rate of dearness allowance and dearness relief effective from January 1, 2025?

- A) 53% B) 54%
- C) 55% D) 56%

Answer : C

- ✓ The Union Cabinet on 28 March 2025 approved a 2% increase in dearness allowance (DA) for central government employees and dearness relief (DR) for pensioners, effective from January 1, 2025, raising it from 53% to 55% of basic pay or pension.

Q. KHANJAR Exercise, recently seen in the news, is bilateral exercise between India and:

- A) Kazakhstan
- B) Kyrgyzstan
- C) Iran
- D) Russia

Answer : B

- ✓ The 12th edition of the India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise Khanjar-XII is set to take place in Kyrgyzstan.
- ✓ About KHANJAR-XII:
- ✓ It is the 12th edition of the annual India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise.
- ✓ It was first initiated in December 2011, in Nahan, India.
- ✓ It is an annual event conducted alternatively in both countries.

Q. With reference to the recently published Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI) report on Global Arms Trade during the period between 2020 and 2024, consider the following statements:

1. India is the largest importer of major arms in the world.
2. The largest share of Indian arms imports came from Russia.
3. The United States is the largest arms exporter in the world.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
- B) 2 and 3 only
- C) 1 and 3 only
- D) 1, 2 and 3

Answer : B

- ✓ India was the second-largest arms importer during the period between 2020 and 2024, though the trade figures decreased by 9.3% between 2015-19 and 2020-24, show the recent data from the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).
- ✓ About Global Arms Trade:
- ✓ Ukraine became the largest importer of major arms in the world during the period between 2020 and 2024, clocking a nearly 100-fold rise in imports compared with the figures for 2015–2019.
- ✓ Ukraine received 8.8% of global arms imports in 2020-24.
- ✓ Four countries in Asia and Oceania—India, Pakistan, Japan, and Australia— ranked among the 10 largest arms importers globally in 2020-24.
- ✓ India was the second-largest arms importer, though the trade figures decreased by 9.3% between 2015-19 and 2020-24.
- ✓ The largest share of Indian arms imports (36%) came from Russia, a significantly smaller share than in 2015-19 (55%) and 2010-14 (72%).
- ✓ India was the biggest arms export destination for both Russia and France.
- ✓ The U.S. further increased its share of global arms exports to 43%, while Russia's exports fell by 64%, accounting for 7.8% of global arms exports, falling behind France (9.6%), which emerged as the second largest arms exporter in 2020-24.
- ✓ India received by far the largest share of French arms exports (28%)—almost twice the share that went to all European recipients combined (15%).

- Q.** Which one of the following defines La Nina?
- A) The cooling of surface-ocean waters along the tropical west coast of South America.
 - B) Increased global temperatures due to excessive greenhouse gas emissions.
 - C) The weakened monsoon activity and prolonged droughts across all tropical regions.
 - D) A stratospheric cooling event that leads to increased frequency of hurricanes in the Atlantic Ocean

Answer : A

- ✓ Climate change is intensifying, and the cooling effects of La Niña may weaken in a warmer future, climate scientists warn, citing current heat trends across much of the country.
- ✓ About La Nina:
- ✓ La Niña is a climate pattern that describes the cooling of surface-ocean waters along the tropical west coast of South America.
- ✓ It is considered to be the counterpart to El Niño, which is characterized by unusually warm ocean temperatures in the equatorial region of the Pacific Ocean.
- ✓ Together, La Niña and El Niño are the "cold" (La Niña) and "warm" (El Niño) phases of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO). ENSO is series of linked weather- and ocean-related phenomena.
- ✓ La Niña is caused by a build-up of cooler-than-normal waters in the tropical Pacific, the area of the Pacific Ocean between the Tropic of Cancer and the Tropic of Capricorn.

- Q.** Where is the world's largest iceberg, Colossal A23a, currently stuck?

- A) Georgia Island
- B) Antarctica
- C) Iceland
- D) Greenland

Answer : A

- ✓ The largest iceberg is currently stuck about 70 km from Georgia Island. It broke off from the Filchner Ice Shelf in Antarctica and has been drifting towards the island.
- ✓ The iceberg's presence near the island could have ecological implications, as its melting and grounding may release nutrients that could support marine life in the surrounding waters.
- ✓ Georgia Island is a British overseas territory, with territorial claims from Argentina as well

- Q.** Which Indian Navy ship arrived at Port Louis, Mauritius, for the first time on 10 March 2025?

- A) INS Vikrant
- B) INS Kolkata
- C) INS Imphal
- D) INS Arihant

Answer : C

- ✓ Indian Navy's warship INS Imphal arrived at Port Louis, Mauritius, on 10 March 2025 for the first time.
- ✓ The ship will participate in the 57th Mauritius National Day celebrations on 12 March 2025, where PM Modi will be the chief guest.

- Q.** In which category was Dr Jayshree Vencatesan, co-founder of the Care Earth Trust, included in the 2025 'Women changemakers in the world of wetlands' released by the Ramsar Secretariat?

- A) Wetland protection
- B) Fostering international collaboration for wetlands
- C) Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future
- D) Wise use of Wetlands

Answer : D

- ✓ Jayshree Vencatesan wins Ramsar award for 'Wetland Wise Use'.
- ✓ Dr Jayshree Vencatesan has become the first Indian to win the annual prestigious Ramsar Award in the 'Wetland Wise Use' category. Dr Jayshree Vencatesan was one of the 12 women included by the Ramsar Secretariat in its second edition of Women Changemakers in the World of Wetlands.
- ✓ The Ramsar secretariat based in Gland, Switzerland announced the names of the '2025 Women changemakers in the world of wetlands' on the eve of the International Women's Day on 7th March 2025.
- ✓ The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands is the international treaty that protects the wetlands of the world.
- ✓ Its secretariat is located at the headquarters of the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature) in Gland, Switzerland.
- ✓ Categories of Award
- ✓ The Women are recognised in three categories:
 - ✓ Fostering international collaboration for wetlands ,
 - ✓ Wise use of wetlands, and
 - ✓ Wetland protection
- ✓ Jayshree Vencatesan was honoured in the " wise use of wetlands' category.
- ✓ About Dr. Jayshree Vencatesan
- ✓ Dr. Jayshree Vencatesan is the co-founder of the Care Earth Trust, established in 2000 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Q. In which state lies the Byrnihat, which has been declared the most polluted city in the world by the 7th World Air Quality Report 2024?

- A) Meghalaya
- B) Assam
- C) Uttar Pradesh
- D) Bihar

Answer : A

- ✓ Status of Air Pollution in India
- ✓ India was the 5th most polluted country in the world after Chad, Bangladesh, Pakistan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.
- ✓ The average annual PM2.5 in India was 50.6 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$. It is more than 10 times higher than the WHO guideline.
- ✓ There was a decline of 7% in the PM2.5 level as compared to last year (54.4 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$).
- ✓ New Delhi is the most polluted capital city in the world, with an average PM2.5 concentration of 91.8 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.
- ✓ Byrnihat in Meghalaya is the most polluted city in the world.
- ✓ Out of 20 most polluted cities in the world, 13 cities are in India.
- ✓ Highlights of the 2024 Report
- ✓ The report ranks 138 countries.
- ✓ Only seven countries -Australia, the Bahamas, Barbados, Estonia, Grenada, Iceland, and New Zealand - met the WHO annual average PM2.5 guideline of 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.
- ✓ 17% of cities around the world meet WHO air pollution guidelines..
- ✓ Chad was the most polluted country in the world, with an average annual PM2.5 concentration of 91.8 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$.
- ✓ Bangladesh was the second most polluted (78.0 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$) followed by Pakistan (73.7 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$), the Democratic Republic of Congo (58.2 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$), and India (50.6 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$).
- ✓ Out of 138 countries monitored in the report, 126 countries failed to meet the WHO criteria.
- ✓ Mayaguez, Puerto Rico, with an annual average PM2.5 concentration of 1.1 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$, was the cleanest metropolitan area in the world.
- ✓ Oceania, with 57% of regional cities meeting the WHO PM2.5 annual guideline value of 5 $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$ is the world's cleanest region.

Q. Which country has conferred its highest civilian award, “The Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean,” to Prime Minister Narendra Modi?

- A) Nigeria
B) Ethiopia
C) Mauritius
D) Maldives

Answer : C

- ✓ PM Modi Conferred with Mauritius Highest Civilian Award.
- ✓ The Mauritius government conferred its highest civilian award, “The Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean”, to the visiting Indian Prime Minister, Narendra Modi, on 12th March 2025.
- ✓ Prime Minister Modi is on a two-day visit to Mauritius on 11 & 12 March 2025.
- ✓ This is his second official visit to Mauritius after 2015.
- ✓ During his visit, eight Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) were signed between the two countries, and PM Modi was also the Chief Guest of the National Day celebration of Mauritius.

Q. Which airport won the prestigious ASQ Award for Best Airport in Asia-Pacific for the seventh consecutive year?

- A) Hong Kong International Airport
B) Singapore Changi Airport
C) Incheon International Airport
D) Delhi International Airport

Answer : D

- ✓ Delhi International Airport, operated by GMR Airports Infrastructure Limited, won the ASQ Airport Experience Award 2024 for the Best Airport Over 40 Million Passengers in the Asia-Pacific region.
- ✓ This marks the seventh consecutive year that the airport has received this prestigious recognition, reflecting its consistent commitment to excellence in customer service, operational efficiency, and passenger experience

Q. Consider the following:

1. The SpaDeX mission successfully demonstrated docking, and undocking operations, making India the fourth country to achieve this milestone.
2. The primary objective of the mission is to test high-speed interplanetary propulsion technology for deep-space exploration.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully completed the undocking of two satellites, part of the Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission, marking a significant milestone in India's space exploration journey.
- ✓ The SPADEX satellites were successfully docked recently. ISRO has now accomplished the pivotal operation of undocking of SPADEX satellites in the very first attempt on 13th March, 2025.
- ✓ The undocking of the satellites took place in 460 km circular orbit with 45-degree inclination.
- ✓ About SpaDeX Mission:
- ✓ SpaDeX mission is a cost-effective technology demonstrator mission for the demonstration of in-space docking using two small spacecraft launched by PSLV.

- ization launched the SPHEREx space telescope to map the universe's cosmic glow
- B) European Space Agency
- D) NASA
- ssfully launched its SPHEREx space telescope on March 11, 2025, from Van
- Base in California aboard a SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket.
- valued at \$488 million, aims to map the entire sky using infrared technology
- ion, the early universe, and interstellar ice.
- y National Park , one of the six heritage sites which has been added to India's U
- ge sites Tentative List, is located in which state?
- Pradesh
- B) Jharkhand
- rh
- D) Madhya Pradesh
- ently added six new properties to its UNESCO Tentative List, bringing the total
- in the country to 62.
- y National Park (Chhattisgarh)
- galithic Menhirs (Telangana)

A) SpaceX
B) European Space Agency
C) ISRO
D) NASA

Recently added six new properties to its UNESCO Tentative List, bringing the total number of properties in the country to 62.

- Chhattisgarh National Park (Chhattisgarh)
- Prehistoric Rock Art Sites along the Mauryan Routes (Multiple States)
- Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka (Multiple States)
- Rock Shelters of North India (Multiple States)
- Rock Shelters of the Bundelas (Madhya Pradesh & Uttar Pradesh)

India boasts 43 properties inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, including 35 cultural sites, seven natural sites, and one mixed site.

Following statements regarding Ashwini Radar, recently seen in the news, are correct/incorrect?

It is an electronically scanned phased array radar.

- ct Sites along the Mauryan Routes (Multiple States)
 gini Temples (Multiple States)
 es of North India (Multiple States)
 sses of the Bundelas (Madhya Pradesh & Uttar Pradesh)
 ndia boasts 43 properties inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, comp
 seven natural sites, and one mixed site.
- following statements regarding Ashwini Radar, recently seen in the news:
- ve electronically scanned phased array radar.
- lly indigenous radar jointly developed by the Defence Research and Dev
 (DRDO) and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).
- statements given above is/are correct?
- B) 2 only
- D) Neither 1 nor 2
- 1 2
- , [Telegram](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Youtube](#) ,  [WhatsApp Query](#)

A) Himachal Pradesh
B) Jharkhand
C) Chhattisgarh
D) Madhya Pradesh

Recently added six new properties to its UNESCO Tentative List, bringing the total number of properties in the country to 62.

- Chhattisgarh National Park (Chhattisgarh)
- Prehistoric Rock Art Sites along the Mauryan Routes (Multiple States)
- Rock Shelters of Bhimbetka (Multiple States)
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India boasts 43 properties inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, including 35 cultural sites, seven natural sites, and one mixed site.

Following statements regarding Ashwini Radar, recently seen in the news, are correct/incorrect?

It is an electronically scanned phased array radar.

- , [Telegram](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Youtube](#) ,  [WhatsApp Query](#)

1. It is an active electronically scanned phased array radar.
2. It is a fully indigenous radar jointly developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).

A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

[Telegram](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [Youtube](#) ,  [WhatsApp Que](#)

- ✓ Union Ministry of Defence (MoD) recently signed a ₹2,906 crore contract with Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), Ghaziabad for the procurement of Low-level Transportable Radar, LLTR (Ashwini).
- ✓ About Ashwini Radar:
- ✓ LLTR (Ashwini) is an active electronically scanned phased array radar based on state-of-the-art solid-state technology.
- ✓ It is capable of tracking aerial targets from high-speed fighter aircraft to slow-moving targets such as Unmanned Aerial Vehicles and helicopters.
- ✓ The fully indigenous Ashwini radars have been jointly developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and BEL.

Q. With reference to Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) ID, consider the following statements:

1. It is a unique and permanent 12-digit ID to every student, offering a comprehensive record of their academic achievements.
2. APAAR prioritizes data security and confidentiality, sharing information only with necessary government agencies if and when required.
3. Consent-based document sharing ensures that students have control over the information shared through APAAR.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1 and 3 only D) 1, 2 and 3

Answer : D

- ✓ Parents and activists worry that the Ministry of Education's Automated Permanent Academic Account Registry (APAAR) ID for school students could become near impossible to opt out from, even though the programme is supposed to be voluntary.
- ✓ About APAAR ID:
- ✓ It is a specialized identification system designed for all students in India.
- ✓ This initiative is part of the 'One Nation, One Student ID' program launched by the Union government, aligning with the new National Education Policy of 2020.
- ✓ The APAAR ID serves as a lifelong academic passport, consolidating all achievements and credentials of a student in one place.
- ✓ APAAR assigns a unique and permanent 12-digit ID to every student, offering a comprehensive record of their academic achievements, including degrees, scholarships, awards, and other credits.

Q. Who won the 2024 Hockey India's Balbir Singh Sr. Award for Player of the Year (Men) award?

- A) Mandeep Singh
B) Sukhjeet Singh
C) Harmanpreet Singh
D) Gurjant Singh

Answer : C

- ✓ Indian men's hockey team captain Harmanpreet Singh and veteran Indian women's hockey team goalkeeper Savita Punia won the 7th Hockey India's best male and female players awards, respectively.
- ✓ Top Awards for Harmanpreet
- ✓ India men's team captain Harmanpreet Singh won Hockey India's Balbir Singh Sr. Award for Player of the Year in the men's category..
- ✓ Harmanpreet Singh was also named the 2024 FIH Men's Player of the Year.

Q. Who won the 2024 Hockey India's Balbir Singh Sr. Award for Player of the Year (Women) award?

- A) Savita Punia
B) Nikki Pradhan
C) Lalremsiami
D) Salima Tete

Answer : A

- ✓ 7th Hockey India Awards and their winners
- ✓ Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award:
- ✓ Indian men's hockey team that won the 1975 World Cup. They defeated Pakistan in the final at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The team was led by Ajit Pal Singh.
- ✓ Prize money- Rs 30 lakhs.
- ✓ Balbir Singh Sr. Award for Player of the Year (Men):
- ✓ Harmanpreet Singh.
- ✓ It was the second time he has won the prize.
- ✓ Prize Money- Rs 25 lakhs
- ✓ Balbir Singh Sr. Award for Player of the Year (women):
- ✓ Savita Punia
- ✓ It was the third time she has won the prize.
- ✓ Prize Money -Rs 25 lakhs.
- ✓ Baljit Singh Award for Goalkeeper of the Year:
- ✓ Savita Punia
- ✓ Prize Money- Rs 5 lakhs
- ✓ Pargat Singh Award for Defender of the Year:
- ✓ Amit Rohidas
- ✓ Prize Money -Rs 5 lakhs
- ✓ Ajit Pal Singh Award for Midfielder of the Year:
- ✓ Hardik Singh
- ✓ Prize Money -Rs 5 lakhs

Q. Who won the 2024 Hockey India's Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award?

- A) 1928 Men's Hockey Team
B) 1932 Men's Hockey Team
C) 1965 Men's Hockey Team
D) 1975 Men's Hockey Team

Answer : D

- ✓ Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award:
- ✓ Indian men's hockey team that won the 1975 World Cup. They defeated Pakistan in the final at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The team was led by Ajit Pal Singh.
- ✓ Prize money- Rs 30 lakhs.
- ✓ Hockey India
- ✓ Formed in 2009
- ✓ Headquarters: New Delhi
- ✓ President: Dileep Tirkey

Q. Chandrayaan-5 mission is being conducted in collaboration with which country?

- A) Russia
B) USA
C) Japan
D) France

Answer : C

- ✓ The Indian government has approved the ambitious Chandrayaan-5 mission, which marks a significant milestone in lunar exploration.

- ✓ The mission is being conducted in collaboration with Japan and will feature a 250 kg advanced rover, which is ten times heavier than the 25 kg 'Pragyan' rover used in Chandrayaan-3.
- ✓ The upgraded rover will conduct detailed studies of the Moon's surface and composition, further enhancing India's space research capabilities.
- ✓ This mission was a critical demonstration of ISRO's ability to conduct safe landings and rover operations on the lunar surface
- ✓ Chandrayaan-4 mission, slated for 2027, aims to advance lunar exploration further by retrieving samples from the Moon's surface

Q. Who has been sworn in as the new Prime Minister of Canada?

- A) Justin Trudeau B) Mark Carney
C) Matt Henry D) Kamal Khara

Answer : B

- ✓ Mark Carney has been sworn in as Canada's new Prime Minister, replacing Justin Trudeau.
- ✓ Canada
- ✓ Capital : Ottawa
- ✓ Currency : Canadian dollar

Q. Which team won the 3rd Women's Premier League Cricket Tournament 2025?

- A) Royal Challengers Bengaluru B) Mumbai Indians
C) Gujarat Giants D) Delhi Capitals

Answer : B

- ✓ Mumbai Indians defeated Delhi Capitals by eight runs in the final of the 3rd Women's Premier League(WPL) to win their second WPL title.
- ✓ The final of the 3rd WPL 2025 was played at the Brabourne Stadium in Mumbai on 15 March 2025
- ✓ Player of the Final Match: Harmanpreet Kaur (Mumbai Indians)
- ✓ Player of the Series: Nat Sciver-Brunt (Mumbai Indians)
- ✓ Award winners of the 3rd WPL 2025
- ✓ Emerging player of the season (Rs. 5 lakh) - Amanjot Kaur of Mumbai Indians
- ✓ Most Valuable Player (Rs. 5 lakh) - Nat Sciver-Brunt of Mumbai Indians
- ✓ Orange Cap for maximum run scorer in the tournament (Rs. 5 lakh) - Nat Sciver-Brunt of Mumbai Indians. She scored 523 runs.
- ✓ Purple Cap for highest wicket-taker in the tournament (Rs. 5 lakh) - Amelia Kerr of Mumbai Indians. She took 18 wickets.

Q. According to the International Astronomical Union (IAU), how many moons does the planet Saturn have?

- A) 274 B) 245
C) 189 D) 139

Answer : A

- ✓ Saturn gained 128 new moons, with a total of 274 moons.
- ✓ International Astronomical Union (IAU) has officially recognised 128 new moons for the gas giant planet Saturn, taking the number of moons of the planet to 274.
- ✓ The number of Saturn's moons increased after the IAU recognised the discoveries from a team of astronomers led by Edward Ashton at the Academia Sinica in Taiwan.
- ✓ Saturn now officially has the largest number of moons of the eight planets in our solar system.
- ✓ Jupiter, with 95 moons, has the second-highest number of moons in the solar system.

- ✓ The 128 new moons were discovered by stacking images from the Canada-France-Hawaii telescope.
- ✓ Some of Saturn's other moons were discovered by space voyages of the Voyager 1 and Cassini spacecraft. when it passed by Saturn.
- ✓ Out of 274 moons, Saturn has 24 regular moons and 250 irregular moons.
- ✓ Moons in Our Solar System
- ✓ After the latest update by IAU, the total number of moons in our solar system is 416.
- ✓ Saturn has 274, followed by Jupiter with 95, Uranus 28, Neptune 16, Mars 2, and Earth 1.
- ✓ Mercury and Venus have no moon

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Raisina Dialogue:

1. It is India's flagship conference on geopolitics and geo-economics.
2. It is an annual event hosted by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ New Zealand Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, foreign ministers of at least 18 countries, top executives of several global firms and foreign policy experts will converge in the national capital for the annual Raisina Dialogue.
- ✓ About Raisina Dialogue:
- ✓ It is India's flagship conference on geopolitics and geo-economics, committed to addressing the most challenging issues facing the international community.
- ✓ It is modeled on the lines of the Munich Security Conference and Singapore's Shangri-La Dialogue.
- ✓ It is held annually since 2016 in New Delhi.
- ✓ The conference is hosted by the Observer Research Foundation (ORF) in partnership with the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India.
- ✓ The theme of Raisina Dialogue 2025 is Kalachakra: People. Peace. Planet.

Q. Which institution is home to the Hyperloop testing facility where the world's longest high-speed tube is being developed?

- A) IIT Delhi
B) IIT Bombay
C) IIT Madras
D) IIT Kanpur

Answer : C

- ✓ The Hyperloop testing facility where the 410-meter-long Hyperloop tube is being developed is located at IIT Madras.
- ✓ This tube is set to become the world's longest high-speed tube.
- ✓ The project is supported by the Indian Railways Ministry, with funding and technical assistance, while the Integral Coach Factory (ICF) Chennai is responsible for developing the necessary electronic technology for the Hyperloop system

Q. Consider the following with respect to PM Internship Scheme:

1. The scheme provides 12-month internships for young individuals aged 21-24 years.
2. The scheme prioritizes students from elite institutions like IITs, IIMs, and National Law Universities to ensure the best talent gets internship opportunities.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Union Minister Nirmala Sitharaman recently launched a dedicated mobile application for the Prime Minister Internship Scheme and urged more companies to join the programme.
- ✓ About PM Internship Scheme:
- ✓ PM Internship Scheme is a remarkable initiative launched by the Indian government, designed to provide valuable internship opportunities for the youth of India.
- ✓ It aims to provide young individuals aged 21-24 years from low-income households with 12-month internship opportunities in the country's top 500 companies.
- ✓ The pilot phase targets 1.25 lakh youth, with a five-year goal to facilitate internships for one crore young individuals.
- ✓ These internships span 24 sectors, including oil, gas, energy, travel, hospitality, automotive, banking, and financial services.
- ✓ Eligibility Criteria:
- ✓ Passed 10th, 12th, ITI, Polytechnic, or Diploma courses.
- ✓ Fresh graduates from non-premier institutions.
- ✓ Anyone from a household that includes a person who earned an income of Rs.8 lakh or less in a year.
- ✓ No family member has a government job.
- ✓ Note: Students from IITs, IIMs, National Law Universities, and individuals with professional degrees like CA, MBA, MBBS, etc., are excluded to promote inclusivity for underrepresented groups.
- ✓ The program, part of the larger vision for skill development and employment, aims to bridge the gap between academic learning and real-world experience.

Q. Starlink is a satellite-based internet service operated by which aerospace company?

A) Lockheed Martin

B) SpaceX

C) Firefly Aerospace

D) None of the Above

Answer : B

- ✓ Airtel and Jio have partnered with Starlink, SpaceX's satellite internet service, to provide broadband in India.
- ✓ Starlink is a satellite-based internet network operated by SpaceX and founded by Elon Musk. It was launched in 2019.
- ✓ It aims to offer high-speed, low-latency internet globally, especially in remote areas.
- ✓ The project plans to deploy 42,000 satellites in low-Earth orbit (LEO).
- ✓ Starlink works by using a constellation of LEO satellites to provide connectivity.
- ✓ A Starlink dish connects to the nearest satellite, which relays data through ground stations, eliminating dependence on fiber or cellular networks.

Q. What is the name of the initiative launched by UN Secretary-General to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness within the UN?

A) UN Reform 2030

B) UN80 Initiative

C) UN Vision 2050

D) None of the Above

Answer : B

- ✓ UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched the UN80 Initiative to improve efficiency and cost-effectiveness in the United Nations.
- ✓ It is a reform strategy introduced on the 80th anniversary of the UN.
- ✓ The initiative aims to ensure financial sustainability as global contributions decline.

- ✓ It focuses on structural reforms to enhance the implementation of UN mandates.

Q. Which city is the host of 353rd Governing Body meeting of the International Labour Organisation (ILO)?

- A) Paris, France
- B) New Delhi, India
- C) Geneva, Switzerland
- D) Beijing, China

Answer : C

- ✓ The 353rd Governing Body meeting of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) is being held in Geneva, Switzerland, from March 10 to 20, 2025.
- ✓ Representatives from governments, workers, and employers discuss key labour and employment policies.
- ✓ India's delegation, led by Sumita Dawra, Secretary, Ministry of Labour and Employment, highlighted India's labour welfare and employment efforts.
- ✓ India supported the UN-led Second World Summit for Social Development in Doha, Qatar.
- ✓ India has doubled its social protection coverage to 48.8%, exceeding the global average by 5%

Q. Exercise Varuna is a bilateral Naval Exercise between India and which other country?

- A) United Kingdom
- B) United States
- C) France
- D) Sri Lanka

Answer : C

- ✓ The Indian and French Navies are gearing up for the 23rd edition of their bilateral naval exercise, VARUNA 2025.
- ✓ About Exercise Varuna:
- ✓ It is the bilateral Naval Exercise between India and France.
- ✓ Initiated in 1993, the exercise was christened 'Varuna' in 2001 and has become a hallmark of the India-France strategic bilateral relationship.
- ✓ VARUNA 2025 is the 23rd edition of the exercise and will take place in the Arabian Sea

Q. Who has recently been nominated as the 'Fit India Icon'?

- A) Sachin Tendulkar
- B) Virat Kohli
- C) Vicky Kaushal
- D) Ayushmann Khurrana

Answer : D

- ✓ Actor Ayushmann Khurrana was officially nominated as the 'Fit India Icon' by Union Sports Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya under the Fit India Movement initiated by PM Narendra Modi.

Q. ISRO and the Semiconductor Laboratory developed India's first indigenous 32-bit microprocessors for space. What are their names?

- A) Aakash 3201 and Prithvi 3201
- B) Vikram 3201 and Kalpana 3201
- C) Chandra 3201 and Surya 3201
- D) Navgati 3201 and Abhijeet 3201

Answer : B

- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) announced advancement in its space technology capabilities.
- ✓ The Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC) and the Semiconductor Laboratory (SCL) in Chandigarh have successfully developed two 32-bit microprocessors, namely Vikram 3201 and Kalpana 3201.

Answer : A

- ✓ Andhra Pradesh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation in New Delhi.
- ✓ This collaboration aims to integrate Artificial Intelligence (AI), digital technologies, and data-driven governance across various sectors like healthcare, education, agriculture, and employment.

Q. India AI Mission recently signed an MoU with which of the following?

- A) ISRO
- B) NITI Aayog
- C) Meta
- D) Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation

Answer : D

- ✓ India AI Mission and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation are set to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to develop and implement Artificial Intelligence (AI) solutions in several critical sectors

Q. Which of the following books is an autobiography of the Nobel Peace Prize laureate Kailash Satyarthi?

- A) Undisputed Truth: My Autobiography
- B) Wide Angle
- C) Straight From the Heart: An Autobiography
- D) Diyaslai

Answer : D

- ✓ 'Diyaslai' is not just a book; it is a testament to an inspiring journey: Former President Ram Nath Kovind.
- ✓ The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA), an autonomous institution under the Ministry of Culture, in collaboration with Satyarthi Movement for Global Compassion, held a dedicated discussion on Diyaslai, the autobiography of Nobel Peace Prize laureate Kailash Satyarthi.
- ✓ About Kailash Satyarthi
- ✓ Kailash Satyarthi is an Indian social activist who works and campaigned against child labour in India and elsewhere and advocated the right to education.
- ✓ In 2014 he was the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, along with Pakistan Malala Yousafzai, "for their struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education".
- ✓ Kailash Satyarthi founded the movement called Bachapan Bachao Andolan in India.

Q. Aditya-L1, India's first space-based solar mission, has achieved a breakthrough as its Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT) captured the first-ever image of a solar flare '____' in the lower solar atmosphere, specifically in the photosphere and chromosphere.

- A) kernel
- B) Terrain
- C) Minisar
- D) Steps

Answer : A

- ✓ ISRO's Aditya-L1 mission captured the first-ever image of a solar flare 'kernel', marking a significant breakthrough in solar physics research.
- ✓ The Solar Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (SUIT) onboard Aditya-L1 recorded the brightening in the Near Ultraviolet (NUV) band, offering new insights into solar flare energy dynamics.
- ✓ About Aditya-L1:
- ✓ India's first space-based solar mission, launched to study the Sun's outer layers and solar activity.

- ✓ Positioned at Lagrange Point L1, about 1.5 million km from Earth, enabling continuous solar observation without eclipses.
- ✓ Launched In:
- ✓ September 2, 2023, aboard PSLV C-57 rocket.
- ✓ Successfully placed in halo orbit around L1 on January 6, 2024.

Q. Exercise Desert Hunt, recently in news, is a:

- A) rescue exercise
B) multilateral naval exercise
C) bilateral army exercise
D) tri-service special forces exercise

Answer : D

- ✓ Exercise Desert Hunt 2025 was conducted at Air Force Station Jodhpur from 24 to 28 February 2025.
- ✓ About Exercise Desert Hunt 2025:
- ✓ It is an integrated tri-service special forces exercise conducted by the Indian Air Force.

Q. Which is the 10,000th Farmer Producer Organisation (FPO) to be formed in India under the central government's Formation and Promotion of 10,000 Farmer Producer Organisations scheme?

- A) Khagaria, Bihar
B) Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh
C) Chitrakoot, Madhya Pradesh
D) Gaya, Bihar

Answer : A

- ✓ Govt achieves goal of setting up of 10,000 farmer producer organisations.
- ✓ The 10,000th FPO, registered in Khagaria district in Bihar, focuses on maize, banana and paddy and was launched recently by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ The central scheme for Formation and Promotion of 10,000 FPOs" was launched on February 29th 2020 with a budget outlay of Rs 6,865 crore till 2027-28.
- ✓ According to the agriculture ministry, the successful formation of 10,000 FPOs marks a "transformative milestone for the agriculture sector."

Q. What is the primary objective of the MISHTI scheme, recently seen in the news?

- A) Increasing tourism in coastal areas B) Restoration of mangroves
C) Promoting deep-sea fishing D) Establishing new ports in India

Answer : B

- ✓ Gujarat has emerged as the national leader in mangrove afforestation, covering 19,020 hectares in just two years under the Centre's 'MISHTI' scheme.
- ✓ About MISHTI Scheme:
- ✓ The Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats & Tangible Incomes (MISHTI) scheme is a government-led initiative aimed at increasing the mangrove cover along the coastline and on salt pan lands.
- ✓ "MISHTI" comes after India joined the 'Mangrove Alliance for Climate' launched during the 27th Conference of Parties (COP27) to the UNFCCC held in Egypt in November 2022.
- ✓ It was launched by the Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change on the occasion of World Environment Day, i.e., 5th June 2023.
- ✓ MISHTI envisages the restoration/reforestation of mangroves covering approximately 540 sq.km., spreading across 9 states and 3 union territories for a period of five years commencing 2023-24 onwards.
- ✓ The scheme is primarily focused on the Sundarbans delta, Hooghly Estuary in West Bengal, India, and other bay parts of the country, but also includes other wetlands in the country.

Q. Lankamalleswara Wildlife Sanctuary, is located in:

- A) Kerala
B) Bihar
C) Maharashtra
D) Andhra Pradesh

Answer : D

- ✓ Archaeological Survey of India's epigraphical survey in Sri Lankamalleswara Wildlife Sanctuary in Kadapa district has made major findings of three rock shelters and rock paintings along with 30 inscriptions.
- ✓ About Lankamalleswara Wildlife Sanctuary:
- ✓ It is located in the Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh.

Q. Who is the author of the book titled "Raisina Chronicles"?

- A) S Jaishankar & Samir Saran B) Anand Neelakantan & Rakhi Kapoor
C) Abhimanyu Jha & Yashica Dutt D) Sudeep Nagarkar & Nikita Singh

Answer : A

Q. Harpoon Missile is an anti-ship cruise missile developed by which country?

- A) North Korea
B) Iran
C) United States of America
D) Russia

Answer : C

- ✓ The U.S. Air Force is exploring the use of the Harpoon anti-ship missile on its F-16s, signaling a potential shift in its approach to naval warfare.
- ✓ About Harpoon Missile:
- ✓ The Harpoon (RGM-84/UGM-84/AGM-84) is a subsonic anti-ship cruise missile developed by Boeing for the U.S. Navy.
- ✓ It was first introduced in 1977.
- ✓ It is currently in service with the armed forces of more than 30 countries, including India.

Q. Mission 300, recently in news, is a/an:

- A) initiative of NASA to send 300 students Space station in 2025
- B) target of WHO to eliminate TB across Globe
- C) initiative to plant trees in tropical region by 2030
- D) initiative to provide electricity to 300 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030

Answer : D

- ✓ World Bank and the African Development Bank (AfDB), along with key partners have launched Mission 300.
- ✓ About Mission 300:
- ✓ It is an ambitious initiative to provide electricity to 300 million people in Sub-Saharan Africa by 2030.
- ✓ It aims to accelerate the pace of electrification in Sub-Saharan Africa while ensuring that the transition to more diversified and cleaner sources of energy meets growing demand, brings economic growth, and creates jobs.
- ✓ It is led by the World Bank and the African Development Bank, in collaboration with key partners, Rockefeller Foundation, Global Energy Alliance for People and Planet (GEAPP), Sustainable Energy for All (SE4ALL), and Energy Sector Management Assistance Program (ESMAP).

Q. Which state in India has the maximum riverine dolphins in the country?

- A) Bihar
- B) West Bengal
- C) Uttar Pradesh
- D) Assam

Answer : C

- ✓ Uttar Pradesh has the largest population of riverine dolphins
- ✓ Total dolphins in the country: 6,327
- ✓ Leading state: Uttar Pradesh has the maximum riverine dolphins in the country, followed by Bihar, West Bengal, and Assam.

Q. What is the theme for World Wildlife Day 2025?

- A) Ecosystem Restoration: Healing Nature
- B) Wildlife Conservation Finance: Investing in People and Planet
- C) Nature's Harmony: A Sustainable Future
- D) Biodiversity for a Better World

Answer : B

- ✓ The Prime Minister went on a lion safari at Gir Wildlife Sanctuary in Gujarat's Junagadh recently, on the occasion of the World Wildlife Day.
- ✓ World Wildlife Day 2025 Theme: Wildlife Conservation Finance: Investing in People and Planet

Q. Who has been honored with the Forbes India Leadership Awards recently?

- A) Sachin Tendulkar
- B) MS Dhoni
- C) Rahul Gandhi
- D) Jay Shah

Answer : D

- ✓ Jay Shah, the youngest-ever Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC), was honored with the Icon of Excellence Award at the 14th edition of the Forbes India Leadership Awards (FILA 2025).
- ✓ This prestigious recognition highlights his contributions to cricket administration, innovation, and global expansion of the sport

Q. Who has been appointed as the brand ambassador of MRF Tyre?

- A) Rohit Sharma
- B) KL Rahul
- C) Shreyas Iyer
- D) Shubman Gill

Answer : D

- ✓ Tyre major MRF has signed on cricketer Shubman Gill, Team India's Vice Captain in the ICC Champions Cup, as its brand ambassador.

Q. How many river dolphins were recorded in India's first-ever survey?

- A) 6,100
- B) 6,327
- C) 6,500
- D) 6,000

Answer : B

- ✓ The first-ever river dolphin survey in India recorded a total of 6,327 dolphins across 28 rivers in eight states, with over 8,500 km surveyed.
- ✓ The survey, which involved 3,150 man-days, highlighted the importance of conservation efforts.

- ✓ Uttar Pradesh had the highest number of river dolphins, followed by Bihar, West Bengal, and Assam.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Astra MK-III Missile:

1. It is a beyond-visual-range (BVR) air-to-air missile designed to be mounted on fighter aircraft.
2. It has a range of more than 1000 kilometers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ India's latest and most advanced air-to-air missile, the Astra MK-III, has now been officially renamed Gandiva, after the legendary bow of Arjuna from the Mahabharata.
- ✓ About Astra MK-III Missile:
- ✓ It is a beyond-visual-range (BVR) air-to-air missile designed to be mounted on fighter aircraft.
- ✓ Still under development by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), this missile is expected to redefine the landscape of aerial warfare, especially in BVR combat.
- ✓ The missile will be deployed on the IAF's Sukhoi Su-30MKI jets and the Light Combat Aircraft Tejas.
- ✓ With the eventual induction of Gandiva, India will possess one of the longest-range BVR air-to-air missiles in the world.
- ✓ It has a range of 340 kilometers when the target is at an altitude of 20 kilometers, and 190 kilometers when the target is at a lower altitude of 8 kilometers.
- ✓ The missile's launch speed ranges from 0.8 to 2.2 Mach, with the capability to hit targets at a speed of 2.0 to 3.6 Mach

Q. Where will India's first integrated Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API), Green Hydrogen, and 2G Ethanol be set up?

- A) Almora, Uttarakhand
B) Solan, Himachal Pradesh
C) Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh
D) Jaipur, Rajasthan

Answer : B

- ✓ India's first integrated manufacturing facility for Active Pharmaceutical Ingredients (API), Green Hydrogen, and 2G Ethanol will be set up in the Baddi-Barotiwala-Nalagarh area in the Solan district of Himachal Pradesh.
- ✓ The total investment in the integrated API, green hydrogen, and 2G Ethanol plant is Rs 1400 crore. The project is expected to create 1000 jobs directly.
- ✓ The government of India has set a target to provide 20 percent ethanol blended petrol all over the country by 2025-26 ethanol supply year.

Q. Consider the following statements with respect to Semi-Cryogenic Engine:

1. It uses liquid oxygen as an oxidizer and refined kerosene as fuel.
2. The use of kerosene increases the overall mission costs.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ ISRO recently successfully conducted the hot test on a semi-cryogenic engine (SE2000), coming closer to finalising the crucial cryogenic stage.
- ✓ About Semi-Cryogenic Engine:
- ✓ A semi-cryogenic engine (SCE) is a liquid rocket engine that uses liquid oxygen (LOX) as an oxidizer and refined kerosene as fuel.
- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is developing a semi-cryogenic engine with a thrust of 2000 kN to power the booster stages of future heavy-lift launch vehicles. This engine utilizes a combination of liquid oxygen (LOX) and refined kerosene (RP-1) as propellants.
- ✓ The semi-cryogenic engine offers several advantages over traditional cryogenic engines, including:

Q. Where will the Special Olympics World Winter Games be held in 2025?

A) Italy	B) France
C) Germany	D) Spain

Answer : A

- ✓ The Special Olympics World Winter Games in 2025 will take place in Turin, Italy, from March 7 to 17.
- ✓ The event will feature athletes competing in multiple winter sports such as Alpine Skiing, Cross-Country Skiing, and Snowboarding, among others.
- ✓ India won 33 medals at the Special Olympics World Winter Games 2025 in Turin, Italy.
- ✓ Total Medals Won 8 Gold, 18 Silver, 7 Bronze (Total: 33)

Q. Where was the Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2025 held?

A) London	B) New York
C) Barcelona	D) Paris

Answer : C

- ✓ The Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2025 took place in Barcelona, under the theme "Converge. Connect. Create."
- ✓ This global event showcased significant advancements in 5G, AI, IoT, and digital transformation.
- ✓ India took the opportunity to highlight its telecom achievements, including the rapid 5G rollout, the lowest data tariffs, and the development of indigenous 4G/5G technology stacks.

Q. Which countries were excluded from the 2026 FIFA World Cup?

A) Ukraine, Russia, and Brazil	B) Pakistan, Russia, and Congo
C) Russia, Italy, and Japan	D) South Africa, Syria, and Russia

Answer : B

- ✓ Pakistan, Russia, and Congo were excluded from the 2026 FIFA World Cup due to various issues such as administrative failures, geopolitical sanctions, and third-party interference.
- ✓ The 2026 World Cup will include 48 teams, but these nations will not be part of the competition due to ongoing controversies affecting their participation.
- ✓ The 2026 World Cup will be jointly hosted by the USA, Canada and Mexico

Q. Who has been conferred with the Lifetime Achievement award of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India award?

A) Kunal Shah	B) Peyush Bansal
C) Deepak Ravindran	D) KV Kamath

Answer : D

- ✓ Award Winners of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India
- ✓ Lifetime Achievement Award: KV Kamath, Independent Director and Non-executive Chairman of the Jio Financial Service Limited.
- ✓ Special Jury Award: Dr S. Somnath, former Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- ✓ EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India: Nitin Kamath, CEO of Zerodha Limited.

Q. Who has been conferred with the Special Jury Award of the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024 India award?

- A) S. Somnath
- B) Samir V. Kamat
- C) D. K. Sunil
- D) SN Subrahmanyam

Answer : A

- ✓ Special Jury Award: Dr S. Somnath, former Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO).
- ✓ About the EY Entrepreneur Of The Year India Award
- ✓ The EY Entrepreneur Of The Year India Award is one of the most prestigious business awards in India.
- ✓ It is given by the Indian subsidiary of the global British consultancy firm Ernst & Young Global Limited based in London.
- ✓ The subsidiary company of the Ernst & Young Global Limited around the world is simply known as EY.
- ✓ The company offers services consulting, assurance, law, strategy, tax, and transactions.

Q. Who has won the 2024 A.M. Turing Award?

- A) Saji Abraham and Nader K Abuhassan
- B) James B. Abshire and Omar Abuhassan
- C) Andrew G. Barto and Richard S. Sutton
- D) Aynur Abdurazik and Maryam Abdioskouie

Answer : C

- ✓ Andrew Barto and Richard Sutton win the AM Turing Award 2024.
- ✓ Andrew G. Barto and Richard S. Sutton of the United States of America have been selected for the prestigious 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award.
- ✓ The winner of the prestigious A.M. Turner award, which is considered as a Nobel Prize in Computing, was announced by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) in New York, United States of America.
- ✓ Both the winners will share the \$1 million prize money sponsored by Google.

Q. Which prize is also known as the Nobel prize of Computer Science?

- A) A.M. Turing Award
- B) ACM Grace Murray Hopper Award
- C) IEEE Computer Society Computer Pioneer Award
- D) Millennium Technology Prize

Answer : A

- ✓ About the A.M. Turing Award

- ✓ The A.M.Turing award was instituted in 1966 by the Association for Computing Machinery (ACM), New York, United States of America.
- ✓ It is given every year to individuals whose work has outstanding significance for computer science.
- ✓ The prize has been founded as a tribute to the British mathematician, computer scientist, and cryptanalyst Alan Mathison Turing.
- ✓ Alan Mathison Turing is also known as the father of Computer Science.
- ✓ No one from India has won the A.M. Turing Award

Q. Who received the Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados Award on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi?

- A) Pabitra Margherita
B) Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar
C) Amit Shah
D) Jagat Prakash Nadda

Answer : A

- ✓ The Government of Barbados conferred its prestigious Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados Award to Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 6th March 2025.
- ✓ The award was received by the Union Minister of State for External Affairs and Textiles, Pabitra Margherita, on behalf of Prime Minister Narendra Modi at a function in Bridgetown, the capital of Barbados.

Q. Where was the 24th World Sustainable Development Summit 2025 held?

- A) Hyderabad B) Bengaluru
C) Chennai D) New Delhi

Answer : D

- ✓ The 24th World Sustainable Development Summit 2025 concluded in New Delhi on 7th March 2025.

Q. Who organised the 24th World Sustainable Development Summit 2025?

- A) CSIR
B) NITI Aayog
C) FICCI
D) TERI

Answer : D

- ✓ The World Sustainable Development Summit 2025 was organised by “The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI).”
- ✓ The first summit was organised in 2001.
- ✓ The 24th World Sustainable Development Summit 2025 was inaugurated by the Union Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change Bhupendra Yadav on 6th March 2025.
- ✓ The theme of the 24th World Sustainable Development Summit 2025 was “ Partnerships for Accelerating Sustainable Development and Climate Solutions.”
- ✓ About The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)
- ✓ The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) was set up as the Tata Energy and Resources Institute in 1974.
- ✓ It is a non-governmental organisation registered under the Societies Registration Act of 1860.
- ✓ TERI's expertise lies in conducting research in the fields of energy, sustainable development, and the environment.
- ✓ Headquarters: New Delhi

Q. Sharath Kamal announced his retirement from which sports?

- A) Badminton
- B) Table Tennis
- C) Squash
- D) Hockey

Answer : B

- ✓ Sharath Kamal to retire after WTT Star Contender Chennai 2025.
- ✓ Legendary Indian male table tennis player Achnata Sharath Kamal has announced his retirement from professional table tennis after the 2025 WTT Star Contender Chennai tournament.
- ✓ First International Title
- ✓ Sharath Kamal won his first international title at the 2004 Commonwealth Table Tennis Championships held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- ✓ 42-year-old Sharath Kamal has won seven gold medals and three silver medals at the Commonwealth Games in different categories.
- ✓ He won gold in the singles title in the 2006 Melbourne and 2022 Birmingham Commonwealth Games.
- ✓ At the 2018 Jakarta Asian Games, he won two bronze medals in the men's team and mixed doubles events.
- ✓ Honours and Awards
- ✓ Padma Shri: Sharath Kamal was honoured with India's fourth highest civilian award, Padma Shri, in 2019
- ✓ Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award: India's highest sports award, which was given to Shartath Kamal in 2022.
- ✓ Arjuna Award: Sharath Kamal was conferred the 2004 Arjuna Award.

Q. India's first AI-powered solar manufacturing line has been launched in which state?

- A) Gujarat
- B) Rajasthan
- C) Madhya Pradesh
- D) Bihar

Answer : A

- ✓ Union Minister Pralhad Joshi launched India's first AI-powered solar manufacturing line at Goldi Solar's new facility in Kosamba, Surat, Gujarat.
- ✓ The AI-powered facility enhances precision, scalability, and efficiency, supporting India's net-zero transition.

Q. Tata Power Renewable Energy Ltd (TPREL) has signed an MoU with which state government to develop renewable projects worth Rs 49000 crore?

- A) Andhra Pradesh
- B) Telangana
- C) Karnataka
- D) Tamil Nadu

Answer : A

- ✓ Tata Power Renewables signs MOU worth \$5.6 Bn with Andhra Pradesh govt.
- ✓ Tata Power Renewable Energy Ltd (TPREL) has signed an MoU with the Andhra Pradesh government to develop renewable projects worth Rs 49000 crore (\$5.6 billion).
- ✓ The company plans to build up to 7,000 MW of solar, wind, and hybrid projects under the state's Integrated Clean Energy Policy.

Q. Which company has partnered with DPIIT to boost manufacturing, road safety, and environmental sustainability?

- A) BMW
- B) Mercedes-Benz
- C) Audi
- D) Tata Motors

Answer : B

- ✓ DPIIT (Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade) has partnered with Mercedes-Benz India to enhance manufacturing, road safety, and environmental sustainability through startup programs.
- ✓ This collaboration focuses on infrastructure, mentorship, funding, and global collaborations to drive technological advancements.

Q. India won the 6th Asian Women Kabaddi Championship 2025 by defeating which team in the final?

- A) Thailand
B) Iran
C) Nepal
D) Bangladesh

Answer : B

- ✓ Indian women's Kabaddi team defeated Iran to win their fifth Asian Women's Kabaddi Championship title.
- ✓ The sixth Asian Women's Kabaddi Championship 2025 was held in Tehran from 6-8th March 2025.
- ✓ It was the third time that Iran was hosting the Asian Women's Kabaddi Championship ,having hosted it in 2007 and 2017.
- ✓ The Indian Kabaddi team, led by Sonali Shingate.
- ✓ India is the most successful team in the history of the championship, having won it 5 times, and the South Korean team has won it once.
- ✓ Asian Kabaddi Federation
- ✓ The Asian Kabaddi Federation is the governing body of men's and women's Kabaddi in Asia
- ✓ Headquarters: Tehran, Iran
- ✓ President : Janardhan Singh Gehlot

Q. Which wildlife reserve has been notified as the 58th Tiger Reserve of the Country?

- A) Bandhavgarh National Park
B) Panna National Park
C) Madhav National Park
D) Satpura National Park

Answer : C

- ✓ Union Ministry of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change has notified the Madhav National Park of Madhya Pradesh as the 58th Tiger Reserve of the country under the centrally sponsored scheme Project Tiger.
- ✓ It is the 9th Tiger Reserve of the state under the Tiger Project of the central government.
- ✓ In December 2024, the Union Ministry notified the Ratapani Tiger Reserve of Madhya Pradesh as the 57th Tiger Reserve of India.
- ✓ About the Madhav National Park Madhya Pradesh
- ✓ The Madhav National Park is situated in the Shivpuri district of Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ It was notified as a National Park in 1958.
- ✓ It is spread over 375.233 sq.km.
- ✓ 9th Tiger Reserve of Madhya Pradesh
- ✓ Madhav National Park is Madhya Pradesh's ninth Tiger Reserve. The others are Kanha, Pench, Bandhavgarh, Satpura, Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve, Panna, Sanjay-Dubri, and Ratapani.
- ✓ Madhya Pradesh has the largest number of Tiger reserves under Project Tiger
- ✓ About Project Tiger
- ✓ Project Tiger was launched as a centrally sponsored project in 1973 as a Centrally Sponsored Scheme.

Q. In which district of Madhya Pradesh is the Madhav National Park located?

- A) Mauganj B) Betul
C) Bhind D) Shivrपुरi

Answer : D

Q. Which state has the maximum number of Tiger Reserves under Project Tiger?

- A) Karnataka
- B) Maharashtra
- C) Madhya Pradesh
- D) Tamil Nadu

Answer : C

- ✓ Madhya Pradesh has 9 tiger reserves - Ratapani, Kanha, Pench, Bandhavgarh, Satpura, Veerangana Durgavati Tiger Reserve, Panna, Sanjay-Dubri, and Madhav National Park.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding AI Kosha:

AI Kosha provides an open-source AI sandbox with an integrated development environment, tools, and tutorials.

It is an initiative by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched AI Kosha, a non-personal datasets platform, along with the GPU access portal under the IndiaAI Mission.
- ✓ About AI Kosha:
- ✓ AI Kosha is an initiative by the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) designed to serve as a unified repository for datasets, tools, and AI models.
- ✓ It aims to enhance access to datasets and models from various sources to boost AI innovation, support AI solution development with shared toolkits, and showcase use cases to inspire new applications.
- ✓ It serves as a central repository, offering over 300 datasets, 80+ models, and diverse AI use cases.
- ✓ AIKosha also features an AI sandbox with an integrated development environment, tools, and tutorials.
- ✓ Key security measures include content discoverability, AI readiness scoring, permission-based access, data encryption, secure APIs, and real-time firewalls to ensure safe and efficient AI development.

Q. Consider the following with reference to Ladki Bahin Yojana:

1. The scheme provides financial assistance of Rs 1,500 per month to eligible women through Direct Benefit Transfer.

2. The primary objective of the scheme is to support economically disadvantaged women.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Maharashtra government disbursed ₹17,500 crore to 2.38 crore women under the Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana till December 2024, stated the Economic Survey tabled in the State Assembly.
- ✓ About Ladki Bahin Yojana:
- ✓ The Mukhyamantri Majhi Ladki Bahin Yojana, commonly referred to as the Ladki Bahin Yojana, is a key welfare program introduced by the Maharashtra Government in 2024.

- ✓ **Objective:** It aims to provide financial support to economically disadvantaged women aged 21 to 65, promoting their rehabilitation, economic development, and empowerment.
- ✓ **Eligibility Criteria:** To qualify for the Ladki Bahin Yojana, the applicant must be a permanent resident of Maharashtra.
- ✓ **Age Limit:** The applicant should be between 21 and 65 years old.
- ✓ **Family Income:** The combined annual income of the applicant's family must not exceed ₹2.5 lakh.
- ✓ **Income Tax:** No family member should be an income taxpayer.
- ✓ **Benefits:** Under this scheme, eligible women will receive Rs 1,500 per month through Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT).

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Parvatmala Pariyojana:

1. The main objective is the development of self-sustainable and world-class highways in hilly regions.
2. The projects under the programme are being implemented through Public-Private Partnership with around 60% contribution support by the Government of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : B

- ✓ The union cabinet recently approved two major ropeway projects- Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji (12.4 km) and Sonprayag to Kedarnath (12.9 km)- in Uttarakhand, which will be developed under National Ropeways Development Programme – Parvatmala Pariyojana.
- ✓ About Parvatmala Pariyojana:
- ✓ The National Ropeways Development Programme, known as the ‘Parvatmala Pariyojana’, was announced in the 2022-23 Union Budget.
- ✓ Under the Parvatmala Pariyojana, the Ministry of Road Transport and Highways envisages the provision of safe, economical, convenient, efficient, self-sustainable & world-class ropeway infrastructure providing first- and last-mile connectivity to improve logistics efficiency in India.
- ✓ The aim is to improve connectivity and convenience for commuters, besides promoting tourism.
- ✓ For the development of ropeway infrastructure in dense forests, in urban areas, and in difficult terrains, the ministry is collaborating with various state governments/UT administrations.
- ✓ The Centre has identified more than 200 projects at a cost of Rs 1.25 lakh crore under the programme.
- ✓ The projects are being implemented through Public-Private Partnership with around 60% contribution support by the Government of India.
- ✓ Implementing Agency:
- ✓ The National Highways Logistics Management Limited (NHLML) has been mandated by the ministry to implement the project.
- ✓ It is a 100% owned SPV of the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).

Q. Consider the following statements with respect to Brahmastra Missile:

1. It is a hypersonic glide missile developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
2. It has a range of more than 3000 kilometers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Indian scientists have developed a modern-day 'Brahmastra' with an astonishing speed of 12,144 km per hour.
- ✓ About Brahmastra Missile:
- ✓ This weapon, named the Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (LRAShM), is a hypersonic glide missile.
- ✓ It was developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- ✓ It outperforms similar missiles like China's DF-17 in terms of range and technology.
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ With a range of 1,500 km, this missile can obliterate an enemy ship or warship within 7 to 8 minutes of being launched.
- ✓ It can be deployed from both land and sea, offering versatility in combat scenarios
- ✓ This missile operates at 10 Mach, making it 10 times faster than the speed of sound. This allows it to travel 3.37 km in just one second.

Q. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is related to which one of the following?

- A) Climate Change and Environmental Protection
- B) Global Economic Growth and Trade Policies
- C) International Security and Peacekeeping
- D) Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

Answer : D

- ✓ Union Minister for Women and Child Development will lead India's delegation at the 69th session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) at the United Nations headquarters in New York.
- ✓ About Commission on the Status of Women (CSW):
- ✓ It is the principal global intergovernmental body exclusively dedicated to the promotion of gender equality, the rights, and the empowerment of women.
- ✓ It is part of the United Nations, and works to promote women's political, economic, civil, social, and educational rights.
- ✓ A functional commission of the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), it was established by ECOSOC resolution of 21 June 1946.
- ✓ CSW can also highlight urgent problems, such as the situation of women and girls affected by conflict.
- ✓ The Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action, adopted by 189 countries, is the most comprehensive and transformative global agenda for the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls

Q. Which film won the best feature film award at the 97th Oscars ?

- A) Oppenheimer
- B) The Holdovers
- C) The Boy and the Heron
- D) Anora

Answer : D

Q. Who won the best director award for a feature film at the 2025 Oscar film awards ?

- A) Cilian Murphy
- B) Christopher Nolan
- C) Brady Corbet
- D) Emma Stone

Answer : C

Q. Who won the best actor award at the 2025 Oscar film awards ?

- A) Cillian Murphy
- B) Adrien Brody
- C) Colman Domingo
- D) Ralph Fiennes

Answer : B

Q. Who won the best actress award at the 2025 Oscar film awards ?

- A) Emma Stone
- B) Cynthia Erivo
- C) Mikey Madison
- D) Demi Moore

Answer : C

- ✓ Oscar Award 2025 officially known as the 97th Academy Awards, was a grand celebration of cinematic excellence.
- ✓ Organized by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS), the event took place at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles on March 2, 2025.
- ✓ 97th Academy Awards (Oscars Awards 2025)
- ✓ Best Picture : Anora
- ✓ Best Actor : Adrien Brody (The Brutalist)
- ✓ Best Actress : Mikey Madison (Anora)
- ✓ Best Director : Sean Baker (Anora)
- ✓ Best International Feature Film : I'm Still Here
- ✓ The Hindi comedy film 'Laapataa Ladies', produced by Amir Khan and Kiran Rao and directed by Kiran Rao, has been chosen to be India's official entry for the International Feature Film Category at the 97th Academy Awards 2025 (popularly known as the Oscars).
- ✓ The 97th Academy Awards ceremony will be held on 2nd March 2025 in Los Angeles, United States of America.
- ✓ About the Oscar Award:
- ✓ Its real name is 'Academy Award of Merit'.
- ✓ This award show was first organized on May 16, 1929.
- ✓ The first Oscar ceremony was held in a hotel in America.
- ✓ Academy librarian Margaret Herrick is credited with naming the Academy Award trophy 'Oscar'.

Q. India defeated which team in the final of the 9th ICC Champions Trophy 2025?

- A) South Africa
- B) Australia
- C) England
- D) New Zealand

Answer : D

- ✓ India win their 3rd Champions Trophy, beating New Zealand at Dubai International Stadium in Dubai, United Arab Emirates.
- ✓ India won their third ICC Champion Trophy by beating New Zealand by 4 wickets in the final of the 9th edition of the Champions trophy in Dubai on 9th March 2025.
- ✓ India previously won it in 2002 under Sourav Ganguly and in 2013 under MS Dhoni's captaincy.
- ✓ It was the second consecutive ICC Title for the Indian men's cricket team led by Rohit Sharma.
- ✓ Under Rohit Sharma's captaincy, India won the 9th ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 in Barbados defeating South Africa.
- ✓ It was the second consecutive ICC Title for the Indian men's cricket team led by Rohit Sharma.
- ✓ Under Rohit Sharma's captaincy, India won the 9th ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024 in Barbados defeating South Africa.
- ✓ The members of the Indian team that won the Champions Trophy were given the iconic white jackets.
- ✓ The white jacket ,designed by Mumbai fashion designer Babita M, was first introduced in the 2009 Champions Trophy held at South Africa and given to the victorius Australian team.
- ✓ The final of the 9th Champions Trophy was a repeat of the 2000 finals, where New Zealand defeated India by 4 wickets.
- ✓ New Zealand team, nicknamed Kiwi or Black Cap, captain Mitchell Santner won the toss and decided to bat first.

- ✓ Man of the Match: Rohit Sharma (India)
- ✓ Player of the Tournament: Rachin Ravindra (263 Runs) [New Zealand]
- ✓ India is the most successful team in the tournament's history, with three title wins in 2002, 2013, and 2025.

Q. Where was the final of the 9th ICC Champions Trophy 2025 held?

- A) Pakistan
- B) Sri Lanka
- C) UAE
- D) Saudi Arabia

Answer : C

- ✓ Dubai International Stadium in Dubai, United Arab Emirates on 9th March 2025.

Q. Who was the Player of the Tournament of the 9th ICC Champions Trophy 2025?

- A) Rachin Ravindra
- B) Virat Kohli
- C) Rohit Sharma
- D) Shreyas Iyer

Answer : A

- ✓ Player of the Tournament: Rachin Ravindra (New Zealand)
- ✓ Mitchell Santner is the captain of New Zealand in the Champions Trophy.
- ✓ Meanwhile, New Zealand captain Mitchell Santner, leading the team in the absence of Kane Williamson, explained the decision to bat first.

Q. Where was the first first Conference for Women Peacekeepers of the United Nations held?

- A) Chennai
B) New Delhi
C) Hyderabad
D) Bengaluru

Answer : B

- ✓ The first Conference for Women Peacekeepers of the United Nations was held in New Delhi on 24 & 25 February 2025.
- ✓ The Conference brought together 35 nations whose women troops are active in the United Nations Peacekeeping operation across the globe.
- ✓ India is the second largest contributor to the United Nations Peacekeeping operations.
- ✓ Amongst the UN Military Experts on Mission and Staff Officers in 2024, the largest women contingent -176 were Indian.
- ✓ The Conference was organised by the Ministry of External Affairs in association with the Union Ministry of Defence and the Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) of the Indian Army
- ✓ The theme of the first Conference for Women Peacekeepers of the United Nations was “ Women in Peacekeeping: A Global South Perspective” .
- ✓ According to the United Nations ,women are deployed in the civilian, police and military duties of the Peacekeeping operations.
- ✓ As on 31st December 2024, of all the total UN Peacekeeper troops deployed, 11 percent were women.
- ✓ The maximum women peacekeeper were from Nepal-5753

Q. How many countries participated in the first Conference for Women Peacekeepers of the United Nations?

- A) 30
B) 35
C) 40
D) 60

Answer : B

- ✓ About the Centre for UN Peacekeeping
- ✓ The Centre for UN Peacekeeping is a joint endeavor of the Ministry of External Affairs and the Indian Army.
- ✓ It is based in New Delhi.
- ✓ The center trains troops and trainers for the various United Nations Peacekeeping operations.
- ✓ It sends its Mobile Training Teams to friendly foreign countries as part of capacity building in the field of UN peacekeeping training.

Q. Which football club has won the 2024-25 season Indian Super League (ISL) Winners Shield?

- A) Mumbai City FC
B) FC Goa
C) Mohun Bagan Super Giant
D) Jamshedpur FC

Answer : C

- ✓ Mohun Bagan Super Giant football club won their second Indian Super League (ISL) Winners Shield when they defeated Odisha FC club 1-0 at the Vivekananda Yuba Bharati Krirangan Stadium in Kolkata on 23 February 2025.
- ✓ Kolkata-based Mohun Bagan Super Giant football club, nicknamed Mariners, also became the first team in ISL history to defend its ISL Winners Shield.
- ✓ The Mohun Bagan Super Giant has also qualified for the next AFC Champions League Two season.

- ✓ The Indian Super League is a premier club-based football tournament in India organised in the format of the cricket's Indian Premier League (IPL).

Q. International Finance Corporation (IFC) has decided against investing in a proposed \$40 million loan for waste-to-energy (WTE) incineration projects in which state?

- A) Andhra Pradesh
- B) Odisha
- C) Uttar Pradesh
- D) Gujarat

Answer : D

- ✓ International Finance Corporation (IFC) has decided against investing in a proposed \$40 million loan for waste-to-energy (WTE) incineration projects in Gujarat, India.
- ✓ About International Finance Corporation:
- ✓ It is the private lending arm of the World Bank.
- ✓ It was established in 1956 as a member of the World Bank Group, focused on investing in economic development.
- ✓ Functions of International Finance Corporation
- ✓ It provides financing of private-enterprise investment in developing countries around the world, through both loans and direct investments.
- ✓ The President of the World Bank Group is also the President of the IFC.
- ✓ Headquarter: Washington, D.C

Q. Which company has partnered with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) to restore heritage water bodies?

- A) Coca-Cola
- B) PepsiCo
- C) Nestle
- D) Bisleri

Answer : D

- ✓ Bisleri International has partnered with the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) under the 'Adopt a Heritage 2.0 Programme' to restore and protect historic water bodies at heritage sites across India.
- ✓ This collaboration is part of Bisleri's CSR initiative, 'Nayi Umeed,' which focuses on water conservation and environmental sustainability.
- ✓ The project will start by revitalizing four significant water bodies in Rajasthan and Uttar Pradesh, contributing to ecological restoration and improving tourism experiences while preserving India's heritage.

Q. Where has India's first zoo-based wildlife biobank been established?

- A) National Zoological Park
- B) Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park
- C) Nandankanan Zoological Park
- D) Nehru Zoological Park

Answer : B

- ✓ India's first zoo-based wildlife biobank has been established at the Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHZP) in Darjeeling, West Bengal.
- ✓ This biobank is a significant step in wildlife conservation, as it preserves genetic materials from endangered species using cryogenic storage.

Q. Which country assumed the Chairmanship of the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO)?

- A) India
B) Bangladesh
C) Sri Lanka
D) Maldives

Answer : A

- ✓ India officially assumed the Chairmanship of the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) from Bangladesh during the 13th Governing Council Meeting in Malé, Maldives.
- ✓ Leading India's delegation, Dr Abhilaksh Likhi, Secretary of the Department of Fisheries, emphasized India's commitment to sustainable fisheries and regional cooperation.
- ✓ Under India's leadership, the organization will focus on marine resource management, capacity building, research, and addressing issues like Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing, in line with India's broader vision of 'Viksit Bharat 2047'.

Q. Who is the first astronaut with a disability to be cleared for a mission to the International Space Station (ISS)?

- A) Chris Hadfield
B) Tim Peake
C) John McFall
D) Daniel Neuenschwander

Answer : C

- ✓ John McFall, a former British Paralympian with a prosthetic leg, has been medically approved by the European Space Agency (ESA) for long-duration space missions to the International Space Station (ISS).
- ✓ This marks a historic milestone in making space exploration more inclusive.
- ✓ McFall's selection in 2022 for ESA's "Fly! Feasibility" study, which evaluated the viability of astronauts with disabilities in space

Q. With reference to PUNCH Mission, consider the following:

1. It consists of constellation of four satellites each sent to the Low Earth Orbit.
2. It is an initiative of the European Space Agency.
3. It is designed to make use of the polarisation of light to measure the corona and solar wind.

Which of the statements given above are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1 and 3 only
D) 1, 2 and 3

Answer : C

- ✓ NASA is gearing up for a new and first-of-its-kind solar mission called PUNCH mission that will closely observe the solar atmosphere.
- ✓ About PUNCH Mission:
- ✓ The Polarimetry to Unify the Corona and Heliosphere (PUNCH) mission will be launched by SpaceX .
- ✓ Components of PUNCH Mission:
- ✓ It will be a constellation of four, suitcase-sized satellites each weighing about 64 kg sent to the Low Earth Orbit (LEO).
- ✓ It will have three Wide Field Imagers (WFI) and one Narrow Field Imager onboard.
- ✓ Objectives of PUNCH Mission

- ✓ It is the first time that a solar mission has been specifically designed to make use of the polarisation of light to measure the corona and solar wind, that too, in 3D.
- ✓ Time Period: The expected mission life is two years

Q. What is the name of the indigenously developed air-launched anti-ship missile system with a sea skimming ability?

- A) BrahMos Air-Launched Missile B) Prithvi-III
C) Naval Anti-Ship Missile (NASM-SR) D) Agni-V

Answer : C

- ✓ Indian Navy in collaboration with the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully conducted the flight test of the indigenously developed Naval Anti-Ship Missile -Short Range (NASM-SR) on 25 February 2025.
- ✓ The missile was launched from the Indian Navy's Sea King Mk 42B helicopter from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur in Odisha on 25th February 2025.
- ✓ NASM-SR is the country's first indigenously developed air-launched anti-ship missile system with a sea skimming ability. The first test of the missile was conducted in May 2022.

Q. What is the range of the recently tested indigenously developed Naval Anti-Ship Missile -Short Range (NASM-SR)?

- A) 45 kilometers B) 55 kilometers
C) 75 kilometers D) 65 kilometers

Answer : B

- ✓ Feature of the NASM-SR Missile .
- ✓ The NASM-SR missile is a helicopter-launched variant of the NASM family of missiles.
- ✓ It is a subsonic weapon with an average cruise speed of Mach 0.8.
- ✓ It is powered by a two-stage solid-propellant rocket motor.
- ✓ The overall length of the missile is 3.6 m, a diameter of 300 mm, and weighs around 380 kg.
- ✓ The maximum range of the missile is 55 km.

Q. Who is manufacturing the indigenously developed Naval Anti-Ship Missile -Short Range (NASM-SR)?

- A) Adani Defence and Aerospace B) Tata Advanced Systems
C) Mahindra Defence Systems Limited D) Bharat Dynamics

Answer : A

- ✓ Developer of the Missile
- ✓ The DRDO has developed the missile with the contribution of its Research Centre Imarat, Defence Research and Development Laboratory, High Energy Materials Research Laboratory and Terminal Ballistics Research Laboratory.
- ✓ The Adani Defence and Aerospace Company is manufacturing the Missile

Q. Which company has launched the 'Surya Urja ka Maha Kumbh' mission , an initiative to power 10 lakh homes by 2027 in line with PM Surya Ghar Yojana?

- A) Tata Power B) JSW Energy
C) Adani Power D) Power Grid Corporation of India

Answer : A

- ✓ Tata Power has launched the 'Surya Urja ka Maha Kumbh' mission , an initiative to power 10 lakh homes by 2027 in line with PM Surya Ghar Yojana.
- ✓ Tata Power encouraging solar energy adoption at Maha Kumbh Mela.
- ✓ Aligning with the PM Surya Ghar Yojana, which aims to solarize 1 crore homes, Tata Power has committed to powering 10 lakh households by 2027 with rooftop solar solutions.
- ✓ This mission—'Saurya Urja ka Maha Kumbh'— aims to create a shift towards energy independence.

Q. Which institution organized Asia's first Global Hyperloop Competition?

- A) IIT Bombay
B) IIT Delhi
C) IIT Kanpur
D) IIT Madras

Answer : D

- ✓ The first-ever Global Hyperloop Competition in Asia was organized by IIT Madras, with Railway Minister Vaishnaw addressing the closing ceremony.

Q. Who is the author of the Kannada short story collection Heart Lamp, longlisted for the International Booker Prize 2025?

- A) Banu Mushtaq
B) Perumal Murugan
C) U.R. Ananthamurthy
D) Geetanjali Shree

Answer : A

- ✓ Heart Lamp is a short story collection by Kannada author Banu Mushtaq, which has been longlisted for the prestigious International Booker Prize 2025.
- ✓ This is a historic achievement, as it is the first time that a Kannada work has made it to the long list.
- ✓ The judges have praised the book's storytelling, calling it "witty, vivid, colloquial, moving, and excoriating."
- ✓ Indian winner of the Booker Prize
- ✓ Arundhati Roy in 1997 for The God of Small Things.
- ✓ Kiran Desai in 2006 for "The Inheritance of Loss".
- ✓ Aravind Adiga in 2008 for "The White Tiger."

Q. Which country introduced the Green Transition Alliance India (GTAI) to enhance collaboration with India on sustainable energy solutions?

- A) Sweden
B) Denmark
C) Germany
D) Finland

Answer : B

- ✓ Denmark launched the Green Transition Alliance India (GTAI) to strengthen its collaboration with India in the field of sustainable energy solutions.
- ✓ The initiative is a part of the Green Strategic Partnership (GSP) between Denmark and India, focusing on accelerating the transition to net zero emissions, with Denmark aiming for net zero by 2045 and India by 2070.

Q. Saurav Ghosal defeated which player to win the PSA Octane Sydney Classic 2025 Squash Tournament?

- A) Abdelrahman Nassar
B) James Willstrop
C) Jesse Engelbrecht
D) Paul Coll

Answer : A

- ✓ Saurav Ghosal returned from his retirement to win the Octane Sydney Classic 2025 Squash Tournament.
- ✓ India's most successful squash player, Saurav Ghosal, announced his retirement from professional squash in April 2024.
- ✓ Saurav Ghosal's Achievements in Squash
- ✓ In 2003, Saurav Ghosal made his debut as a professional squash player..
- ✓ He is the only squash player from India to reach the world's top 10 ranking in the senior men's singles.
- ✓ Saurav Ghosal has won the national championship 13 times.
- ✓ He has won a total of nine medals at the Asian Games.
- ✓ He won the first-ever squash medal for India, a bronze medal, in the 2006 Doha Asian Games.
- ✓ In 2007, Saurav Ghosal was awarded the Arjuna Award. He is the first squash player to be awarded the Arjuna Award.

Q. NITI Aayog has constituted a committee to prepare a roadmap aimed at transforming AIIMS, New Delhi into a premier institution for medical research and practice. Who is heading this committee?

A) Jyoti Narula	B) Vijay Kumar Saraswat
C) Arvind Virmani	D) V K Paul

Answer : D

- ✓ Government think tank NITI Aayog has formed a committee to create a roadmap aimed at transforming AIIMS, New Delhi, into a premier institution for medical research and practice.
- ✓ The mandate of committee led by NITI Aayog member V K Paul involves thoroughly examining the existing systems and processes at AIIMS and proposing significant reforms along with specific timelines for their implementation, the Aayog said in its annual report 2024-25.

Q. Power Finance Corporation has inked an initial pact to provide Rs 26,800 crore finance to power utilities of which state?

A) Uttar Pradesh	B) Himachal Pradesh
C) Madhya Pradesh	D) Rajasthan

Answer : C

- ✓ Power Finance Corporation (PFC) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the government of Madhya Pradesh to extend financial assistance of Rs 26,800 crore to the states power utilities.
- ✓ The agreement was signed at the recently-concluded Madhya Pradesh Global Investors Summit 2025 in Bhopal.
- ✓ Power Finance Corporation (PFC)
- ✓ Founded : 1986
- ✓ Headquarters : New Delhi
- ✓ Chairman & MD : Parminder Chopra.
- ✓ PCF is an Indian central public sector undertaking under the ownership of the Ministry of Power, Government of India.
- ✓ PFC paying almost Rs. 14,500 Crs to the Govt. of India for the 52.63% stake.
- ✓ PFC) is set to become the 11th Maharatna central public sector enterprise (CPSE).

Q. Which country has introduced the Blue Visa for a 10-year residency permit focused on environmental sustainability?

A) Saudi Arabia	B) Qatar
C) Oman	D) UAE

Answer : D

- ✓ UAE has introduced the Blue Visa, a 10-year residency permit for individuals dedicated to environmental sustainability.
- ✓ This initiative was announced during the World Governments Summit 2025 in Dubai.
- ✓ It is part of the country's broader commitment to sustainability and climate action, in line with its existing long-term residency options such as the Golden Visa and Green Visa.
- ✓ The Blue Visa is being launched by the Ministry of Climate Change and Environment (MoCCAEE) in collaboration with the Federal Authority for Identity, Citizenship, Customs, and Ports Security (ICP).
- ✓ United Arab Emirates (UAE)
- ✓ Capital : Abu Dhabi
- ✓ Currency : dirham
- ✓ President : Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan
- ✓ Prime Minister : Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum

Q. When is National Science Day celebrated every year?

- A) 26 February B) 27 February
C) 28 February D) 29 February

Answer : C

- ✓ National Science Day is celebrated every year on 28 February in India.
- ✓ The theme for National Science Day 2025 is “Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science & Innovation for Viksit Bharat.”
- ✓ The first National Science Day was celebrated on 28 February 1987.
- ✓ Sir C. V. Raman was an Indian physicist whose ground breaking work in the field of light scattering earned him the 1930 Nobel Prize for Physics.

Q. What is the theme of National Science Day 2025?

- A) Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science & Innovation for Viksit Bharat
B) Future of STI: Impact on Education Skills and Work
C) Indigenous Technologies for Viksit Bharat
D) Integrated Approach in S&T for Sustainable Future

Answer : A

- ✓ The theme for National Science Day 2025 is “Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science & Innovation for Viksit Bharat.”
- ✓ It emphasizes the role of young minds in driving India’s scientific and technological progress, aligning with the vision of Viksit Bharat 2047, which aims for a developed and self-reliant India.

Q. Which state introduced India’s first Global Capability Centers (GCC) Policy 2025?

- A) Maharashtra B) Tamil Nadu
C) Uttar Pradesh D) Madhya Pradesh

Answer : D

- ✓ Madhya Pradesh introduced India’s first Global Capability Centers (GCC) Policy 2025 with the goal of transforming Tier-2 cities like Indore, Bhopal, and Jabalpur into global business hubs.
- ✓ This policy aims to attract multinational corporations by providing a conducive business environment, infrastructure, and financial incentives.
- ✓ The policy not only enhances the state's global business standing but also decentralizes economic growth, supporting balanced development across India.

Q. Which of the following naval vessels was used for Navika Sagar Parikrama?

A) INS Astradharini

B) INSV Tarini

C) INS Kavaratti

D) INS Nilgiri

Answer : B

- ✓ The Indian Naval Sailing Vessel (INSV) Tarini entered Port Stanley on 18 Feb 25 thus completing the third and most challenging phase of Navika Sagar Parikrama II.
- ✓ About Navika Sagar Parikrama II.:
- ✓ It underscores the Indian Navy's commitment to gender empowerment and maritime excellence.
- ✓ It is crewed by two women officers-Lieutenant Commander Dilna K and Lieutenant Commander Roopa A.
- ✓ It aims to promote ocean sailing, self-reliance, and India's rich maritime heritage.
- ✓ The historic expedition was flagged off from Goa by the chief of the Naval Staff on October 2, 2024.
- ✓ Navika Sagar Parikrama II covering more than 21,600 nautical miles (approx 40,000 km) will unfold in five legs with stop overs at four ports for replenishment and maintenance, as required. The broad contour of voyage will be as follows: -
- ✓ Goa to Fremantle, Australia
- ✓ Fremantle to Lyttleton, New Zealand
- ✓ Lyttleton to Port Stanley, Falkland
- ✓ Port Stanley to Cape Town, S. Africa
- ✓ Cape Town to Goa.
- ✓ About INSV Tarini:
- ✓ It is a 56-foot sailing vessel built by M/s Aquarius Shipyard Ltd.
- ✓ The vessel has clocked more than 66,000 nautical miles (1,22,223 km) and participated in first edition of Navika Sagar Parikrama in 2017.
- ✓ The boat is equipped with advanced navigation, safety and communication equipment.

INS IN NEWS 2024-25

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi commissioned three frontline naval warships and submarines - INS Surat, INS Nilgiri and INS Vagsheer at the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai, Maharashtra on 15 January 2025.
- INS Nilgiri is a stealth frigate and is the lead ship of the Indian Navy's Project 17A, to develop stealth frigates .
- INS Surat is the last of the four guided missile destroyer class ships to be constructed under Project 15B and INS Vagsheer is the the sixth and final submarine of the Kalvari class built under Project 75 of the Indian Navy
- Larsen & Toubro (L&T) launched the second multi-purpose vessel (MPV) INS Utkarsh for the Indian Navy.
- Mumbai based Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) marked a key milestone in India's defence capabilities with the delivery of the sixth and final Scorpene-class submarine, INS Vagsheer, to the Indian Navy.
- It is the sixth submarine of the first batch of six Kalvari-class submarines for the Indian Navy.
- INS Nirdeshak is the second ship under the Survey Vessel (Large) Project of the Indian Navy. It is designed to conduct hydrographic surveys, assist in navigation and support maritime operations.
- It is built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.
- Indian Navy is set to commission its latest multi-role stealth guided missile frigate, INS Tushil, at Kaliningrad, Russia
- Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE) Ltd delivered INS Nirdeshak to the Indian Navy. It is the second in a series of four Survey Vessels (Large) being built by the Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers.

- ✓ Pragganandhaa became only the second Indian to win the crown after the legendary Viswanathan Anand (2006)

CHES GRANDMASTER IN NEWS 2024-25

- ✓ Grandmaster R Praggnanandhaa clinched the Tata Steel Masters 2025 title in Netherlands by defeating World Champion D Gukesh.
- ✓ R. Vaishali of India won the bronze medal in the women's section of the 2024 FIDE World Blitz Championships and Gold for Ju Wenjun from China.
- ✓ For the time in the history of the World Blitz Championship, the title of the Open section was shared between two players- Magnus Carlsen and Ian Nepomniachtchi.
- ✓ Koneru Humpy of India and the Russian Volodar Murzin respectively won the women's and Open titles at the 2024 FIDE World Rapid Championships.
- ✓ D Gukesh created history at the age of 18 by defeating China's Ding Liren to win the World Chess Championship 2024 title. Gukesh, who became India's second world champion after Vishwanathan Anand.
- ✓ Indian Men's and Women's chess teams won gold medals in their respective events at the 45th edition of the FIDE Chess Olympiad, held in the Hungarian capital of Budapest from 10-23 September 2024. The next 46th FIDE Chess Olympiad will be held in Tashkent, Uzbekistan 2026.
- ✓ Grand Master Arjun Erigaisi has become the second Indian chess player and 16th in the world to achieve 2800 Elo rating points in classical chess.
- ✓ Anish Sarkar of Kolkata, West Bengal, has become the youngest-rated FIDE chess player in the world. At the age of three years, eight months, and 19 days, Anish secured a FIDE rating of 1555.
- ✓ Karthik Venkataraman won the 61st edition of the Indian National Championship
- ✓ Former world chess champion Viswanathan Anand of India has won the Leon Master chess championship for the 10th time .
- ✓ 18-year Nagpur girl and women's chess International Master Divya Deshmukh won the FIDE under - 20 Girl's World Chess Championship.
- ✓ Magnus Carlsen and Ju Wenjun emerged as the champions at the Norway Chess tournament at Stavanger.
- ✓ World No 1, Magnus Carlsen won the Casablanca Chess Variant tournament .
- ✓ P Shyaamnikhil of Tamil Nadu becomes India's 85th Chess Grandmaster.

Q. Which institution has launched India's largest metal 3D printing machine for rocket components?

- A) IIT Madras
B) IIT Delhi
C) IIT Kanpur
D) IIT Hyderabad

Answer : D

- ✓ DRDO and IIT Hyderabad unveiled India's largest metal 3D printing machine for rocket components. It was developed at the DRDO-Industry-Academia Centre of Excellence (DIA-CoE) at IIT Hyderabad.
- ✓ The machine uses Powder-based Directed Energy Deposition technology for additive manufacturing.
- ✓ It has a build volume of 1m x 1m x 3m, making it one of India's largest metal 3D printers.
- ✓ The system features dual heads for thermal balancing and speed.
- ✓ A key milestone was achieved with the successful fabrication of a one-meter-high component, advancing large-scale additive manufacturing in India.

Q. Who became the first Black woman to win the Mrs World title?

- A) Angela Lewis
B) Maria Gonzalez
C) Tshego Gaelae
D) Naomi Richards

Answer : C

- ✓ Tshego Gaele made history by becoming the first Black woman to win the Mrs World title in 2025.

- ✓ She is an attorney, entrepreneur, and advocate for women's empowerment, using her platform to drive sustainable change, particularly for children.
- ✓ Gaelae is passionate about authenticity and aims to represent South Africa's rich cultural heritage on a global stage

FIRST'S FEMALE IN NEWS 2024-25

- Tshogo Gaelae made history by becoming the first Black woman to win the Mrs World title in 2025.
- The British multinational bank Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corporation (HSBC) made history by appointing Pam Kaur as its first female chief financial officer(CFO).
- Surgeon Vice Admiral Arti Sarin became the first woman to head the Director General of the Armed Forces Medical Services (DGAFMS).
- Saleema Imtiaz becomes first Pakistan woman to be nominated as International Umpire
- Lt Gen Sadhna Saxena Nair becomes first woman DG Medical Services (Army).
- Sub Lieutenant Anamika B. Rajeev became the Indian Navy's first woman helicopter pilot.
- Claudia Sheinbaum Elected As Mexico's First Woman President.
- Idashisha Nongrang has been named first woman Director General of Police (DGP) of Meghalaya state.
- Professor Naima Khatoon has been appointed as the Vice Chancellor of Aligarh Muslim University (AMU).
- Democratic Republic Of Congo Appoints Judith Suminwa Tuluka As African Nation's First Woman Prime Minister.
- Suman Kumari has become the first woman sniper of the Border Security Force (BSF).
- Maryam Nawaz was sworn in as the first woman Chief Minister (CM) of Pakistan's Punjab province.
- Justice Ritu Bahri was today sworn in as the first woman Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court.
- Nina Singh becomes first woman to be appointed as DG of CISF.
- Captain Fatima Wasim has become the first woman medical officer to be posted at the operational post of Siachen Glacier.
- Captain Geetika Kaul of Snow Leopard Brigade had become the first woman medical officer to be deployed in Siachen.
- Commander Prerna Deosthalee has been appointed as the first woman officer to command a warship in the Indian Navy (INW).

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Pinaka Multiple Rocket Launch Systems (MRLS):

1. It is an indirect area fire artillery weapon system developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
2. It was first used during the 1965 Indo-Pak War.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Union Defence Ministry recently signed contracts worth ₹10,147 crore for a variety of ammunition for the Army's Pinaka Multiple Rocket Launch Systems (MRLS).
- ✓ About Pinaka Multiple Rocket Launch Systems (MRLS):
- ✓ It is a battle-proven, all-weather, indirect area fire Artillery Weapon System.
- ✓ It was developed by DRDO's Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE).
- ✓ It was first used during the Kargil War, where it successfully neutralised Pakistan Army positions on the mountain tops.
- ✓ Each launcher carries 12 rockets, and a battery consists of six launchers (72 rockets total).
- ✓ It delivers a variety of warheads, including high-explosive and submunitions.

- ✓ It has a range of 60 to 75 kilometers.
- ✓ Initially unguided, but the Pinaka-Guided version uses INS/GPS navigation for precision strikes.
- ✓ The system is mounted on a Tatra truck for mobility.

Q. The central government has extended the term of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis by how many years in February 2025?

- A) 2 years
B) 3 years
C) 4 years
D) 5 years

Answer : B

- ✓ National Commission for Safai Karamcharis tenure extended by 3 years.
- ✓ The Union Cabinet in a meeting held in New Delhi and chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has extended the tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis for a period of three years till 31 March 2028.
- ✓ The tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis was to lapse on 31st March 2025.
- ✓ About the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis
- ✓ The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis was set up as a statutory body in 1994 by the government of India under the provision of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993.
- ✓ As per the provision of the act, the tenure of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis was three years.
- ✓ The central government periodically amended the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act in 1997 and 2001 and extended its term by three -three years.
- ✓ The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act was allowed to lapse on 29 February 2004 by the government and was converted into a non-statutory body.
- ✓ The government has periodically extended the term of the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis.
- ✓ The non-statutory body National Commission for Safai Karamcharis comes under the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment.
- ✓ The National Commission for Safai Karamcharis consists of the Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, and five members.
- ✓ The Chairperson has a status equivalent to the Union Minister of State.
- ✓ The other members and Vice-Chairperson have the status equivalent to the Secretary to the Government of India.
- ✓ Headquarters of the Commission: New Delhi

Q. The government of India has extended the “ Skill India Programme” till ?

- A) 2025-26
B) 2027-28
C) 2028-29
D) 2029-30

Answer : A

- ✓ Union Cabinet in a meeting held in New Delhi on 7th February 2025 and chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has restructured and extended the central sector scheme “ Skill India Programme” till 2025-26.
- ✓ The Skill India Mission was
- ✓ launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2015 to create a trained workforce in India to meet the needs of the industry and help in the economic development of the country.
- ✓ The government of India later launched various schemes to realize the objectives of the Skill India Mission.
- ✓ Three key skilling schemes of the central government -Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0, Pradhan Mantri National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS), and the Jan Shikshan Sansthan Scheme have been consolidated into a comprehensive “Skill India Programme”.

- ✓ The Outlay for the Skill India Programme from the period 2022-23 to 2025-26 is Rs 8,800 crore.
- ✓ The Skill India programme is being implemented by the Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- ✓ The Ministry came into existence on 9 November 2014.

Q. What is the total outlay for the central government scheme Skill India Programme?

- A) Rs 6,370 crore
B) Rs 8,800 crore
C) Rs 5,250 crore
D) Rs 3,210 crore

Answer : B

- ✓ The Outlay for the Skill India Programme from the period 2022-23 to 2025-26 is Rs 8,800 crore.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC):

1. It is a satellite-based navigation system developed by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).
2. It provides service to users in India as well as the region extending about 5000 km beyond the Indian landmass.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ ISRO recently faced a setback in its mission to position the NVS-02 satellite in the desired orbit due to thruster failure, but is working on alternative strategies to utilise the satellite in its current elliptical orbit for the NavIC navigation system.
- ✓ About Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC):
- ✓ NavIC is India's independent regional navigation satellite system designed to provide accurate Position, Velocity, and Timing (PVT) service to users in India as well as the region extending about 1500 km beyond the Indian landmass, which is its primary service area.
- ✓ It is a satellite-based navigation system developed by the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO).
- ✓ The first NavIC satellite was launched in July of 2013.
- ✓ As of 2022, the NavIC system consists of eight satellites, three of them in geostationary orbits and five in inclined geosynchronous orbits, with plans to expand to 12 satellites. Currently, 7 satellites are active.
- ✓ NavIC offers two services:
- ✓ Standard Position Service (SPS) for civilian users.
- ✓ Restricted Service (RS) for strategic users.
- ✓ The system provides positioning accuracy of better than 10 metres (10.9 yards) throughout India and better than 20 m (21.9 yards) for the area surrounding India by 1,500 km (932 miles).
- ✓ NavIC SPS signals are interoperable with the other global navigation satellite system (GNSS) signals namely GPS, Glonass, Galileo and BeiDou.

Q. What was the name of the joint airborne exercise conducted jointly by the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force in February 2025?

- A) Exercise Winged Raiders
B) Exercise Autumn Forge
C) Exercise Able Archer
D) Exercise Tarang Shakti

Answer : A

- ✓ Indian Army and IAF conducts joint military exercise 'Winged Raider.
- ✓ Indian Army and the Indian Air Force jointly conducted a comprehensive training exercise named EX Winged Raiders in the Eastern Theater. The exercise which was focused on special airborne operations was aimed to enhance inter-service synergy. The joint military exercise is part of the government of India's effort to push for interoperability leading to the setting up of an integrated theatre command in the country.
- ✓ Interoperability in the military means the ability of the different wings of the armed forces to work together and use other weapon systems.
- ✓ This means that Indian Army personnel will gain expertise in operating the Indian Air Force weapons systems and vice versa.
- ✓ The 'Winged Raiders' was conducted to test the interoperability of the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force.
- ✓ The exercise focused on special airborne operations and was conducted in the Eastern Theater of the Indian Army.
- ✓ The Chief of Army Staff General Upendra Dwivedi and the Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh flew together in the indigenous Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas on the eve of Aero India 2025 in Bengaluru on 9 February 2025.
- ✓ This was the first time that the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force Chief flew together in an LCA.
- ✓ The 15th edition of the Aero India show is being held at Air Force Station, Yelahanka in Bengaluru, Karnataka from 10-14 February 2025.

EXERCISE IN NEWS 2024-25.

- The Indian Army and Indian Air Force conducted EX Winged Raiders in the Eastern Theater.
- The 13th edition of the joint India-Maldives military exercise 'Ekuverin' is being hosted by Maldives from 2-15 February 2025.
- The indigenously designed and built guided missile destroyer INS Mumbai is participating in the Exercise LA PEROUSE.
- It is the fourth edition of the multinational naval exercise.
- Exercise SLINEX 2024 (Sri Lanka-India Exercise) will be conducted from 17 to 20 Dec 24 at Visakhapatnam under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command.
- India and Malaysia commenced the bilateral Joint Military Exercise "Harimau Shakti" on 2 December 2024 at Bentong camp, Pahang district, Malaysia.
- The third edition of the joint military exercise AUSTRALIND commenced today at the Foreign Training Node in Pune, Maharashtra.
- India Launches First Space Defense Exercise Antariksha Abhyas – 2024.
- The Defence Space Agency, under the Headquarters Integrated Defence Staff, is conducting Antariksha Abhyas – 2024
- The Indian Navy will conduct the fourth edition of its nationwide coastal defence exercise, Sea Vigil-24, on November 20 and 21
- Indian Army contingent departs for 9th India-Indonesia joint exercise GARUD SHAKTI 24 in Jakarta.
- The Indian Army contingent departed today for the 15th edition of India- US joint Special Forces Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR.
- The exercise is scheduled to be conducted from 2nd to 22nd November 2024 at Orchard Combat Training Centre in Idaho, USA
- The 31st edition of the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (SIMBEX) is scheduled from 23 to 29 Oct 2024, in the Eastern Naval Command at Visakhapatnam.
- India -Kazakhstan joint military exercise 8th edition of KAZIND-2024 commenced at the mountainous Surya Foreign Training node in Auli, Uttarakhand, on 30 September 2024.
- Indian Navy and the Royal Navy of Oman conduct a bilateral maritime exercise called Naseem Al Bahr, or Sea Breeze Exercise.
- The 13th edition of the Naseem Al Bahr exercise was held off the coast of Oman from November 19 to 24, 2024

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi has declared India's plan to establish its own space station by 2035.
- National Strategic Plan & Roadmap for Leprosy (2023-27) to achieve zero transmission of leprosy by 2027.
- India self-reliant in pulses by December 2027
- Indian Consumer Tech To Touch \$300 Bn By 2027.
- India is expected to overtake Japan and Germany to emerge as the third largest economy in the world by 2027.
- Members of the Association of Asia Pacific Airlines (AAPA) collectively have set an "aspirational target" of 5% sustainable aviation fuel (SAF) usage by 2030.
- India to push developed nations to become carbon-negative before 2050.
- This 'Bharat Drone Shakti 2023' event will help the country to achieve its commitment of becoming a global drone hub by 2030.
- Vaccine manufacturer Indian Immunologicals Limited (IIL) expects to commercially launch its dengue fever vaccine by early 2026.
- Group Chief Economic Advisor at the State Bank of India (SBI), Soumya Kanti Ghoshon has reiterated that India is likely to become the third-largest economy by 2027.
- The Ministry of Coal has set a target to gasify 100 million tonnes of coal by FY 2030.
- According to the report of Goldman Sachs Research, by the year 2075, India will become the second largest economy in the world after China leaving behind not only Japan and Germany but also America.
- UNEP suggests measures to reduce 80% of world's plastic pollution by 2040.
- India aims to become one trillion dollar tourism economy by 2047.
- The government announced a plan to add 250 GW of renewable energy capacity in the next five years to achieve its target of 500 GW of clean energy by 2030.
- India has set targets for half of its installed electricity capacity to be from non-fossil fuel sources by 2030 and for the country to attain net-zero carbon emissions by 2070.
- 2023 foreign trade policy has the vision to take India's goods and services exports to \$2 trillion by 2030.
- India to get 9% of Electricity from Nuclear Sources by 2047.
- India sets target to become 'Global Hub for Green Ship' building by 2030
- Indian Railways to become Net Zero Carbon Emitter by 2030.
- India to produce 5 million tonnes of green hydrogen by 2030.
- Indian Government has set a target to eliminate TB in India by 2025.

. Q. Who has been named as the pilot for Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4)?

A) Mohana Singh	B) Narinder Chatrath
C) Aruna Kumar Datta	D) Shubhanshu Shukla

Answer : D

- ✓ Indian Air Force officer and ISRO astronaut Shubhanshu Shukla was named the pilot for Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4).
- ✓ Ax-4 is the fourth private astronaut mission to the International Space Station (ISS).
- ✓ The mission is organized by Axiom Space in collaboration with NASA.
- ✓ The crew will launch aboard a SpaceX Dragon spacecraft from NASA's Kennedy Space Center.
- ✓ They will spend up to 14 days on the ISS conducting scientific research and technology demonstrations.

Q. Which country has been certified malaria-free by the World Health Organization (WHO) in January 2025?

A) Azerbaijan	B) Georgia
C) Armenia	D) Moldova

Answer : B

- ✓ Georgia has been certified malaria-free by the World Health Organization.
- ✓ It is located at the intersection of Eastern Europe and West Asia, in the Transcaucasia region.
- ✓ Malaria is a life-threatening fever caused by Plasmodium parasites spread by infected female Anopheles mosquitoes.
- ✓ It is primarily found in tropical countries and is not contagious. The disease cannot spread from person to person; transmission occurs through mosquito bites.

Q. Which astronaut holds the record for most spacewalks by a woman in space?

- A) Peggy Whitson B) Sunita Williams
C) Svetlana Savitskaya D) Sally Ride

Answer : B

- ✓ Indian-origin astronaut Sunita Williams has set a new record for the longest spacewalking time by a woman, surpassing former astronaut Peggy Whitson's previous record.
- ✓ Williams has now logged a total of 62 hours and 6 minutes of spacewalking time across nine spacewalks
- ✓ Williams just surpassed former astronaut Peggy Whitson's total spacewalking time of 60 hours and 21 minutes

Q. In February 2025, Four new wetlands from India have been added to the list of Ramsar sites. Which of the given options is not true with respect to the location of these wetlands?

- A) Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary - Tamil Nadu
B) Therthangal Bird Sanctuary - Tamil Nadu
C) Khecheopalri Wetland - Manipur
D) Udhwa Lake - Jharkhand

Answer : C

- ✓ India with 89 Sites has the largest number of Ramsar sites in Asia.
- ✓ The government of India has added four new wetland sites - Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary and Therthangal Bird Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu, Khecheopalri Wetland in Sikkim, and Udhwa Lake in Jharkhand- to the Ramsar Wetlands Site.
- ✓ The number of Ramsar sites in the country is now 89 and India has the highest number of Ramsar sites in Asia ahead of China (82 sites).
- ✓ After the United Kingdom(175 sites) and Mexico (142), India has the third-largest number of Ramsar sites in the world.
- ✓ Within India, Tamil Nadu has a maximum - 20 wetlands under the Ramsar site list.
- ✓ For the first time, wetland sites of Jharkhand and Sikkim have been included in the Ramsar site list.
- ✓ About the Recently Added Ramsar Sites
- ✓ Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu
- ✓ Location - Spread over parts of Sakkarakottai, Rajasuriyamadai, and Achadipirambu villages of Ramanathapuram Taluk, Ramanathapuram district of Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ Area -230.49 Hectares.
- ✓ Therthangal Bird Sanctuary, Tamil Nadu
- ✓ Location - Situated in the Therthangal Village of Ramanathapuram Taluk, in Ramanathapuram District.
- ✓ Area - 29.5 hectares
- ✓ Khecheopalri Wetland, Sikkim
- ✓ Location -Khecheopalri village in the West Sikkim district.
- ✓ Area-11.56 hectares
- ✓ Locally known as Kha-Chot-Palri or Sho Dzo Sho

- ✓ Udhwa Lake in Jharkhand
- ✓ Location -Sahebganj district
- ✓ Area - 565 Hectares.
- ✓ Ramsar Convention
- ✓ To protect these ecologically important areas, an international conference was held in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971.
- ✓ The countries agreed on a set of measures to conserve these wetlands.
- ✓ This convention is known as the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
- ✓ Ramsar Convention and India
- ✓ on 1 February 1982, India ratified the Ramsar Convention.
- ✓ First Indian wetland sites- Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan) and Chilika Lake (Odisha) in 1981.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu has a maximum of 20 sites.
- ✓ Largest Ramsar site: Sunderban of West Bengal.
- ✓ Smallest Ramsar: Renuka in Himachal Pradesh.
- ✓ Two Indian cities Indore of Madhya Pradesh and Udaipur of Rajasthan have been accredited as the Wetland Cites under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.

Q. Which is the first wetland of Jharkhand to be included in the Ramsar Wetland site list?

A) Topchanchi Lake	B) Kalindi Lake
C) Manjura Lake	D) Udhwa Lake

Answer : D

Q. Which is the first wetland of Sikkim to be included in the Ramsar wetlands list ?

A) Tso Lhamo Lake	B) Khecheopalri Lake
C) Tsongmo Lake	D) Gurudongmar Lake

Answer : B

Q. Which state in India has the highest number of wetlands under the Ramsar sites?

A) Uttar Pradesh	B) Tamil Nadu
C) Karnataka	D) Madhya Pradesh

Answer : B

- ✓ As of February 2025, Tamil Nadu has the most Ramsar sites in India, with 20 sites.
- ✓ Uttar Pradesh has the second highest number of wetlands recognized as Ramsar sites, with a total of 10 sites.

Q. Recently four new wetlands from India have been added to the Ramsar sites list. What is the total Ramsar sites tally so far in India?

A) 85	B) 93
C) 81	D) 89

Answer : D

- ✓ The number of Ramsar sites in the country is now 89 and India has the highest number of Ramsar sites in Asia ahead of China (82 sites).
- ✓ What is a Ramsar Site?
- ✓ Ramar Site refers to wetlands that have been notified by the signatory countries of the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance as being of international importance.
- ✓ The Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance came into force in 1975.

- ✓ An international conference was held in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 to build an international consensus on conserving and preserving wetlands worldwide.
- ✓ The list of the Ramsar sites is maintained by the Ramsar convention's secretariat, based at the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) headquarters in Gland, Switzerland.
- ✓ World's First Ramsar site was identified in 1974, which was the Cobourg Peninsula in Australia.
- ✓ First Indian wetland sites- Keoladeo National Park (Rajasthan) and Chilika Lake (Odisha) in 1981.
- ✓ Ramsar Convention is an intergovernmental environment treaty established in 1975 by UNESCO.

Q. With reference to Very Short-Range Air Defence System, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Man Portable Air Defence system.
2. It is short-range, lightweight and portable surface-to-air missile.
3. It is designed and developed indigenously.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
- B) 2 and 3 only
- C) 1, 2 and 3
- D) None

Answer : C

- ✓ Defence Research & Development Organisation (DRDO) has successfully conducted three successive flight-trials of the Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) from Chandipur off the coast of Odisha.
- ✓ About Very Short-Range Air Defence System:
- ✓ It is a Man Portable Air Defence system.
- ✓ Features
- ✓ It is short-range, lightweight and portable surface-to-air missiles that can be fired by individuals or small groups to destroy aircraft or helicopters.
- ✓ Range: They have a maximum range of 8 kilometres and can engage targets at altitudes of 4.5 km.
- ✓ The missile incorporates many novel technologies including a miniaturized Reaction Control System (RCS) and integrated avionics, which have been successfully proven during the tests.
- ✓ It is designed and developed indigenously by the Research Center Imarat in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and Development cum Production Partners.
- ✓ The missile system has the capability to meet the needs of all the three branches of the Armed Forces, viz. Indian Army, Navy and Air Force.

Q. Etemad and Ghadr-380 missiles, recently seen in the news, are developed by which one of the following countries?

- A) France
- B) Turkey
- C) United Arab Emirates
- D) Iran

Answer : D

- ✓ Iran recently unveiled two missiles, named Etemad and Ghadr-380.
- ✓ About Etemad Missile:
- ✓ It is a new ballistic missile built by the Iranian defence ministry.
- ✓ Dubbed Etemad, or "trust" in Persian, it has a maximum range of 1,700 kilometres (1,056 miles).
- ✓ With a length of 16 meters and a diameter of 1.25 meters, the missile is equipped with a precision-guided warhead.
- ✓ About Ghadr-380:

- ✓ It is an anti-warship cruise missile developed by Iran.
- ✓ It has a range of over 1,000 kilometers.
- ✓ It has anti-jamming capability

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Small Modular Reactors (SMRs):

1. Finance Minister announced a ₹20,000 crore 'Nuclear Energy Mission' to develop indigenous Small Modular Reactors (SMR).

2. They are small nuclear reactors with a maximum output of 300 Megawatt electric (MWe).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Finance Minister recently announced a ₹20,000 crore 'Nuclear Energy Mission' to develop indigenous Small Modular Reactors (SMR).
- ✓ About Small Modular Reactors (SMRs):
- ✓ SMRs are defined as small nuclear reactors with a maximum output of 300 Megawatt electric (MWe) and can produce 7.2 million kWh per day.
- ✓ By comparison, large-size nuclear power plants have an output of over 1,000 MWe and can produce 24 million kWh per day.
- ✓ SMRs, which can produce a large amount of low-carbon electricity, are:
- ✓ Small – physically a fraction of the size of a conventional nuclear power reactor.
- ✓ Modular – making it possible for systems and components to be factory-assembled and transported as a unit to a location for installation.
- ✓ Reactors – harnessing nuclear fission to generate heat to produce energy.

Q. Inland mangrove of Guneri, recently in news, is located in:

- A) Karnataka
B) West Bengal
C) Tamil Nadu
D) Gujarat

Answer : D

- ✓ Gujarat government declared the inland mangrove in Kutch district's Guneri village as the first Biodiversity Heritage Site of Gujarat.
- ✓ Guneri Mangrove
- ✓ It is a natural inland mangrove site located in Kutch district of Gujarat.
- ✓ It is located at a distance of 45 km from the Arabian Sea and four km from the Kori Creek, where seawater never approaches.
- ✓ They are assumed to have originated either after the marine transgression which occurred in the area during the Miocene period or on the bank of the lost river (the Saraswati River) in the Great Rann of Kachchh.
- ✓ The announcement has been done under the provisions of The Biodiversity Act, 2002

Q. Which team won the 6th Men's Hockey India League 2024-25?

- A) Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers B) Hyderabad Toofans
C) Dabang Mumbai D) Punjab Warriors

Answer : A

- ✓ Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers win men's Hockey India League 2024-25 Title.

- ✓ Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers won the 6th Men's Hockey India League 2024-25 title, beating Hyderabad Toofans 4-3 in a tense final at a packed Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, Odisha on 1 February 2025.
- ✓ This was the first title win for the Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers, winning them a prize of Rs 3 crore.
- ✓ The runners-up Hyderabad Toofan won Rs 2 crore as prize money.
- ✓ The 6th men's Hockey India league was held at the Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, Odisha from 28th December 2024 to 1st February 2025.

Q. The Indian women's team defeated which team in the final to win their second consecutive ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup title?

A) Australia	B) Bangladesh
C) South Africa	D) England

Answer : C

- ✓ India successfully defends its ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup Title.
- ✓ The Indian women's U19 cricket team demolished South Africa by nine wickets in the final of the 2nd ICC Women's U19 T20 World Cup to retain their title, which was won two years back in South Africa.
- ✓ The final of the tournament was played on 2 February 2025 at the Bayuemas Cricket Oval, Kuala Lumpur Malaysia.
- ✓ This was the major title win for the Niki Prasad-led Indian team, having won the inaugural Asian Cricket Council Women's U19 Asia Cup 2024 Title in Malaysia in December 2024.
- ✓ The 2nd ICC U-19 Women's T20 World Cup, organised by the International Cricket Council (ICC) was held in Malaysia from 18 January to 2 February 2025.

Q. What is the mascot of the 9th Winter Asian Games 2025?

A) Binbin and Nini	B) Fu Niu and Lele
C) Bing Dwen and Shuey Rhon	D) Shuey Rhon and Binbin

Answer : A

- ✓ For the first time, the government of India has extended full financial support to the Indian contingent participating in an Asian Winter Games under the Assistance to National Sports Federations (ANSF) Scheme.
- ✓ The Chinese city of Harbin is hosting the 9th Asian Winter Games from 7-14 February 2025.
- ✓ Harbin is hosting the Winter Asian Games for the second time having hosted it in 1994.
- ✓ The government will provide full financial support to the athletes participating in the Alpine Skiing, Cross-Country Skiing, Figure Skating, Short Track Speed Skating, and Speed Skating (Long Track) events at the 9th Asian Winter Games.
- ✓ India is sending an 88-member contingent to the Harbin Winter Games, including 59 athletes and 29 officials.
- ✓ Mascot and Slogan of the 9th Asian Winter Games
- ✓ Mascot - Binbin and Nini. Both are tigers found in the Northeastern region of China. Binbin represents ice sports and Nini represents snow sports.
- ✓ Slogan of the Games- Dream of Winter, Love among Asia
- ✓ Emblem of the Games- Breakthrough.

Q. Which country will host the 10th Winter Asian Games in 2029?

A) UAE	B) Saudi Arabia
C) Qatar	D) United States

Answer : B

- ✓ Saudi Arabia wins bid to host 2029 Asian Winter Games
- ✓ The Olympic Council of Asia is organising the 9th Asian Winter Games in Harbin, China, from 7 -14 February 2025.
- ✓ Harbin is hosting the Winter Asian Games second time having hosted it in 1996.
- ✓ Six sports -biathlon, curling, ice hockey, skating, skiing, and ski mountaineering. There will be men's and women's events across all six sports as well as mixed events in certain disciplines.
- ✓ About the Asian Winter Games
- ✓ The Winter Games is modelled on the Winter Olympic Games and is held every four years.
- ✓ The first Asian Winter Games was held in Sapporo, Japan in 1986.
- ✓ Japan is the most successful team in the Winter Asian Games having won 397 medals- 138 gold,144 silvers, and 114 bronze medals.
- ✓ India has not won any medals in the Winter Asian Games.
- ✓ Olympic Council of Asia
- ✓ The Olympic Council of Asia is the sports apex governing body in Asia. It is affiliated with the International Olympic Committee
- ✓ Headquarters: Kuwait
- ✓ President: Raja Randhir Singh

Q. The World Wetlands Day is observed every year on which day?

A) February 04	B) February 02
C) February 03	D) February 01

Answer : B

- ✓ Recently, the union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) organised the World Wetlands Day 2025 celebrations at the Parvati Arga Ramsar Site.
- ✓ It is celebrated annually on February 2.
- ✓ It aims to spread awareness about conserving one of the most critical ecosystems on the planet.
- ✓ This date marks the adoption of the Ramsar Convention in 1971.
- ✓ Theme of 2025: This year, the theme was "Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future".
- ✓ India has been a party to the Convention since 1982, designating 89 Ramsar sites.
- ✓ The World Wetlands Day is observed every year on February 2 all over the world.
- ✓ World Wetlands Day was first celebrated in 1997.
- ✓ 2025 marks 54 years of the Convention on Wetlands.

Q. What is the theme of World Wetlands Day 2025?

A) Wetlands and Climate Change	B) Wetlands and Biodiversity
C) Wetlands and Water	D) Protecting Wetlands for our Common Future

Answer : D

- ✓ World Wetlands Day 2025, themed 'Protecting Wetlands for our Common Future', celebrated at Parvati Arga Ramsar Site, in Gonda, Uttar Pradesh

Q. Who has won the Best New Age Album Award at the 67th Grammy Awards 2025?

A) Anoushka Shankar	B) Chandrika Tandon
C) Asha Puthli	D) D. Niharika Desai

Answer : B

- ✓ Chandrika Tandon wins Best New Age Album Award at the 67th Grammy.

Q. "Ekuverin" is the joint military exercise between India and which country?

- A) Singapore
- B) Malaysia
- C) Maldives
- D) Indonesia

Answer : C

- ✓ The 13th edition of the joint India-Maldives military exercise 'Ekuverin' is being hosted by Maldives from 2-15 February 2025.
- ✓ The inaugural ceremony of the 13th Ekuverin exercise between the Indian Army and the Maldives National Defence Forces (MNDF) was held at the Official Composite Training Center of the MNDF at Maafilaafushi in Maldives on 2 February 2025.
- ✓ The 12th edition of the Ekuverin was held at Chaubatia in Uttarakhand from 11-24 June 2023.
- ✓ About the Ekuverin Exercise
- ✓ Ekuverin which means Friends in the Dhivehi language of Maldives was started in 2009 to strengthen the bilateral military ties between India and Maldives.
- ✓ It is held between the Indian Army and the Maldivian National Defence Forces.
- ✓ List of military exercises conducted between India and Maldives
- ✓ Exercise Katha : Indian Navy and the Naval wing of the MNDF.
- ✓ Exercise Shield : Anti-narcotics and Maritime search and rescue operations, between the Indian Navy, MNDF, and the Sri Lanka Navy.
- ✓ Exercise Dosti : Exercise between the Coast Guard of India, Maldives, and Sri Lanka

Q. Which cricketer has been honoured with the 2023-24 Col.C.K.Nayudu lifetime achievement award by the BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India)?

- A) Sachin Tendulkar
- B) Kapil Dev
- C) Syed Kirmani
- D) Anil Kumble

Answer : A

- ✓ Legendary Indian cricketer and Bharat Ratna awardee Sachin Tendulkar was honoured with the 2023-24 Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award by the BCCI (Board of Control for Cricket in India) in a glittering ceremony held in Mumbai on 1st February 2025.
- ✓ The cricket governing body in India, the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), honoured the exceptional performance of Indian cricketers for the 2023-24 season at the BCCI Naman Awards 2025.
- ✓ Sarfraz Ahmed was honoured with the Best International Debut Trophy for a male player.
- ✓ Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award for Tendulkar.
- ✓ The Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award was instituted by the BCCI in honour of the legendary Indian cricketer Col. C.K. Nayudu.
- ✓ The first cricketer to receive the award was Lala Amarnath in 1994.
- ✓ Sachin Tendulkar was honoured with the 2023-24 award.
- ✓ During his illustrious career, Tendulkar played 200 Tests, 463 one-day internationals (ODIs), and one T20 Internationals for India.
- ✓ He scored 34,357 runs in international matches across all the three formats.
- ✓ Sachin was part of India's 2011 ODI World Cup-winning team.
- ✓ He was conferred India's highest civilian award Bharat Ratna in 2014.

Q. Who has been honoured with the 2023-24 BCCI's Polly Umrigar Award for Best International Cricketer?

- A) Ravindra Jadeja
- B) Hardik Pandya
- C) Ravichandran Ashwin
- D) Jasprit Bumrah

Answer : D

Q.

1. It was launched by India during the event 'Commemorating 50 years of Project Tiger'.
2. It aims to conserve seven big cats namely -Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Recently, in a major development, the Framework Agreement on establishment of the International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) has officially come into force.
- ✓ It was launched by the Prime Minister of India on 9th April 2023, during the event 'Commemorating 50 years of Project Tiger'.
- ✓ It was launched with the aim of conservation of seven big cats - Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard, Cheetah, Jaguar and Puma.
- ✓ Present Member countries: Nicaragua, Eswatini, India, Somalia and Liberia - have deposited the instruments of ratification under the Article VIII (1) of the Framework Agreement.
- ✓ The IBCA was established by Government of India, through the nodal organisation viz., National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), Ministry of Environment, Forest & Climate Change (MoEFCC).
- ✓ Funding: It has secured Government of India's initial support of Rs. 150 crore for five years (2023-24 to 2027-28).

Q.

- A) Rajasthan
B) Gujarat
C) Maharashtra
D) Uttar Pradesh

Answer : B

- ✓ Gujarat has appointed a panel, led by retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Desai, to draft the state's Uniform Civil Code (UCC).
- ✓ The five-member panel includes experts from various fields and is expected to submit its report within 45 days.
- ✓ This initiative aligns with Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision of implementing a Uniform Civil Code to ensure equal rights for all citizens.
- ✓ The move marks a significant step in legal reforms, as Gujarat becomes one of the states actively working towards drafting a UCC.
- ✓ Uttarakhand becomes the first state to implement a Common Civil Code.
- ✓ Article 44 of the Indian constitution under Chapter IV entitled Directive Principle of State Policy (DPSP) provides that the State shall endeavour to secure a uniform civil code for the citizens of India throughout the territory of India”
- ✓ Uttarakhand is the first state in India to enact a law under the provision of Article 44.
- ✓ Goa implemented the uniform civil code in 1869 but it was under Portuguese rule at that time.

Q.

- A) India
B) Brazil
C) China
D) South Africa

Answer : A

- ✓ India is set to host the BRICS Youth Council Entrepreneurship Working Group Meeting from March 3-7, 2025, under the theme “Youth Entrepreneurship for Sustainable Growth.”
- ✓ The event aims to enhance youth cooperation in entrepreneurship, policy discussions, and global networking among BRICS nations

Q. Which African country became the first to eliminate onchocerciasis?

- A) Nigeria
- B) Niger
- C) Ethiopia
- D) Kenya

Answer : B

- ✓ Niger has become the first African country and the fifth globally to eliminate onchocerciasis, a disease caused by the *Onchocerca volvulus* parasite and transmitted by black flies in riverine areas.
- ✓ The World Health Organization (WHO) officially recognized this achievement, marking a significant public health milestone.
- ✓ Other countries that have successfully eradicated the disease include Colombia, Ecuador, Guatemala, and Mexico

Q. Which country successfully launched the H-3 rocket carrying the Michibiki No. 6 satellite?

- A) China
- B) India
- C) United States
- D) Japan

Answer : D

- ✓ Japan successfully launched the H-3 rocket, which carried the Michibiki No. 6 satellite, as part of its efforts to enhance its positioning system.
- ✓ This satellite is crucial for Japan's version of the U.S. Global Positioning System (GPS), providing high-precision location data with centimeter-level accuracy.
- ✓ The launch was conducted by the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA) from the Tanegashima Space Center in Kagoshima Prefecture.
- ✓ Japan is aiming to have a full fleet of Michibiki satellites in operation to achieve greater self-sufficiency in its navigation systems and reduce reliance on external GPS sources.

Q. Which state will establish India's first AI university?

- A) Karnataka
- B) Tamil Nadu
- C) Gujarat
- D) Maharashtra

Answer : D

- ✓ Maharashtra is set to establish India's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) university, aiming to drive AI education, research, and innovation.
- ✓ A task force comprising experts from academia, industry, and government has been formed to oversee the project.
- ✓ The university will focus on AI research, skill development, and technological innovation while fostering collaboration between various stakeholders.
- ✓ It aligns with broader national goals to enhance AI capabilities and make Maharashtra a global hub for AI education and policy formulation

Q. Which country has recently announced its withdrawal from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC)?

- A) United States
- B) Ukraine
- C) Argentina
- D) Russia

Answer : A

- ✓ Donald Trump, the 47th President of the United States of America, has signed an executive order to withdraw the country from the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) and permanently stop the funding of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).
- ✓ He has also ordered the review of the American contribution to UNESCO and the funding of the United Nations.
- ✓ The world's largest economy, the United States, contributes around 22% of the United Nations budget
- ✓ These measures were announced by US President Donald Trump after his meeting with Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu in Washington D.C. on 4th February 2025.
- ✓ During his meeting with Netanyahu, he also announced that the United States would take over the Palestinian territory of Gaza, under the control of Israel, and resettle its estimated 18 lakh Palestinian population, somewhere else
- ✓ US decision to withdraw from UNHCR.
- ✓ During his first presidency(2017-2021), Donald Trump pulled out of the UNHRC in 2018 accusing it of bias against Israel.
- ✓ However, when Joe Biden became the President of the United States in 2021 the United States renewed its support for the UNHCR, and the United States was elected to the UNHRC in 2021 for a term of three years.
- ✓ But in September 2023, the Biden administration announced that it would not seek a second consecutive term in the UNHRC.
- ✓ Impact
- ✓ The latest order of the Trump administration will not have any immediate impact on the UNHRC as the United States is not a member of the UNHRC.
- ✓ The 47 members of the UNHRC are elected by the United Nations General Assembly for a term of three years.
- ✓ However, the United States like all the 193 members of the United Nations has an informal observer status in the UNHRC
- ✓ About the UNHRC
- ✓ The United Nations General Assembly established the United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) in 2006.
- ✓ It replaced the United Nations Commission Human Rights, set up by the United Nations in 1946.
- ✓ Functions of the UNHRC
- ✓ Works for the promotion and protection of human rights around the world;
- ✓ Discuss situations of human rights violations around the world and make recommendations on them.;
- ✓ Members
- ✓ 47 members are elected for a three-year term United National General Assembly.
- ✓ The membership is distributed among regions. 13 members come from Asia, 13 from Africa, 6 come from East Europe, 7 from Western Europe And other groups, and 8 from South America and Caribbean countries.
- ✓ Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland

Q. Which country has recently announced the permanent stopping of funds to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA)?

- A) Ukraine
- B) Argentina
- C) China
- D) United States

Answer : D

- ✓ Withdrawal from UNRWA
- ✓ Donald Trump has also suspended the American funding of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestinian Refugees in the Near East (UNRWA).

- ✓ In his first Presidency, Donald Trump had suspended funding to the UNRWA in 2018 but it was reversed by the Joe Biden administration later on.
- ✓ In 2024 the Joe Biden administration stopped funding to the UNRWA after some of the UNRWA staff were known to be involved in the 7 October 2023, Hamas attack in Israel which sparked war in Gaza and Lebanon.
- ✓ In 2024 the Israeli Parliament, Knesset passed a law to stop the operation of UNRWA from Israel which came into effect in January 2025.
- ✓ The United States is the biggest donor to the UNRWA with \$343 million funding in 2022 and \$422 million in 2023.
- ✓ Impact.
- ✓ The UNRWA budget is funded mainly by the voluntary contribution of the member countries of the United Nations.
- ✓ If the United States stops funding it will seriously impact the working of the UNRWA
- ✓ About the UNRWA
- ✓ It was set up by the United Nations in 1949 to help the Palestinian refugees who fled or were expelled from Palestine before and during the 1948 Arab -Israeli war that led to the creation of Israel.
- ✓ Israel was established by partitioning Palestine by the United Nations.
- ✓ The UNRWA Provides basic services like health, education, food, shelter, etc to the descendants of these Palestinian refugees living in Gaza, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem, as well as in Syria, Jordan, and Lebanon.
- ✓ The UNRWA is funded by voluntary contributions of the United Nations member countries.
- ✓ In 2024-25 India has pledged \$ 5 million assistance to the UNRWA.
- ✓ Headquarters: Amman (Jordan) and Gaza Strip.
- ✓ Let's recall, The order includes the American withdrawal from the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the Paris Climate Change Agreement 2015, ending automatic citizenship rights for foreign parent's children born in the USA

Q. What was the installed solar power capacity in the country as of 31st January 2025?

A) 100.3 GW	B) 180.1 GW
C) 201.5 GW	D) 150.9 GW

Answer : A

- ✓ Installed Solar Power Capacity Crosses 100 GW In India.
- ✓ The installed solar power capacity in the country has surpassed the 100 GW milestone and at the end of 31st January 2025, the total installed solar power capacity was 100.3 GW.
- ✓ This information was given by the Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy, Pralhad Joshi in a social media post on 7th February 2025.
- ✓ The government of India has set a target to achieve 500 GW of installed power capacity from non-fossil fuel (renewable energy + nuclear) sources by 2030.
- ✓ The renewable energy sources mainly include solar, wind, hydel, and wind power.
- ✓ The contribution of solar energy to the total installed renewable energy capacity was 47%.
- ✓ Highlights of the Solar Power Capacity in India .
- ✓ In 2014 the total installed solar power capacity in the country was 2.8 GW which increased to 100.3 GW as of 31st January 2025.
- ✓ In 2024, 24.5 GW of solar capacity was added in the country.
- ✓ At present 84.10 GW solar power projects are under implementation.
- ✓ Utility Scale Solar Installation .
- ✓ The utility-scale solar installation refers to the large solar projects in which the electricity produced is fed to the electricity grid. The electricity distribution companies (called utility providers) sell the electricity to the consumers.
- ✓ In 2024, 18.5 GW of utility-scale solar capacity was added in the country.

- ✓ Rajasthan, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh were the top-performing states in utility-scale solar power installations
- ✓ Roof Top Installation
- ✓ In 2024, 4.59 GW of rooftop solar power was installed, a growth of 53% as compared to 2023.
- ✓ The credit is given to the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana which was launched on 13 February 2024.
- ✓ PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana is a rooftop solar project that encourages households to install solar panels.
- ✓ These households receive 330 units of free electricity per month and the surplus electricity is sold to the utility provider.
- ✓ Hybrid Solar Project
- ✓ Hybrid solar project refers to renewable energy projects that use both solar panels and wind turbines to produce electricity.
- ✓ a 64.67 GW project is under implementation in the country.
- ✓ Solar Module Production
- ✓ In 2014, the total solar module production capacity in the country was around 2 GW.
- ✓ In 2024, the total solar module production capacity in the country was 60 GW.
- ✓ Target- 100 GW capacity by 2030

Q. The government of India has set a target to achieve 100 GW solar module production capacity by which year?

A) 2028	B) 2026
C) 2030	D) 2035

Answer : C

- ✓ The total solar module production capacity in the country was 60 GW.
- ✓ Target- 100 GW capacity by 2030.

Q. Klub-S Missile System, recently seen in the news, is developed by which country?

A) United States	B) North Korea
C) Iran	D) Russia

Answer : D

- ✓ India recently reached an agreement with Russia to acquire the Klub-S missile system, aimed at enhancing the operational capabilities of the Indian Navy's submarine fleet.
- ✓ About Klub-S Missile System:
- ✓ Developed by Russian defense company NPO Novator, the Klub, also known as Kalibr, is a cruise missile inducted into Moscow's defense forces in 1994.
- ✓ The Klub-S missiles have a warhead payload of 400 kilograms and are capable of targeting surface ships, submarines, and ground targets up to 300 kilometers away.

Q. Where was the first BIMSTEC Youth Summit held?

A) Hyderabad, Telangana	B) Gandhinagar, Gujarat
C) Bengaluru, Karnataka	D) Chennai, Tamil Nadu

Answer : B

- ✓ 1st BIMSTEC Youth Summit 2025 held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.
- ✓ The first BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Youth Summit was held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat from 7-11 February 2025.
- ✓ Earlier, a two-day BIMSTEC Digital Conclave was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on 7th and 8th February 2025.

- ✓ India hosted the second meeting of the BIMSTEC Expert Group on Cyber Security Cooperation in New Delhi on 21 January 2025.
- ✓ The 1st BIMSTEC Youth Summit was organised jointly by the Ministry of External Affairs and the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs.
- ✓ The Young Indians of the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) was the knowledge partner of the Youth Summit.
- ✓ The theme of the 1st BIMSTEC Youth Summit was 'Youth as a bridge for intra-BIMSTEC exchange'.
- ✓ The two-day BIMSTEC Digital Conclave 2025 was held in Colombo, Sri Lanka on the 7th & 8th February 2025.
- ✓ The theme of the BIMSTEC Digital Conclave was "Building Digital Public Infrastructure (DPI) for Shared Prosperity."
- ✓ About BIMSTEC
- ✓ The BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) is an inter-governmental organisation of seven South Asian and Southeast Asian countries - India, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Thailand, and Myanmar.
- ✓ It was established in 1997 to promote trade and cooperation between the countries lying along the Bay of Bengal.
- ✓ Secretariat: Dhaka Bangladesh

Q. What was the theme of the first BIMSTEC Youth Summit?

- A) Youth as a bridge for intra-BIMSTEC exchange.
- B) Strengthening Economic Cooperation for a Resilient Future
- C) Towards a Resilient Region
- D) Prosperous Economies, and Healthy People

Answer : A

Q. Who has been appointed as the Prime Minister of Lebanon?

- A) Abbas Hajj Hassan
- B) Youssef Khalil
- C) Ziad Baroud
- D) Nawaf Salam

Answer : D

- ✓ After two years of political stalemate in Lebanon, a new government has been formed under the leadership of Prime Minister Nawaf Salam.
- ✓ The newly elected Lebanese President Joseph Aoun issued a Presidential decree on 8 February 2025 forming the new government under Prime Minister Nawaf Salam
- ✓ About Lebanon
- ✓ Capital: Beirut
- ✓ Currency: Lebanese Pound
- ✓ President: Joseph Aoun

NEWLY PRIME MINISTER IN NEWS 2024-25

- Nawaf Salam : Lebanon
- Micheal Martin : Ireland
- Shigeru Ishiba : 103rd Prime Minister of Japan.
- Dr. Naveen Ramgoolam : Mauritius
- Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli : Nepal
- Keir Starmer : 58th Prime Minister of the United Kingdom
- Dick Schoof : Netherlands
- Allamaye Halina : Chad

- Lawrence Wong : Singapore
- Ahmed Abdullah Al-Ahmad Al-Sabah : Kuwait
- Simon Harris : Ireland
- Bjarni Benediktsson : Iceland
- Luis Montenegro : Portugal
- Mohammad Mustafa : Palestine
- Olzhas Bektenov : Kazakhstan
- Gabriel Attal : France
- Donald Tusk : Poland
- Luke Frieden : Luxembourg
- Robert Fico : Slovakia
- Christopher Luxon : 42nd PM of New Zealand

Q. Who is the author of the book titled "Tested : The remarkable power of resolve "

- A) Pat Cummins
- B) Steve Smith
- C) Scott Boland
- D) Aaron Finch

Answer : A

Q. Who is the author of the book titled "Source Code: My beginnings"?

- A) Bill Gates
- B) Paul Allen
- C) Steve Jobs
- D) Steve Wozniak

Answer : A

- ✓ Source Code: My beginnings
- ✓ By Bill Gates

Q. What is India's rank in the Global LEED Green Buildings 2024 rankings?

- A) 1st
- B) 2nd
- C) 4th
- D) 3rd

Answer : D

- ✓ India secured the 3rd position in the U.S. Green Building Council's (USGBC) Global LEED Green Buildings 2024 rankings, with 370 projects covering 8.50 million gross square meters (GSM) of green-certified space.
- ✓ China ranked first with over 25 million GSM, followed by Canada with 10 million GSM.
- ✓ LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) certification is a globally recognized standard for sustainability, energy efficiency, and reduced carbon footprint in buildings.
- ✓ India's consistent ranking highlights its growing commitment to eco-friendly infrastructure and sustainable construction, reinforcing its leadership in green building development in the Asia-Pacific region.

Q. When is World Pulses Day celebrated?

- A) February 10
- B) February 8
- C) February 9
- D) February 11

Answer : A

- ✓ World Pulses Day' is celebrated every year on 10 February to spread awareness about the nutritional and environmental benefits of pulses as part of sustainable food production.
- ✓ The theme of 'World Pulses Day' for this year 2025 "Pulses Bringing Diversity to Agrifood Systems"
- ✓ History of World Pulses Day:
- ✓ The UNGA adopted a resolution related to pulses on 20 December 2013, declaring 2016 as the International Year of Pulses (IYP).
- ✓ In recognition of the potential of pulses in achieving the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.
- ✓ India is the largest producer of pulses. Which produces about 25 percent of the total pulses produced in the world.
- ✓ Rajasthan ranks first in India in the production of pulses.
- ✓ Indian Institute of Pulses Research - Kanpur

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the R-37M Missile, recently seen in the news:

1. It is an intercontinental ballistic missile (ICBM).
2. It was developed by Russia.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : B

- ✓ Russia has reportedly offered the R-37M missile, one of the world's best air-to-air missiles, to India.
- ✓ About R-37M Missile:
- ✓ The R-37M missile, known by its NATO reporting name AA-13 Axehead, is a long-range air-to-air missile developed by Russia.
- ✓ It is designed to eliminate enemy fighter jets and drones beyond visual range (BVR).
- ✓ It has a weight of approximately 510 kilograms and a length of over 4 meters, with a warhead weighing 60 kilograms.
- ✓ The guidance system of the R-37M is a combination of inertial navigation with mid-course updates, an active radar homing head, and semi-active radar guidance for the terminal phase.
- ✓ It features a jettisonable rocket booster that allows it to achieve a range of 300 to 400 kilometers, making it one of the longest-reaching air-to-air missiles in service globally.
- ✓ Its speed can reach hypersonic levels, up to Mach 6, which is crucial for intercepting fast-moving targets.

Q. Which among the following best describes 'Yashas', recently seen in the news?

- A) A transport aircraft used by the Indian Air Force.
- B) An unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV).
- C) A reconnaissance satellite launched by ISRO.
- D) A jet training aircraft

Answer : D

- ✓ Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) recently renamed its flagship HJT-36 jet training aircraft as 'Yashas', following significant upgrades.
- ✓ About Yashas:
- ✓ It is the flagship jet training aircraft of the Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL).

- ✓ The aircraft, previously known as Hindustan Jet Trainer (HJT)-36, has undergone extensive modifications aimed at improving its departure characteristics and spin resistance across the aircraft envelope, leading to its rechristening as 'Yashas.'
- ✓ Its capabilities extend to aerobatics and armament carriage, supporting up to 1,000 kg of payload.
- ✓ It is powered by a Full Authority Digital Engine Control (FADEC)-controlled AL55I Jet engine, providing best-in-class thrust-to-weight ratio, optimised thrust management, and reliability.

Q. Which Indian women have been included in the Times Magazine's “ Women of the Year” 2025?

- A) Gita Gopinath
B) Roshni Nadar Malhotra
C) Purnima Devi Barman
D) Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw

Answer : C

- ✓ Assam's Purnima Barman named "Woman of the Year" by Time magazine.
- ✓ Dr Purnima Devi Barman, a wildlife biologist from Assam, has been included in the Time Magazine 2025 "Women of the Year" list.
- ✓ Dr Purnima Devi Barman is among the 13 women across the globe to be included on the Time Magazine list.
- ✓ These women have been included in the list for their contribution in identifying a problem related to women and finding a solution to it to create a better, more equitable world.
- ✓ Dr Purnima Devi Barman and her Conservation effort
- ✓ A two-time Whitley Gold Awardee (2017 & 2024), Dr Purnima Devi Barman, was recognised for her effort in conserving the endangered bird, Hargila or Greater Adjutant Stork and its wetland habitat.
- ✓ Dr. Barman mobilised the local people, especially women and children, to protect the Hargila bird and its ecosystem in Assam.
- ✓ Dr Barman worked to change people's perceptions of birds and founded the Hargila Army of Stork sisters, a group of mainly local women who protected the birds' nesting areas.
- ✓ Women Included in the Time Magazine Women of the Year 2025
- ✓ Dr Purnima Devi Barman of India.
- ✓ Nicole Kidman - Hollywood movie star. She is an Australian.
- ✓ Jordan Chiles - American Gymnast
- ✓ A'ja Wilson- American basketball player
- ✓ Laufey Lin Bing Jonsdottir, famous as Laufey - Iceland's singer, songwriter and musician.
- ✓ Olivia Munn - American actress who works for breast cancer awareness
- ✓ Raquel Willis- American writer and editor
- ✓ Gisèle Pelicot of France- Raising awareness about rape victims.
- ✓ Anna Sawai- Japanese actress and singer
- ✓ Amanda Zurawski - American Reproductive rights activist.
- ✓ Fatou Baldeh- Led a movement against female genital mutilation in Gambia.
- ✓ Claire Babineaux-Fontenot- She is the CEO of Feeding America. Feeding America is the largest non-governmental organisation in America, and it runs more than 200 food banks in the country to provide food to the hungry.
- ✓ Laura Claire Modi - She is an Irish American and CEO of Bobbie company, which makes baby food modelled after mother's milk.
- ✓ Time Magazine is an American media company that was established in 1923.
- ✓ The New York-based media company started as a weekly news magazine. It is now a global multi-media company.
- ✓ Dr Purnima Devi Barman, a wildlife biologist from Assam, has won her second Whitley Gold Award, also known as the Green Oscar.
- ✓ She was honoured for her conservation effort of the endangered bird, Hargila or Greater Adjutant Stork and its wetland habitat.

Q.

- A) Draupadi Murmu
C) Amit Shah

Answer : B

- ✓ 1st SOUL Leadership Conclave inaugurated by PM Modi in Delhi
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first edition of the SOUL Leadership Conclave at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi on 21 February 2025. The two-day SOUL Leadership Conclave is being held in New Delhi on February 21 and 22 February 2025.
- ✓ The visiting Bhutanese Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay delivered the keynote address at the SOUL Leadership Conclave.
- ✓ Sudhir Mehta, Chairman of the SOUL Board, and Vice Chairman, Hasmukh Adhia, were present during the inaugural session and shared their leadership experiences.
- ✓ The Bhutanese Prime Minister Dasho Tshering Tobgay is on a three-day visit to India from 20-22 February 2025.
- ✓ The SOUL Leadership Conclave aims to provide a platform where leaders from various walks of life - sports, arts, politics, media, the spiritual world, public policy, business and the social sector- share their successes and failures to inspire young generations.
- ✓ The SOUL Leadership Conclave has been organised by the School of Ultimate Leadership (SOUL).
- ✓ SOUL is a privately funded premier institution established by like-minded individuals.
- ✓ It is located near GIFT (Gujarat International Financial Tech) city in Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

Q.

- A) Japan
B) Russia
C) India
D) China

Answer : C

- ✓ India has become the second country in the world after China to launch an Electronic Personnel License (EPL) for pilots in the civil aviation sector.
- ✓ The Union Minister for Civil Aviation, K Rammohan Naidu, formally launched the EPL for pilots on 20 February 2025 at the Udaan Bhawan in New Delhi.
- ✓ The EPL for pilots was introduced based on the recommendation and format of the global civil aviation body, the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO).
- ✓ About the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO)
- ✓ The International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO) was founded after the conclusion of the Convention on International Civil Aviation in Chicago, the United States of America, in 1944.
- ✓ Members: 193 countries
- ✓ Headquarters: Montreal, Canada

Q.

1. It is the largest solid propellant mixing equipment globally.
2. It is developed and designed by Satish Dhawan Space Centre in collaboration with Central Manufacturing Technology Institute.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- Q.** Who is the author of the book titled "I AM A SOLDIER'S WIFE : The Life and Love of Toni Lidder"?
- A) Geetika Lidder B) Prashant Bhushan
- C) Ram Gopal Varma D) Poonam Saxena

- ✓ Legacy of Brigadier LS Lidder, a distinguished officer of the Indian Army, is honored in a heartfelt memoir written by his wife, Geetika Lidder, titled 'I Am a Soldier's Wife: The Life and Love of Toni Lidder.'
- ✓ The book is a tribute to his remarkable journey, both as a soldier and as a devoted family man

- Answer : C

- Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the NAKSHA Programme:

1. It aims to create and update land records in urban areas to ensure accurate and reliable documentation of land ownership.
2. It will empower citizens and improve ease of living in urban areas.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- Answer : C

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- ✓ About NAKSHA Programme:
- ✓ The National Geospatial Knowledge-based Land Survey of Urban Habitations (NAKSHA) programme aims to create and update land records in urban areas to ensure accurate and reliable documentation of land ownership.
- ✓ This initiative will empower citizens, improve ease of living, enhance urban planning, and reduce land-related disputes.
- ✓ The IT-based system for property record administration will foster transparency, efficiency and support sustainable development.
- ✓ The Survey of India is the technical partner for NAKSHA programme which is responsible for conducting aerial surveys and providing orthorectified imagery, through third party vendors, to state and Union Territory governments.
- ✓ The end-to-end web-GIS platform will be developed by the Madhya Pradesh State Electronic Development Corporation (MPSEDC) and storage facilities will be provided by the National Informatics Centre Services Inc. (NICSI).

Q. Where was the statue of Thiruvalluvar unveiled?

A) Australia	B) Philippines
C) Sri Lanka	D) United States

Answer : B

- ✓ The statue of the Tamil poet and philosopher Thiruvalluvar was unveiled in the Philippines, specifically at the Gullas College of Medicine (GCM) in Cebu.
- ✓ The Indian Ambassador, Harsh Kumar Jain, participated in the unveiling ceremony.
- ✓ The event was organized by the Gullas College of Medicine under the leadership of Dr. David Pillai, the Chief Executive Adviser of GCM, who had commissioned the statue.
- ✓ This event highlights the cross-cultural appreciation and recognition of Thiruvalluvar's contributions

Q. Who was recently honored with the title of Honorary Knighthood in the UK?

A) Amit Shah	B) Raghuram Rajan
C) N. Chandrasekaran	D) Arvind Kejriwal

Answer : C

- ✓ N. Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Group, was honored with the title of Honorary Knighthood in the UK for his significant contributions to strengthening UK-India trade relations.
- ✓ The UK government announced this recognition on February 14, 2025, under the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (Civil Division).

Q. What is the primary health hazard found in the Ganga River at Prayagraj during the Maha Kumbh Mela?

A) E. coli	B) Faecal Bacteria
C) Salmonella	D) Coliform Bacteria

Answer : B

- ✓ The presence of faecal coliform bacteria in the Ganga River at Prayagraj has raised serious public health concerns, particularly during the Maha Kumbh Mela.
- ✓ Faecal coliform bacteria are indicative of contamination due to animal or sewage waste.
- ✓ While not all faecal bacteria are harmful, their presence signals the potential presence of other pathogens like E. coli and Salmonella, which can cause gastrointestinal infections and other serious health issues.

Q.

- A) Rio de Janeiro B) Beijing
C) New Delhi D) Moscow

Answer : A

- ✓ The 17th BRICS Summit will take place in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on July 6-7, 2025.
- ✓ The summit will bring together leaders from BRICS countries and selected invited nations to discuss critical global governance reforms and cooperation.
- ✓ The event is particularly significant as it occurs amid U.S. threats of imposing 100% tariffs on BRICS nations, adding an extra layer of complexity to discussions.

Q.

- A) Manu Bhaker
B) Mirabai Chanu
C) PV Sindhu
D) Koneru Humpy

Answer : A

- ✓ Shooter Manu Bhaker named BBC Indian Sportswomen of the Year 2024.
- ✓ Double Olympic medal winner shooter Manu Bhaker has been named the 2024 Indian Sportswomen of the Year by the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) of the United Kingdom. In 2020, Manu Bhaker won the BBC's Emerging Athlete of the Year award.
- ✓ Award for Manu Bhaker
- ✓ This year, in addition to Manu Bhaker, cricketer Smriti Mandhana, Golfer Aditi Ashok, para-shooter Avani Lekhara, and wrestler Vinesh Phogat were the other nominees.
- ✓ Manu Bhaker secured the highest public vote to win the 2024 BBC Indian Sportswomen of the Year award.
- ✓ Achievement
- ✓ 22-year-old Manu Bhaker created a record in the 2024 Summer Paris Olympics by becoming the first Indian athlete after independence to win two medals in a single edition of the Summer Olympics.
- ✓ She won a bronze medal in the 10m air pistol and, partnering with Sarabjot Singh, won another bronze medal in the mixed 10m air pistol.
- ✓ She was also the first Indian woman to win a medal in the shooting event at the Olympics.
- ✓ Norman Pritchard won two silver medals in athletics at the 1900 Paris Olympics.
- ✓ Previous Winner of BBC Indian Sportswomen of the Year award
- ✓ The following are the winners of the BBC Indian Sportswoman of the Year Award. Mirabai Chanu won it twice, in 2021 and 2022.
- ✓ 2019- PV Sindhu (Badminton player)
- ✓ 2020- Koneru Humpy (Chess)
- ✓ 2021- Mirabai Chanu (weightlifter)
- ✓ 2022- Mirabai Chanu (weightlifter)
- ✓ 2023- No Award was given this year.
- ✓ 2024- Manu Bhaker .
- ✓ 2024 BBC Indian Sportswomen of the Year Award Winners.
- ✓ Sportswomen of the Year- Manu Bhaker (Shooter)
- ✓ Para-sportswoman of the year award -Avani Lekhara (won gold in 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris Paralympics in shooting).
- ✓ Lifetime Achievement Award - Mithali Raj (former Indian women's cricket team captain).
- ✓ Emerging Athlete of the Year- Sheetal Devi (youngest para-athlete to win a medal in Paralympics. She won a bronze in the Archery's Mixed team Open event at the 2024 Paris Paralympics.)
- ✓ British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) is a publicly funded broadcasting company in the United Kingdom, founded in 1927.

Q. Who has been honoured with the 2024 BBC Lifetime Achievement Award?

- A) Saina Nehwal
B) Sakshi Malik
C) Anju Bobby George
D) Mithali Raj

Answer : D

- ✓ Lifetime Achievement Award - Mithali Raj (former Indian women's cricket team captain).

Q. Who won the 2024 BBC Indian Para-sportswoman of the Year award?

- A) Avani Lekhara
B) Deepthi Jeevanji
C) Manisha Ramadass
D) Deepa Malik

Answer : A

- ✓ Para-sportswoman of the year award -Avani Lekhara (won gold in 2020 Tokyo and 2024 Paris Paralympics in shooting).

Q. Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC) is a project consisting of a crude oil pipeline that connect which of the following countries?

- A) Russia and Iran
B) Kazakhstan and Iran
C) Kazakhstan and Russia
D) Azerbaijan and Russia

Answer : C

- ✓ Russia said oil flows through the Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC), a major route for supplying Kazakhstan and exporting to the global market, were reduced by 30-40% recently after a Ukrainian drone attack on a pumping station.
- ✓ About Caspian Pipeline Consortium (CPC):
- ✓ CPC is a \$2.6 billion project consisting of a 935-mile crude oil pipeline that runs from the Tengiz oil field in Kazakhstan to the Russian Black Sea port of Novorossiysk.
- ✓ Construction on the CPC pipeline began in 1999.
- ✓ It was commissioned in 2001, and a \$5.1 billion expansion project was completed in 2018.
- ✓ It is a key East-West pipeline that will carry oil from the Caspian Sea region to international markets.
- ✓ CPC includes the Russian and Kazakh governments, as well as Western energy majors Chevron, ExxonMobil, and Shell.
- ✓ This pipeline accounts for two-thirds of Kazakhstan's oil exports.
- ✓ The pipeline's total capacity is 1.4 million barrels per day of oil. This is 2.3 percent of global seaborne oil trade.

Q. Climate Risk Index, recently in news, is prepared by:

- A) World Meteorological Organization B) World Bank
C) UNEP D) Germanwatch

Answer : D

- ✓ According to a new Climate Risk Index report, India ranks sixth among the top 10 countries most affected by extreme weather events over the last three decades from 1993-2023.
- ✓ About Climate Risk Index:
- ✓ It is being published since 2006.
- ✓ It is one of the longest running annual climate impact-related indices.
- ✓ The CRI analyses climate-related extreme weather events' degree of effect on countries. It measures the consequences of realised risks on countries.

- ✓ This backward-looking index ranks countries by their economic and human impacts (fatalities as well as affected, injured, and homeless) with the most affected country ranked highest.
- ✓ The findings of the report are based on extreme weather event data from the International Disaster Database (Em-dat) and socio-economic data from the International Monetary Fund (IMF).
- ✓ It is published by Germanwatch, an independent development, environmental, and human rights organisation based in Bonn and Berlin.
- ✓ Highlights of the Index
- ✓ India is among the 10 countries most affected by extreme weather events between 1993 and 2022, accounting for 10% of global fatalities caused by such events, and 4.3% of the damage (in dollar terms).
- ✓ It is ranked sixth in the Climate Risk Index, 2025, highlighting its vulnerability to the climate crisis
- ✓ Dominica, China, Honduras, Myanmar, and Italy are ranked ahead of India.
- ✓ India faced more than 400 extreme events, causing \$ 180 billion in losses, and at least 80,000 fatalities.
- ✓ India was affected by floods, heatwaves, and cyclones during the period. It experienced devastating floods in 1993, 1998, and 2013, along with severe heatwaves in 2002, 2003, and 2015.

Q. Which Indian cricketer has been appointed as an event ambassador for ICC Champions Trophy 2025?

- A) Sachin Tendulkar B) Kapil Dev
C) Yuvraj Singh D) Shikhar Dhawan

Answer : D

- ✓ The world cricket governing body, the International Cricket Council (ICC), has appointed former Indian cricketer Shikhar Dhawan as one of the four ambassadors of the ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025.
- ✓ The 9th ICC Men's Champions Trophy is being co-hosted by Pakistan and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) from 19 February -9 March 2025.
- ✓ The four ambassadors of the 2025 Champions Trophy are Shikhar Dhawan of India, Sarfraz Ahmed of Pakistan, Shane Watson of Australia, and New Zealand's legendary fast bowler, Tim Southee.
- ✓ The 9th edition of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025 is being co-hosted by Pakistan and the UAE.
- ✓ The Champions trophy is being played in the 50 overs format of the ODI.
- ✓ The ICC Champions Trophy was started by the ICC as the Wills International Cup in 1998. In the 2nd edition, the name was changed to the ICC Knock-Out Trophy in 2000.
- ✓ In the third edition held in 2002, the name was changed to Champions Trophy.

LATEST BRAND AMBASSADOR IN NEWS 2024

- Shikhar Dhawan : ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025
- Ayushmann Khurrana : FICCI Frames
- Kartik Aryan : Emami Smart and Handsome
- Rajkumar Rao : Cashfree Payments
- Chess Grandmaster D Gukesh : RBL Bank's brand ambassador
- Sachin Tendulkar : Bank of Baroda
- Mahendra Singh Dhoni : Brand ambassador for Jharkhand election by the Election Commission,
- Rashmika Mandanna : Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)
- Rahul Dravid : Shriram Finance Limited
- Manu Bhaker: Brand Ambassador of Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterway
- Salman Khan : GRM Basmati Rice
- Shikhar Dhawan : MotoGP in India
- Sania Mirza, Mary Kom & Rannvijay Singh : 'Play Sports'
- Aditya Roy Kapur : Bisleri
- Shah Rukh Khan : Muthoot Pappachan Group
- Shahid Afridi : Men's T 20 World Cup 2024 Brand Ambassador.
- Kareena Kapoor Khan : UNICEF India National Ambassador #ForEveryChild
- Yuvraj Singh : ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2024

- Usain Bolt : 2024 ICC T20 World Cup
- Sana Mir : ICC Women's T20 World Cup Qualifier
- Mahendra Singh Dhoni : Citroen
- Sanjana Sanghi : SPACE India
- Narendra Kumar Yadav : "Fit India" Movement as Brand Ambassador
- Neeraj Chopra : Eveready Battery

Q. With reference to J. C. Bose Grant Scheme, consider the following:

1. It is designed to support senior-level researchers who have demonstrated exceptional achievements.
2. It provides an annual research funding of Rs. 25 lakhs for duration of five years.
3. The grant under this Scheme can be availed until the age of 55 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
- B) 2 and 3 only
- C) 1 only 3 only
- D) 1, 2 and 3

Answer : A

- ✓ The Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) has announced the launch of the new scheme J. C. Bose Grant (JBG).
- ✓ About J. C. Bose Grant:
- ✓ It is a restructured form of the J. C. Bose Fellowship running under erstwhile Science and Engineering Research Board (SERB).
- ✓ It recognizes the outstanding performance and contributions of senior Indian scientists and engineers to enhance their research in cutting-edge scientific and technological areas.
- ✓ Eligibility: Participants must be active, senior Indian scientists or researchers with a proven track record of excellence, holding at least a Professor-level position or equivalent at an Indian institution/university.
- ✓ Grants:
- ✓ This grant provides an annual research funding of Rs. 25 lakhs for a duration of five years.
- ✓ Additionally, an annual overhead of Rs. 1.0 lakh will be provided to the implementing institution.
- ✓ If the Principal Investigator (PI) superannuates, during the term of the grants, it can be continued subject to the host institutions willingness to host the PI.
- ✓ The grant can be availed until the age of 68.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding BrahMos NG Missile:

1. It is an advanced supersonic cruise missile developed jointly by India-Russia.
2. It will be able to fit on a wider array of platforms like Sukhoi-30MKI and Tejas fighter aircrafts.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The next-generation BrahMos missile, known as BrahMos NG, is approaching its first flight test, slated for 2026, with production set to commence in 2027-28.
- ✓ About BrahMos NG:

- ✓ It is an advanced supersonic cruise missile developed jointly by India-Russia.
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ It is a sleeker missile with the same capabilities as its predecessor.
- ✓ It is lighter, smaller and compact, due to its reduced size, the next-generation missile system will be able to fit on a wider array of platforms.
- ✓ These include the Russian-origin Sukhoi-30MKI fighter aircraft and India's indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, both of which will now be capable of deploying the BrahMos NG.
- ✓ It weighs 1.6 tonnes and is 6 metres long while the older version weighed 3 tonnes and was 9 metres long.
- ✓ Range and Speed: The missile has a range of 290 km and a speed of up to 3.5 Mach.

Q. Which State/Union Territory has topped the 2024 "Status of Devolution to Panchayats in States – An Indicative Evidence Based Ranking" ?

A) Kerala	B) Karnataka
C) Tamil Nadu	D) Maharashtra

Answer : B

- ✓ Karnataka tops the Status of Devolution to Panchayats in States report.
- ✓ Union Minister of State for Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Prof. S. P. Singh Baghel, unveiled the 2024 "Status of Devolution to Panchayats in States – An Indicative Evidence Based Ranking" report in a function in New Delhi on 13 February 2024.
- ✓ The report assesses the status of devolution of powers and resources by the State/Union Territories government to the Panchayati Raj Institutions as per the provision of the 73rd Constitutional Amendments 1992.
- ✓ The 73rd Constitutional Amendment 1992 inserted the 11th schedule in the constitution and mentions the powers and functions of the Panchayati Raj Institution.
- ✓ Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj in 2005-06 introduced Panchayats Empowerment and Accountability Incentive Scheme (PEAIS) to
- ✓ Provide an incentive to the States/Union Territories to empower the panchayats;
- ✓ Provide an incentive to the Panchayats to put in place robust accountability systems to make their functioning transparent and efficient.
- ✓ The Status of Devolution to Panchayats in States – An Indicative Evidence Based Ranking" 2024 report has been prepared by the Indian institute of Public Administration (IIPA), New Delhi for the Union Ministry of Panchayati Raj.
- ✓ The first report was unveiled in 2006-07 and it was prepared by the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER).
- ✓ All the states and the Union Territories has been covered in the report except:
- ✓ Meghalaya, Mizoram and Nagaland where the 73rd amendment is not applicable:
- ✓ National Capital Territory of Delhi as panchayats were suspended in 1990:
- ✓ Union Territory of Chandigarh as there are no panchayats.
- ✓ Dimensions and Indicators of the Devolution Index of Panchayats
- ✓ The index uses 6 dimensions and 25 sub indicators to rank the State and the Union Territories under the Devolution Index of Panchayats.
- ✓ The Dimensions are : Framework; Functions, Finance, Functionaries, Capacity enhancement and Accountability.

Rank	State/Union Territories	Index Score
1	Karnataka	72.23
2	Kerala	70.59
3	Tamil Nadu	68.38
4	Maharashtra	61.44
5	Uttar Pradesh	60.07
6	Gujarat	58.26
7	Tripura	57.58,
8	Rajasthan	56.67,
9	West Bengal	56.52
10	Chattisgarh	56.26

Q. Which team topped the medals tally at the 38th National Games 2025?

- A) Services Sports Control Board B) Maharashtra
C) Haryana D) Karnataka

Answer : A

- ✓ Services Sports Control Board finished the 38th Summer National Games with 121 medals - 68 gold, 26 silvers, and 27 bronze- to top the medal tally and win the Raja Bhalindra Singh Trophy.
- ✓ It was the fifth Raja Bhalindra Singh Trophy for the Services team.
- ✓ At the last 37th Summer National Games 2023, held in Goa, Maharashtra, topped the medal tally and was awarded the Raja Bhalindra Singh Trophy.
- ✓ Uttarakhand hosted the 38th Summer National Games across 12 cities of the state from 28 January to 14 February 2025.
- ✓ The National Games is organised by the Indian Olympic Association and hosted by a State/Union Territory government.
- ✓ Opening and Closing ceremony
- ✓ The opening ceremony of the National Games was held at Dehradun, Uttarakhand, on 28 January 2025. The Games were inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ The closing ceremony of the Game was held at the International Sports Complex, Haldwani, Uttarakhand, on 14th February 2025. Union Home Minister and Minister for Cooperation Amit Shah was the chief guest of the closing ceremony.
- ✓ Meghalaya was officially handed the National Games flag during the closing ceremony of the 38th Summer National Games.

Position	Team	Gold Medal	Silver Medal	Bronze Medal	Total Medal
1	Services Sports Control Board	68	26	27	121
2	Maharashtra	54	71	73	198
3	Haryana	48	47	58	153
4	Karnataka	34	18	28	80
5	Madhya Pradesh	33	26	23	82
6	Tamil Nadu	27	30	34	91
7	Uttarakhand	24	35	43	102
8	West Bengal	16	13	18	47
9	Punjab	15	20	31	66
10	Delhi	14	15	26	55

Q. Which state hosted the 38th Summer National Games?

- A) Meghalaya B) Tripura
C) Uttarakhand D) Assam

Answer : C

- ✓ Uttarakhand hosted the 38th Summer National Games across 12 cities of the state from 28 January to 14 February 2025.
- ✓ Mascot, Sports, and Medal
- ✓ The Mascot of the 38th National Games was Mauli. Mauli is a bird, Monal, which is a state bird of Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh.
- ✓ Sports- At the 38th National Games, initially, mallakhamb and yogasana were announced as demonstration sports but were later upgraded to medal sports.
- ✓ Two sports - Kalaripayattu and Rafting were the demonstration sports in which no medals were given to the participants.
- ✓ Thus, at the 38th National Games, there were 35 sports-33 sports medal sports, and two non-medal sports.
- ✓ Medals- A total of 1523 - 457 golds, 455 silver, and 611 bronze medals were at stake at the Games in 33 sports.
- ✓ Participants - Athletes from 28 states, eight Union Territories, and the Services Sports Control Board competed for the 1523 medals at the 38th National Games.
- ✓ 5th Raja Bhalendra Singh Singh Trophy for Services

- ✓ The team that wins the most gold medals in a Summer National Games is given the Raja Bhalendra Singh Singh Trophy.
- ✓ Service Sports Control Board, which comprises sportspersons from the Indian Army, Indian Navy, and the Indian Air Force, has won the Raja Bhalendra Singh Trophy five times -2007, 2011, 2015,2022, and 2025.
- ✓ Last year, the winner, Maharashtra, finished the 38th National Games with 198 medals and 54 gold medals.

Q. Which state will host the 39th Summer National Games in 2027?

- A) Manipur
B) Meghalaya
C) Odisha
D) Jharkhand

Answer : B

- ✓ Meghalaya to host the 39th Summer Games in 2027
- ✓ The Indian Olympic Association has chosen Meghalaya to host the next edition of the Summer National Games in February/March 2027.
- ✓ It will be the first time that Meghalaya will host the National Games.
- ✓ Amongst the North-Eastern States, Manipur hosted the 30th National Games in 1999, and Assam hosted the 33rd edition in 2007.

Q. When is World Radio Day celebrated?

- A) February 12 B) February 10
C) February 13 D) February 14

Answer : C

- ✓ World Radio Day is celebrated on February 13th, a date chosen to commemorate the establishment of UN Radio in 1946.
- ✓ The event was first proposed by Spain in 2010 and officially recognized by UNESCO in 2011.
- ✓ The 2025 theme, "Radio and Climate Change," underscores radio's vital role in raising awareness about climate issues and encouraging sustainable practices.

Q. Which company has signed an agreement with the Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) to supply 1.2 million tonnes per annum of liquified natural gas (LNG) for the next 14 years?

- A) Emirates National Oil Company (ENOC)
B) Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC)
C) Exxon Mobil Corporation
D) Dubai Petroleum

Answer : B

- ✓ UAE's ADNOC sign 14 year deal with IOCL to supply LNG.
- ✓ United Arab Emirates company ADNOC (Abu Dhabi National Oil Company) has signed a contract with the government of India-owned Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL) to supply liquefied natural gas (LNG) for 14 years.
- ✓ The third edition of the India Energy Week was held in New Delhi from 11-14 February 2025.
- ✓ India signed a deal to export LNG from India to Nepal. This will be the first-ever export of LNG from India to a foreign country.
- ✓ The signing of numerous deals is expected to boost the energy security of India which is a major importer of oil and gas in the world.
- ✓ Features of the ADNOC Deal with IOCL

- ✓ 14-year agreement between the two companies
- ✓ ADNOC Gas, a subsidiary company of ADNOC, will supply 1.2 million tonnes per year of LNG.
- ✓ The LNG supply will begin from 2026.
- ✓ ADNOC will supply LNG from its Das Island liquefaction facility.
- ✓ IOCL will import the LNG at its Dahej facility in Gujarat or at its Ennore terminal in Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The total value of the deal is USD 6-9 billion
- ✓ ADNOC deal with BPCL
- ✓ ADNOC Gas to supply 2.4 million tonnes of LNG to BPCL
- ✓ Tenure - 5 years, starting April 2025.
- ✓ Agreement can be extended by another 5 years with mutual consent.
- ✓ TotalEnergies deal with GPSC
- ✓ French energy giant TotalEnergies will supply 4 lakh tonnes of LNG per year to Gujarat State Petroleum Corporation Ltd (GPSC).
- ✓ Tenure -10 years starting from 2026.
- ✓ The LNG will be delivered by TotalEnergy at the GPSC, LNG import facility at Mundra in Gujarat.
- ✓ The LNG will be used by the GPSC mainly for its industrial customers.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the U.S.-India COMPACT Initiative:

1. It will lay the foundation for deepening military partnerships.
2. Under this initiatives India and US aim to double bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030 under “Mission 500.”

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ President of USA and Prime Minister of India launched the U.S.-India COMPACT initiative.
- ✓ About U.S.-India COMPACT Initiative:
- ✓ The Catalyzing Opportunities for Military Partnership, Accelerated Commerce & Technology (COMPACT) initiative will drive transformative change across key pillars of cooperation.
- ✓ It is a framework that will lay the foundation for deepening military partnerships, with a clear focus on technology, trade, and defence industrial cooperation.
- ✓ Key features of COMPACT Initiative
- ✓ New Defence Procurements & Regulatory Reforms: A new ten-year Framework for the US-India Major Defense Partnership, with the US pledging additional defence sales and co-production initiatives
- ✓ Economic & Trade Expansion: Under this component both countries aim to double bilateral trade to \$500 billion by 2030 under “Mission 500.” They plan to negotiate the first phase of a Bilateral Trade Agreement by fall 2025, focusing on fair trade, national security, and job creation.
- ✓ Boosting Space Cooperation & Critical Minerals Partnership: To deepen space collaboration includes the introduction of INDUS Innovation, inspired by the INDUS-X platform, which will drive academic and industrial partnerships in space and emerging tech.
- ✓ Space Collaboration in 2025: NASA and ISRO partner via AXIOM to send the first Indian astronaut to the ISS and expedite the NISAR dual-radar satellite launch.

Q. What is the primary purpose of Matsya 6000, recently seen in the news?

- A) Space exploration B) Deep-sea mining and biodiversity studies
- C) Underwater military surveillance D) Oil drilling

Answer : B

- ✓ India's first manned submersible, Matsya 6000, is expected to carry three people to a depth of 6,000 metres in the ocean by 2026, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences.
- ✓ About Matsya 6000:
- ✓ Matsya 6000 is India's deep-sea submersible designed for ocean exploration, particularly for deep-sea mining and biodiversity studies.
- ✓ Developed by the National Institute of Ocean Technology (NIOT) under the Samudrayaan Mission, it is capable of diving to a depth of 6,000 meters in the ocean.
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ It is equipped with cutting-edge technologies, including advanced life support systems, navigation equipment, robotic arms for sample collection, and high-resolution imaging systems.
- ✓ Matsya 6000 will house a 2.1-metre internal diameter Titanium alloy personnel sphere to safely carry humans to a 6000 m depth.
- ✓ The Titanium alloy personnel sphere is being integrated in collaboration with ISRO.
- ✓ The submersible is designed to enable continuous operations at 6000 m depth for up to 12 hours with an emergency endurance of up to 96 hours for conducting deep water observation and exploration.

Q. Which company partnered with Garuda Aerospace to develop advanced UAVs for defence, agriculture, and smart cities?

A) Reliance Industries	B) Infosys
C) Tata Elxsi	D) Wipro

Answer : C

- ✓ Tata Elxsi and Garuda Aerospace signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) at Aero India 2025 to collaborate on the development of advanced UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) aimed at sectors like defence, agriculture, and smart cities.
- ✓ The partnership focuses on creating AI-powered solutions that can cut energy use by 20%, reduce costs, and ensure regulatory compliance.

Q. Which company developed the world's first DIVA marker vaccine for Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD)?

A) Biovet	B) Serum Institute of India
C) Bharat Biotech	D) Cadila Healthcare

Answer : A

- ✓ Biovet has developed Biolumpivaxin, the world's first DIVA marker vaccine for Lumpy Skin Disease (LSD), and has received CDSCO approval for it.
- ✓ The vaccine is based on the LSD virus strain developed by ICAR-NRCE and is noted for its high safety and efficacy.
- ✓ It also helps differentiate between infected and vaccinated animals, making it an important tool for managing LSD in livestock

Q. Which company partnered with ONGC to collaborate on Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS)?

A) Tata Power	B) Adani Green Energy
C) NTPC	D) Reliance Power

Answer : A

- ✓ ONGC has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Tata Power Renewable Energy Ltd to collaborate on Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS).
- ✓ The partnership aims to improve grid stability, integrate renewable energy sources, and support India's clean energy target of 500 GW by 2030.

- ✓ Additionally, ONGC has set a goal to achieve 10 GW of renewable capacity by 2030, which aligns with its broader objective of reaching net-zero carbon emissions by 2038.
- ✓ This collaboration strengthens efforts to transition toward sustainable energy solutions

Q. Which company won the Forward Faster Sustainability Award 2025 in the Water Resilience category?

- A) Reliance Industries B) NTPC
C) Tata Power D) Adani Green

Answer : B

- ✓ NTPC Ltd. won the Forward Faster Sustainability Award 2025 in the Water Resilience category from the UN Global Compact Network India (UN GCNI) on 13th February in Chennai.
- ✓ This award recognizes NTPC's efforts in water conservation, wastewater treatment, and sustainable water management practices, highlighting the company's leadership in these areas.
- ✓ Additionally, NTPC has set a target to achieve 60 GW of renewable energy by 2032, reinforcing its commitment to sustainability.

Q. Which ministry is organizing the Prime Minister's Yoga Awards 2025?

- A) Ministry of Home Affairs B) Ministry of External Affairs
C) Ministry of AYUSH D) Ministry of Panchayati Raj

Answer : C

- ✓ Ministry of Ayush announces the opening of nominations for the prestigious Prime Minister's Yoga Awards for the 2025 edition of the International Day of Yoga (IDY2025).
- ✓ About Prime Minister's Yoga Award:
- ✓ It recognizes individuals and organizations that have made significant and sustained contributions to the promotion and development of Yoga, both nationally and internationally.
- ✓ It was established to honor the profound impact of Yoga on society and aim to celebrate exemplary contributions to the field, reinforcing Yoga's role in disease prevention, health promotion, and the management of lifestyle-related disorders.
- ✓ The awards will be conferred in the National Individual, National Organization, International Individual, and International Organization categories, with each winner receiving a Trophy, Certificate, and a Cash Award of Rs. 25 lakh.
- ✓ Eligibility: Individuals applying must be 40 years or older and should have at least 20 years of dedicated service in Yoga promotion.
- ✓ Entities can apply directly or be nominated by a prominent Yoga organization. Each applicant/nominee can apply for only one category (National or International) per year.

Q. Gravehawk System, recently seen in the news, is a short-range surface-to-air missile system developed by which one of the following countries?

- A) United States B) Russia
C) France D) United Kingdom

Answer : D

- ✓ Ukraine has reportedly acquired a new weapon system to defend against the barrage of missiles unleashed by Russia: the Gravehawk hybrid surface-to-air missile system.
- ✓ About Gravehawk System:
- ✓ It is a short-range surface-to-air missile system developed by the United Kingdom.
- ✓ It is designed to address short-range threats, particularly those posed by fast-moving airborne objects.

Q. Exercise Komodo, recently in news, is a:

- A) multilateral army exercise
- B) rescue exercise
- C) bilateral air force exercise
- D) multilateral naval exercise

Answer : D

- ✓ Indian Navy platforms INS Shardul and long range maritime surveillance P8I aircraft are in Bali, Indonesia, to participate in the International Fleet Review (IFR) 2025 and also in Exercise Komodo.
- ✓ About Exercise Komodo:
- ✓ It was first launched in 2014, is a non-combat military exercise organized by the Indonesian Navy to foster maritime cooperation among friendly nations.
- ✓ It is a multilateral naval exercise aimed at enhancing maritime interoperability and regional security cooperation.
- ✓ This year it is themed “Maritime Partnership for Peace and Stability”.
- ✓ The exercise is the fifth edition of the biennial event

Q. What type of rice has India introduced new HS codes for to facilitate exports?

- A) GI-Tagged Rice
- B) Basmati Rice
- C) Hybrid Rice
- D) Non-Basmati Rice

Answer : A

- ✓ India introduces new HS code to allow exports of GI-recognised rice varieties
- ✓ India's Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman has come up with an amendment to the Customs Tariff Act to provide for an HS (Harmonised System) code, for the export of geographical indication (GI) recognised rice.
- ✓ It is the first time in the world that an HS code has been introduced for GI-recognised rice
- ✓ The amendment was introduced in the Budget proposals for the 2025-26 financial year on February 1, under HS Code 1006-30-11 (parboiled) and 1006-30-91 (white).
- ✓ HS is a global product classification system developed by the World Customs Organization (WCO). HS assigns specific six-digit codes for varying classifications and commodities.

Q. Which state will host the 39th edition of the National Games in 2027?

- A) Assam
- B) Meghalaya
- C) Manipur
- D) Sikkim

Answer : B

- ✓ Meghalaya will host the 39th edition of the National Games in February/March 2027.
- ✓ As host state of the next edition, Meghalaya will be handed the IOA flag during the closing ceremony of the ongoing 38th Games in Uttarakhand

Q. Where was the 2025 Annual Conference of the International Institute of Administrative Science (IIAS) held?

- A) New Delhi
- B) Hyderabad
- C) Bengaluru
- D) Chennai

Answer : A

- ✓ India is for the first time hosting the annual Conference of the International Institute of Administrative Science (IIAS).
- ✓ The conference titled IIAS-DARPG (Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances) India Conference 2025 is being held in New Delhi from 10-14 February 2025.

- ✓ India is looking to revive the proposal to procure six more P-8I long-range maritime patrol aircraft from the U.S.
- ✓ About P-8I Aircraft:
- ✓ P-8I Neptune is a long-range, multi-mission maritime patrol aircraft being manufactured by Boeing (a U.S. aerospace company) for the Indian Navy.
- ✓ It replaced the ageing fleet of the Indian Navy's Tupolev Tu-142 aircraft.
- ✓ The P-8I Neptune flown by the Indian Navy is a variant of the P-8A Poseidon used by the United States Navy.
- ✓ It has a maximum range of over 2,222 kilometres with a time on station of four hours

Q. Srjanam, recently in news, is a:

- A) artificial Intelligence system to curb fake currency notes
- B) a cloud computing tool to improve service delivery system in India
- C) new water purifying technology to provide safe drinking water to children
- D) automated biomedical waste treatment rig

Answer : D

- ✓ Union Minister launched India's first indigenous Automated Bio Medical Waste Treatment Plant Srjanam at AIIMS New Delhi.
- ✓ It is an innovative, automated biomedical waste treatment rig.
- ✓ This environmentally friendly technology, developed by CSIR-NIIST (National Institute for Interdisciplinary Science and Technology),
- ✓ Features of Srjanam Rig
- ✓ It can disinfect pathogenic biomedical waste such as blood, urine, sputum, and laboratory disposables, without the use of costly and energy-intensive incinerators.
- ✓ The rig imparts a pleasant fragrance to the otherwise foul-smelling toxic waste.
- ✓ It has a daily capacity of 400 kg, the equipment is capable of handling 10 kg of degradable medical waste per day in the initial phase.

Q. Who has won the men's event at the 91st Billiards and Snooker National Championships 2024?

- A) Pankaj Advani
- B) Brijesh Damani
- C) Dhruv Sitwala
- D) Dhvaj Haria

Answer : A

- ✓ Ace cueist Pankaj Advani won his 36 National Billiards and 10th Snooker title at the 91st Billiards and Snooker National Championships 2024 held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ The 91st Billiards and Snooker National Championships 2024 for Senior, Junior, and Sub Junior was held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh from 7th January to 16th February 2025.
- ✓ It was organised by the Billiards and Snooker Federation of India and hosted by the Madhya Pradesh Billiards and Snooker Association.
- ✓ Billiards and Snooker Federation of India
- ✓ Billiards and Snooker Federation of India is the governing body of cueist sports- Billiards, Snooker, and Pool- in India.
- ✓ Headquarters- Bengaluru, Karnataka
- ✓ President- S. Balasubramaniam
- ✓ Awards and Honours for Advani
- ✓ Sports Award
- ✓ Pankaj Advani was awarded India's highest sporting award, the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna Award 2006. Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna was renamed the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award by the central government in 2021.

- ✓ In 2005, Pankaj Advani was honoured with the Arjuna Awards.
- ✓ Civilian Award
- ✓ He was conferred with India's third-highest civil award, the Padma Bhushan 2018.
- ✓ Pankaj Advani was honoured with India's fourth-highest Padma Shri in 2009.

Q. Which institute collaborated with ISRO to develop the 'IRIS' chip for space applications?

- A) IIT Madras
- B) IIT Bombay
- C) IIT Delhi
- D) IIT Kanpur

Answer : A

- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) partnered with IIT Madras to develop the 'IRIS' (Indigenous RISC-V Microprocessor for Space Applications) chip, a semiconductor designed for space missions.
- ✓ Derived from the SHAKTI microprocessor project, the chip is based on the open-source RISC-V architecture.
- ✓ It enhances self-reliance in space technology and aligns with India's 'Atmanirbhar Bharat' initiative.
- ✓ The chip's design was carried out at IIT Madras, with fabrication at the Semiconductor Laboratory (SCL) in Chandigarh and packaging by Tata Advanced Systems.

Q. What percentage tariff has Trump imposed on steel and aluminium imports?

- A) 10%
- B) 15%
- C) 20%
- D) 25%

Answer : D

- ✓ U.S. President Donald Trump has announced a 25% tariff on all steel and aluminium imports, effective March 4, 2025, with no exemptions for key exporters like Canada, Brazil, Mexico, and South Korea.
- ✓ The decision aims to boost domestic production and counter foreign dumping but has sparked a global backlash.

Q. What was the rank of India in the 2024 Corruption Perception Index?

- A) 75th
- B) 96th
- C) 86th
- D) 46th

Answer : B

- ✓ Corruption Perception Index 2024: India ranks 96 out of 180 countries.
- ✓ India has been ranked 96th amongst 180 countries/territories in the 2024 Corruption Perception Index, released on 11th February 2025. Last year India was ranked 93rd.
- ✓ The Corruption Perception Index ranks the 180 countries/ territories on the basis of perceived public sector corruption level.
- ✓ Denmark topped the Index for the seventh consecutive time and was perceived as the least corrupt country followed by Finland and Singapore.
- ✓ India's Position and Score in 2024 Index.
- ✓ In 2024, India's overall score was 38, and was ranked 96th.
- ✓ In 2023, India's overall score was 40 and it was ranked 93rd.
- ✓ Thus there has been a decline in both the score and the rank of India.
- ✓ It means the perception of corruption in India has increased among experts and business people.
- ✓ In 2024 Pakistan was ranked at 135th position, Sri Lanka at 121, and Bangladesh at 149. China was ranked in the 76th position
- ✓ About the Corruption Perception Index

- ✓ The Corruption Perception Index is released by Berlin, Germany-based non-governmental organisation, Transparency International.
- ✓ The first report was released in 1995 and since then every year the report has been released by Transparency International.
- ✓ The Index uses a scale of Zero to 100. Zero denotes the highly corrupt while 100 score is least corrupt. No country has ever got a 100 score.

Q. Which country was ranked the most corrupt in the 2024 Corruption Perception Index?

- A) South Sudan
B) Somalia
C) Venezuela
D) Kuwait

Answer : A

- ✓ For the seventh year in a row, Denmark topped the index with a score of 90.
- ✓ South Sudan with a score of 8 was at the bottom and was the most corrupt country.
- ✓ Somalia was at the 179th position with a score of 9, and Venezuela at the 178th position with a score of 10.

Q. Which country is not among the top five in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2024 released by Transparency International?

- A) Denmark
B) Finland
C) Singapore
D) Norway

Answer : D

- ✓ Top Ten Countries in the world on the 2024 Corruption Perception Index.
- ✓ 1-Denmark
- ✓ 2-Finland
- ✓ 3-Singapore
- ✓ 4-New Zealand
- ✓ 5-Luxembourg
- ✓ 6- Norway
- ✓ 7- Switzerland
- ✓ 8-Sweden
- ✓ 9-Netherlands
- ✓ 10-Australia and Ireland

Q. Corruption Perception Index (CPI) is released annually by:

- A) World Economic Forum
B) Transparency International
C) Reporters without Borders
D) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Answer : B

Q. In which country was "Operation Devil Hunt" launched to crack down on violence?

- A) Myanmar
B) Bangladesh
C) Sri Lanka
D) Nepal

Answer : B

- ✓ Bangladesh launched "Operation Devil Hunt" to address political violence and unrest, resulting in the arrest of over 1,300 individuals.
- ✓ The operation was initiated following violent attacks on properties linked to former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina's family and her political party.

- ✓ The crackdown aims to control mobs and political factions responsible for escalating tensions, ensuring stability and security in Bangladesh amidst rising political turmoil.

Q. Which state is set to host the world's largest Jhumur festival in 2025?

- A) West Bengal
- B) Assam
- C) Odisha
- D) Jharkhand

Answer : B

- ✓ Assam is set to host the world's largest Jhumur dance festival on February 24, 2025, as a prelude to the Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment Summit.
- ✓ The event aims to achieve a Guinness World Record with over 7,500 dancers performing Jhumur, a traditional folk dance

Q. The Indian Army conducts a joint military Exercise Cyclone with which country's Armed Forces?

- A) Egypt
- B) Indonesia
- C) Malaysia
- D) Australia

Answer : A

- ✓ The 3rd edition of the India, Egypt military 'Exercise Cyclone' 2025 commenced at the Mahajan Field Firing Range, Rajasthan on the 10th of February 2025.
- ✓ About Exercise Cyclone 2025:
- ✓ It is a joint military exercise held between India and Egypt army.
- ✓ This is the third edition of Cyclone exercise.
- ✓ The first edition of the exercise was conducted in 2023 (In India) and second edition (In Egypt) was in 2024.
- ✓ Goal: The goal is to improve coordination between the two armies. Training will include real-world scenarios and tactical drills.
- ✓ Motto of Exercise Cyclone 2025: "Together we train, together we excel"

Q. Where will the Olympic Esports Games 2027 be held?

- A) Tokyo
- B) Ottawa
- C) Riyadh
- D) Berlin

Answer : C

- ✓ The first Olympic Esports Games will be held in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 2027.
- ✓ The International Olympic Committee (IOC) announced this on 11 February 2025, as part of a 12-year agreement with Saudi Arabia.
- ✓ The IOC is partnering with the Saudi Olympic and Paralympic Committee (SOPC) for this event.

Q. Who won the 2025 Chennai Open Tennis men's single title?

- A) Kyrian Jacquet
- B) Elias Ymer
- C) Dalibor Svrčina
- D) Billy Harris

Answer : A

- ✓ Kyrian Jacquet of France won the 2025 Chennai Open Tennis men's singles title.
- ✓ He defeated Elias Ymer of Sweden in the final on 9 February 2025 at SDAT Tennis Stadium, Nungambakkam, Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The 2025 Chennai Open was an ATP 100 Challenger event held from 3-9 February 2025.
- ✓ This is Kyrian Jacquet's first Association of Tennis Professionals (ATP) title.

- Q.** Which wildlife sanctuary has been selected as India's second cheetah habitat?
- A) Hazaribagh Wildlife Sanctuary B) Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary
- C) Kamlang Wildlife Sanctuary D) Chandoli Wildlife Sanctuary

Answer : B

- ✓ Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary in Madhya Pradesh will become India's second cheetah habitat.
- ✓ Six to eight cheetahs from South Africa are expected to arrive before summer 2025.
- ✓ Gandhi Sagar Wildlife Sanctuary is located in northwestern Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ It lies in the Khathiar-Gir dry deciduous forests ecoregion along the Chambal River. Declared a sanctuary in 1974, it covers 368 sq. km and is recognized as an Important Bird and Biodiversity Area (IBA).
- ✓ The sanctuary features diverse topography, including hills, plateaus, and the catchment area of the Gandhi Sagar Dam, enhancing its ecological richness.

- Q.** Where has India's largest solar cell and module manufacturing unit been inaugurated?
- A) Gujarat B) Tamil Nadu
- C) Karnataka D) Madhya Pradesh

Answer : B

- ✓ India's largest solar cell and module manufacturing unit was inaugurated at Gangaikondan SIPCOT Industrial Growth Centre, Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The facility is set up by TATA Power's TP Solar Limited with an investment of ₹3,800 crore.
- ✓ It will produce 30-GW photovoltaic cells and modules annually for solar power generation.
- ✓ Equipped with advanced robotic automation, it features TOPCon and Mono Perc technology for high efficiency

- Q.** Which country hosted the third international conference on artificial intelligence "AI Action Summit" in February 2025?
- A) Australia B) Germany
- C) France D) Italy

Answer : C

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi co-chaired the 'AI Action Summit' meeting in Paris, France on 11th February 2025, along with the French President Emmanuel Macron.
- ✓ France is hosting the third International summit focussed on artificial intelligence (AI) in Paris on 10th and 11th February 2025.
- ✓ The Summit was attended by the world leaders including American Vice -President JD Vance, Chinese Vice-Premier Zhang Guoqing, Canadian Prime Minister Justine Trudeau and chief executive officers (CEO) of tech giants like Google, Microsoft etc.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi is on a two nation tour of France and the United States of America
- ✓ Background to the AI Action Summit in Paris .
- ✓ The first international summit on artificial intelligence titled "Global AI Safety Summit" was organised by the United Kingdom government at Bletchley Park, in Buckinghamshire in November 2023.
- ✓ The Bletchley Park is the birthplace of the digital, programmable computer in the world.
- ✓ The main aim of the summit was to discuss the safety and regulation of artificial intelligence, particularly advanced AI systems.
- ✓ The second Global AI Safety Summit titled 'Seoul AI Summit' was co-hosted by the South Korean and the United Kingdom government virtually on 21–22 May 2024.
- ✓ France is hosting the third meeting titled "AI Action Summit" that is also being co-chaired by India.

Q. India's first Open Air Art Wall Museum has been inaugurated in which city?

- A) Chennai
- B) Hyderabad
- C) Bengaluru
- D) New Delhi

Answer : D

- ✓ On the occasion of the celebration of the 150th year of the foundation of the Indian Meteorological Department (IMD), India's first "Open Air Art Wall Museum" was inaugurated at the Mausam Bhawan in New Delhi on 18th February 2025.
- ✓ Mausam Bhawan is the name of the building that houses the headquarters of the Indian Meteorological Department in New Delhi.
- ✓ The Indian Meteorological Department was founded by the British on 15 January 1875 and presently it is under the Union Ministry of Earth Science.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Mission Mausam of the IMD on 14 January 2025 in Delhi in a function to celebrate the 150th foundation year of the Indian Meteorological Department
- ✓ The Open Air Art Museum was inaugurated by the Union Minister for State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology and Earth Sciences, Dr Jitendra Singh in New Delhi on 18 February 2025
- ✓ The Open Air Museum refers to the artwork done on the walls of the Mausam Bhawan.
- ✓ The IMD, in collaboration with the 'Delhi Street Art' organisation, has depicted the history of the IMD in 38 unique murals

Q. Where was the first General Assembly meeting of the Inter-governmental organisation, the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA) held?

- A) Singapore
- B) Malaysia
- C) Indonesia
- D) Japan

Answer : A

- ✓ India elected to the Vice Presidency of the IALA in Singapore Meeting.
- ✓ India has been elected Vice Presidency of the International Organisation of Aids to Marine Navigation (IALA).
- ✓ India was elected for this post at the first 1st General Assembly of the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA) held in Singapore from 18-21 February 2025.
- ✓ This was the first General Assembly of the IALA since becoming an intergovernmental organization on 22 August 2024. It was established as a non-governmental organisation (NGO) in 1957.
- ✓ After becoming an inter-governmental organisation, the organisation's name has been changed to the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation.
- ✓ The Indian delegation was led by K. Ramachandran, Secretary, Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways.
- ✓ About the International Organization of Aids to Marine Navigation (IALA)
- ✓ The IALA was established in 1957 as an association of Lighthouse authorities.
- ✓ The main aim of the IALA was to provide a platform for the member lighthouse authorities and Companies engaged in manufacturing navigation aids to exchange views on technical developments in marine aids to navigation and to make navigation safe.
- ✓ Headquarters: Paris, France

Q. Which is the major festival of the Missing tribe, recently in the news?

- A) Bihu
- B) Hornbill
- C) Ali Ai Ligang
- D) Losar

Answer : C

- ✓ The Missing tribe, one of the largest indigenous communities in Assam, recently celebrated the Ali Ai Ligang festival.
- ✓ The Missing people belong to the Tani ethnic group and speak a Tibeto-Burman language.
- ✓ They reside in parts of Assam and Arunachal Pradesh in India and in Tibet, China

FESTIVAL IN NEWS 2024-25

- ✓ Makaravilakku : Kerala
- ✓ Kagyed Dance Festival : Sikkim
- ✓ Ashtalakshmi Mahotsav : New Delhi.
- ✓ Ningol Chakkouba festival : Manipur
- ✓ Mera Hou Chongba festival : Manipur
- ✓ 25th Hornbill Festival : Nagaland
- ✓ Naga King Chilli festival : Nagaland
- ✓ Hemis Tsechu, or Hemis Festival : Ladakh
- ✓ Ambubachi Mela : Assam
- ✓ Saga Dawa Festival : Sikkim
- ✓ Koothandavar Festival : Tamil Nadu
- ✓ Seng Khihlang Festival : Meghalaya
- ✓ Gorsam Kora festival : Arunachal Pradesh
- ✓ Chapchar Kut Festival : Mizoram
- ✓ Orange Festival : Nagaland
- ✓ Pakke Paga Hornbill Festival : Arunachal Pradesh
- ✓ Ethnic Mamani Festival : Ladakh
- ✓ International Camel Festival : Bikaner, Rajasthan
- ✓ Chandubi Festival : Assam
- ✓ International Purple Fest 2024 - Goa
- ✓ National Street Food Festival : New Delhi
- ✓ Kuno Forest Festival : Madhya Pradesh
- ✓ 'Shar Amartala Torgya' Festival : Arunachal Pradesh
- ✓ Dhillio festival : Goa
- ✓ Longte Festival : Arunachal Pradesh

Q. Which country was declared free of the gambiense form of human African trypanosomiasis (HAT) by the WHO on January 29, 2025?

A) Senegal	B) Guinea
C) Mali	D) Liberia

Answer : B

- ✓ World Health Organization (WHO) officially declared Guinea free from the gambiense form of human African trypanosomiasis (HAT), a significant achievement in public health.
- ✓ This success was made possible through mass screenings, vector control using insecticide mini-screens, and door-to-door checks that started in 2012.
- ✓ Despite challenges such as the Ebola outbreak (2013-15) and the COVID-19 pandemic (2020), Guinea's resilience and consistent efforts were key in overcoming this disease.

Q. Who has been appointed as the 26th Chief Election Commissioner of India?

A) Sunil Arora	B) Sushil Chandra
C) Rajiv Kumar	D) Gyanesh Kumar

Answer : D

- ✓ Gyanesh Kumar assume charge as 26th CEC of India.

- ✓ Gyanesh Kumar assumed office as India's 26th Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) on 19th February 2025.
- ✓ He replaced Rajiv Kumar, who retired on 18th February 2025. Dr Vivek Joshi also assumed office as the Election Commissioner in the Election Commission of India on 19th February 2025.
- ✓ The other member of the three-member Election Commission of India is Dr Sukhbir Singh Sandhu.
- ✓ Earlier, the Prime Minister led three-member selection committee, recommended the name of
- ✓ Gyanesh Kumar as the Chief Election Commissioner and Dr Vivek Joshi as the Election Commissioner to the President of India.

Q. Who has been appointed as the new Election Commissioner of the Election Commission of India in February 2025?

- A) Achal Kumar Jyoti
- B) Om Prakash Rawat
- C) V. S. Sampath
- D) Vivek Joshi

Answer : D

- ✓ Dr Vivek Joshi assumed office as the Election Commissioner in the Election Commission of India on 19th February 2025.

Q. What is the term of the Chief Election Commissioner and the Commissioner of the Election Commission of India?

- A) six years or 65 years, whichever is earlier
- B) six years or 62 years, whichever is earlier
- C) six years or 60 years, whichever is earlier
- D) six years or 63 years, whichever is earlier

Answer : A

- ✓ Appointment of the Election Commissioner Under New Law
- ✓ The President appoints members of the Election Commissions on the recommendation of a search committee.
- ✓ The search committee consists of
- ✓ Prime Minister, who is also the Chairperson of the committee
- ✓ A Union Cabinet minister appointed by the Prime Minister as a member.
- ✓ Leader of the Opposition in the Lok Sabha as a member;
- ✓ If there is no recognised leader of the opposition in the Lok Sabha, then the leader of the largest opposition party in the Lok Sabha will be the search committee member.
- ✓ Term of the Election Commission members
- ✓ The Chief Election Commissioner and other Election Commissioners hold office for six years or until they attain sixty-five years of age, whichever is earlier.
- ✓ If an Election Commissioner is appointed as Chief Election Commissioner, his combined term of office shall not be more than six years.
- ✓ The six-year term will include his term as the Election Commissioner and the Chief Election Commissioner.
- ✓ The President of India appoints the Chief Election Commissioner under Article 324 of the Constitution. The Election Commission of India was established on 25 January 1950.
- ✓ 25th January is observed in India as the National Voters Day.
- ✓ Only One woman, V. S. Ramadevi, has been appointed as the Chief Election Commissioner of India.

Q. Which country is set to acquire a \$200 million Akash missile system from India?

- A) Vietnam
- B) Sri Lanka
- C) Bangladesh
- D) Philippines

Answer : D

- ✓ India is finalizing a \$200 million deal with the Philippines for the acquisition of its Akash surface-to-air missile system.
- ✓ This deal is part of India's growing defence exports, showcasing the advanced technology of the Akash missile system.
- ✓ The system's capabilities, including targeting various threats and its mobility, make it an attractive defence option for countries like the Philippines, which is enhancing its military strength amid tensions in the South China Sea.

Q. With which country has India signed a memorandum of understanding in February 2025 for the mining and exploration of lithium minerals?

- A) Qatar
- B) Malaysia
- C) Indonesia
- D) Argentina

Answer : D

- ✓ India Argentina sign MoU for Lithium mining & exploration in Argentina.
- ✓ India and Argentina have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to deepen collaboration in the exploration and development of lithium mines in Argentina.
- ✓ The MoU was signed between the Mineral Exploration and Consultancy Limited (MECL), and the Provincial Government of Catamarca, Argentina, in New Delhi on 19 February 2025.
- ✓ The Mineral Exploration and Consultancy Limited is owned by the government of India and comes under the Union Ministry of Mines.
- ✓ The MoU is expected to help India realise its objective of net-zero emissions by 2070 and establish itself as a manufacturing hub for electric vehicles.
- ✓ Lithium, also called as White Gold, is one of the 30 minerals, identified as critical minerals by the government of India. Lithium is a crucial mineral for the country's clean energy chain
- ✓ In January 2024, the central government-owned public sector company Khanij Bidesh India Ltd (KABIL) signed an agreement with Catamarca Minera Y Energética Sociedad Del Estado (CAMYEN) to acquire five lithium brine blocks in Argentina.
- ✓ CAMYEN is a state-owned mining and energy company in the Argentine province of Catamarca.
- ✓ Under the MoU, KABIL has the exclusive right to explore lithium in these five blocks and use it commercially.
- ✓ Importance of Argentina
- ✓ According to the United States Geological Survey's Lithium Statistics and Information 2023 report, Argentina holds 20 per cent of the world's 98 million tonnes of lithium resources.
- ✓ Argentina's neighbour, Bolivia, has the largest lithium resources in the world.
- ✓ Argentina is part of the "Lithium Triangle" along with Chile and Bolivia. These three countries hold more than half of the world's total lithium resources.
- ✓ Argentina has the second-largest lithium resources, third-largest lithium reserves and the fourth-largest producer globally.
- ✓ Capital of Argentina- Buenos Aires
- ✓ Currency - Argentine peso
- ✓ President- Javier Milei

SIGNS MoU IN NEWS 2024-25

- ✓ India and Argentina have signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) to deepen collaboration in the exploration and development of lithium mines in Argentina.

- ✓ India and Oman have signed a protocol to amend the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA).
- ✓ India and Spain have signed two memorandum of understanding (MoU) to strengthen and deepen the bilateral relations between the two countries.
- ✓ Union Cabinet has approved the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed by the Union Ministry of Cooperation and the Ministry of Trade of Indonesia.
- ✓ India Moldova signs Migration and Mobility Partnership Pact.
- ✓ India, Japan sign agreement for UNICORN masts for Indian naval warships.
- ✓ India and the United Kingdom have signed a framework agreement for co-designing, co-creating and co-production of Electric Propulsion Systems (engines) for the next generation of Indian Naval ships.
- ✓ Union Ministry of Mines has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Energy Agency (IEA) to collaborate in the field of critical minerals.
- ✓ India and Algeria signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on bilateral defence cooperation.
- ✓ India & Colombia sign agreement to boost Film Industry Partnership
- ✓ India and Malaysia have signed MoU to strengthen cooperation in the field of tourism.
- ✓ Indian Coast Guard and Jindal Steel & Power sign MoU to enhance indigenous shipbuilding
- ✓ India signs MoU with Bulgaria to enhance collaboration, exchange auditing expertise
- ✓ India and Mauritius recently amended their Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) to combat tax evasion and avoidance.
- ✓ India and Nepal agree to promote Sanskrit research and education.
- ✓ India and Bhutan signed MoU in the field of Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation Measures.
- ✓ India, Colombia sign MoU on Cooperation in the field of Sharing Successful Digital Solutions.
- ✓ India Signs Agreement for Lithium Exploration & Mining Project in Argentina

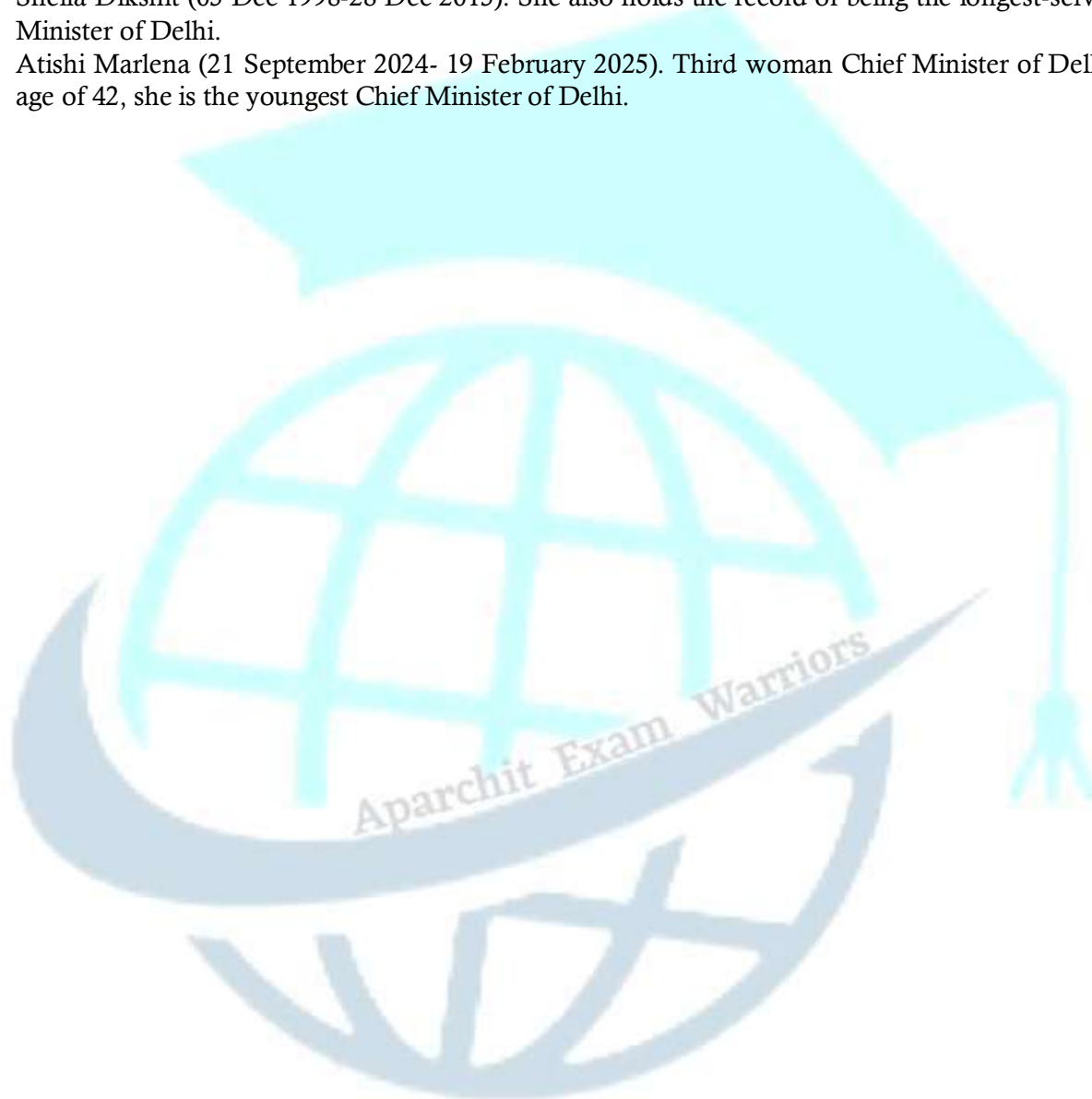
Q. Which recently appointed Woman Chief Minister is also India's 18th Woman Chief Minister?

A) Shikha Roy	B) Rekha Gupta
C) Poonam Sharma	D) Neelam Pehelwan

Answer : B

- ✓ Rekha Gupta of BJP Sworn in as 9th Chief Minister of NCT Delhi.
- ✓ Mrs Rekha Gupta of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) was sworn in as the 4th woman and 9th Chief Minister of the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi on 20th February 2025.
- ✓ Parvesh Sahib Singh Verma, who defeated former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal in the recently held 8th Delhi Legislative Assembly Election 2025, was sworn in as the Deputy Chief Minister of NCT Delhi.
- ✓ The first-time MLA from Shalimar Bagh constituency, Rekha Gupta and her six cabinet ministers were administered the oath of office and secrecy by the Lieutenant Governor of NCT Delhi, Vinai Kumar Saxena, at a function held at the Ramlila Maidan in Delhi.
- ✓ The BJP won 48 seats in the 70-member Delhi Legislative Assembly election held on 5th February 2025.
- ✓ The ruling Aam Aadmi Party won only 22 seats, and its founder and former Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal lost his seat to Parvesh Verma of the BJP.
- ✓ BJP has returned to power in Delhi after a gap of 27 years.
- ✓ About Rekha Gupta
- ✓ Rekha Gupta was elected as a member of the Delhi Legislative Assembly for the first time. She won her Shalimar Bagh assembly constituency in the 2025 Legislative Assembly election.
- ✓ She is a former president and general secretary of the Delhi University Students' Union (DUSU). She has also been the general secretary of the BJP Mahila Morcha in Delhi and a member of the party's national executive committee.
- ✓ She has also been elected as a member of the Delhi Municipal Corporation.
- ✓ 4th Women Chief Minister of Delhi and 18th in India

- ✓ Rekha Gupta is the 4th woman to become the Chief Minister of Delhi. She is also the 18th woman to become the Chief Minister in India.
- ✓ Her predecessor, Atishi Marlena, was the 17th woman to become the Chief Minister and the 3rd of Delhi.
- ✓ Sucheta Kriplani was the first woman Chief Minister in India. She was the Chief Minister of the United Province (later Uttar Pradesh) from 1963 to 1967.
- ✓ Other Women Chief Minister in Delhi
- ✓ Sushma Swaraj of the BJP was the first woman Chief Minister of Delhi (12 Oct 1998- 03 Dec 1998). She also holds the record for being the Chief Minister of NCT Delhi for the shortest term of 52 days.
- ✓ Sheila Dikshit (03 Dec 1998-28 Dec 2013). She also holds the record of being the longest-serving Chief Minister of Delhi.
- ✓ Atishi Marlena (21 September 2024- 19 February 2025). Third woman Chief Minister of Delhi. At the age of 42, she is the youngest Chief Minister of Delhi.



BEST MCQ WITH FACTS

JANUARY 2025

Q. Which country has declared 2025 as the 'Year of Community'?

- A) Saudi Arabia
- B) UAE
- C) Qatar
- D) Kuwait

Answer : B

- ✓ UAE President Sheikh Mohamed bin Zayed Al Nahyan has declared 2025 as the 'Year of Community' under the slogan "Hand in Hand."
- ✓ This initiative aims to promote unity, inclusion, and social cohesion within the country.
- ✓ It emphasizes shared responsibility and sustainable growth by encouraging community service and cultural diversity

YEARS DECLARED IN NEWS 2024-25

- UAE has declared 2025 as the 'Year of Community'
- The Ministry of Defence declares 2025 as the 'Year of Reforms'.
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi will inaugurate the 'United Nations International Year of Cooperatives 2025'
- India and Spain have agreed to observe 2026 as the Year of Culture, Tourism, and Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Indian Navy has declared 2024 as the 'Year of Naval Civilians.'
- Indian Army has declared 2024 as the "Year of Technology Absorption."

INTERNATIONAL YEARS IN NEWS 2024-25

- 2023 : International Year of Millets
- 2023 : International Year of Dialogue as a Guarantee of Peace
- 2024 : International Year of Camelids
- 2025 : International Year of Peace and Trust
- 2025 : International Year of Glaciers' Preservation
- 2025 : International Year of Cooperatives
- 2025 : International Year of Quantum Science and Technology
- 2026 : International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists
- 2026 : International Year of Volunteers for Sustainable Development
- 2026 : International Year of the Woman Farmer
- 2027 : International Year of Sustainable and Resilient Tourism
- 2029 : International Year of Asteroid Awareness and Planetary Defence

Q. Which rocket of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched the NVS-02 satellite in January 2025?

- A) GSLV F15
- B) PSLVC-60
- C) PSLVC-61
- D) PSLVC-59

Answer : A

- ✓ ISRO successfully launches GSLV F15, its 100th mission from Sriharikota.
- ✓ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) achieved a significant milestone by successfully launching its 100th mission from its Spaceport -Satish Dhawan Space Centre Sriharikota (SHAR), Andhra Pradesh on 29 January 2025.

- ✓ The GSLV-F-15 rocket carrying the NVS-02 satellite was launched from the second launch pad of the SHAR.
- ✓ In 1971 the first rocket- a sounding rocket RH -125 was launched from Sriharikota.
- ✓ Recently the government of India has approved the construction of a 3rd launchpad in the SHAR to enable ISRO to launch heavier rockets to meet the ambitious target of the Indian Space programme during the Amrit Kaal.
- ✓ GSLV-F-15 launch from Sriharikota
- ✓ The launch of the GSLV-F-15 from Sriharikota was the 17th launch of the Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) of ISRO. It was the 8th operational launch of GSLV with an indigenously developed cryogenic stage.
- ✓ The GSLV is a 51.7 m long, three-stage rocket.
- ✓ The first stage of the rocket comprises a solid propellant augmented by four liquid propellant straps.
- ✓ The second stage consists of a solid Vikas engine developed indigenously.
- ✓ The third stage is a cryogenic stage which uses liquid oxygen and liquid hydrogen as fuel.
- ✓ About the NVS-02 satellite
- ✓ The NVS-02 satellite launched by the GSLV-F-15 rocket was the second satellite in the second-generation series of satellites for the Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) system.
- ✓ Five second-generation satellites will be launched by ISRO. The first satellite of the second-generation NaviC, NVS-01, was launched in May 2023 with an Indigenous atomic clock
- ✓ The second-generation satellite will augment the first-generation NaviC satellites and help in providing better services.
- ✓ Navigation with Indian Constellation (NavIC) system
- ✓ The NavIC is India's indigenously developed regional navigation satellite system designed to provide accurate PVT (Position, Velocity, and Timing) service.
- ✓ It will provide the service to users in India as well within a range of 1500 km beyond the Indian landmass.

Q. Which Indian cities have been included in the inaugural Wetland City Accreditation list of cities under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands?

A) Indore and Udaipur	B) Bhopal and Jaipur
C) Varanasi and Mysuru	D) Surat and Ahmedabad

Answer : A

- ✓ Udaipur and Indore included in Wetland Accredited Cities List.
- ✓ Two Indian cities Indore of Madhya Pradesh and Udaipur of Rajasthan have been accredited as the Wetland Cities under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands.
- ✓ These Indian cities were part of the 31 cities worldwide which has been granted the prestigious status of Wetland Accredited Cities.
- ✓ Wetlands are areas on land or coastal areas where water covers the soil or is present either at or near the soil's surface all year or for a particular period during the year.
- ✓ Earlier the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change nominated three Indian cities Indore and Bhopal of Madhya Pradesh and Udaipur for the inaugural Wetland City Accreditation.
- ✓ Indore and Udaipur are the first Indian cities to be granted the status of Wetland City Accreditation.
- ✓ A maximum of 9 cities in China were granted the status of Wetland City Accreditation.
- ✓ About Indore and Udaipur
- ✓ Indore was founded by the Holkar dynasty and is the cleanest city in India. Within Indore, there is a Ramsar site, Sirpur Lake which is an important waterbird site.
- ✓ Udaipur city in Rajasthan is famous as the City of Lakes in India. It is surrounded by
- ✓ five major wetlands- Rang Sagar, Pichola, Doodh Talai, Fateh Sagar, and Swaroop Sagar.
- ✓ What is the Wetland City Accreditation?
- ✓ The 12th meeting of the Conference of the Contracting Parties (COP) of the Ramsar Convention held in Punta del Este, Uruguay in 2015, introduced a Wetland City Accreditation scheme.

- ✓ The Wetland City accreditation scheme is a voluntary scheme that recognises cities in 172 member countries for taking steps in safeguarding their natural or human-made wetlands in urban areas.
- ✓ The Wetland City Accreditation scheme aims to further promote the conservation and wise use of urban and peri-urban wetlands (wetlands that are located around the city and town).
- ✓ The protected wetlands will promote sustainable socio-economic benefits for local populations.
- ✓ Ramsar Convention on Wetlands
- ✓ To protect these ecologically fragile wetland sites an international conference was held in the Iranian city of Ramsar in 1971 to build an international consensus on conserving and preserving wetlands worldwide.
- ✓ The agreement, which is famous as the Ramsar Convention, came into force in 1975.
- ✓ 85 Indian wetlands have been declared as Ramsar sites.

Q. Which organisation releases the Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024?

A) Sarvpratham Foundation	B) Pratham Foundation
C) Nanhi jaan Foundation	D) Pehel Foundation

Answer : B

- ✓ Annual Status of Education Report (ASER) 2024 released by NGO Pratham Foundation.
- ✓ The ASER is a nationwide rural household-based survey of children's schooling and learning status.
- ✓ It tests the schooling status for children in the age group of 3-16, and the ability to read simple text & do basic arithmetic in the age group of 5-16.
- ✓ The ASER survey was conducted annually from 2005 till 2014. Thereafter, an alternate-year cycle was introduced.
- ✓ Key Findings
- ✓ Reversing the Learning Gap: Improvements in basic reading and arithmetic among students of classes 3 and 5 in rural areas reverting back from the post-pandemic damage.
- ✓ Improvement in both reading & arithmetic levels for all elementary grades (Std I-VIII) since 2022 with arithmetic levels being highest over the decade.
- ✓ Digital Literacy: In 2024, for the first time, it includes a component of 'Digital Literacy' among the age group 14-16.
- ✓ Access to smartphones is close to universal: Almost 90% of both girls and boys report having a smartphone at home.
- ✓ Gender Gap in Smartphone Ownership: 36.2% of boys own a smartphone compared to just 26.9% of girls.
- ✓ Smartphone Usage More for Social Media than Education: Only 57% of teenagers use smart devices for educational purposes, while approximately 76% use them for social media.
- ✓ School Infrastructure: All Right to Education indicators in ASER show slight improvements, including functional girls' toilets, drinking water facilities etc.

Q. The 'world's biggest iceberg', "____", which is more than twice the size of London, is drifting toward South Georgia Island.

A) K32g iceberg	B) P96s iceberg
C) N18y iceberg	D) A23a iceberg

Answer : D

- ✓ 'World's biggest iceberg' drifts towards Antarctic penguin island.
- ✓ The 'world's biggest iceberg', "A23a iceberg", which is more than twice the size of London, is drifting toward South Georgia Island, raising concerns among scientists that it could disrupt the feeding patterns of young penguins and seals.
- ✓ The massive ice block is slowly moving from Antarctica and could collide with South Georgia, a vital wildlife breeding ground in the South Atlantic.

- ✓ About Belarus
- ✓ Belarus is a tiny landlocked country in Eastern Europe.
- ✓ Belarus was part of the Soviet Union and was one of its three Slavic Republics, the other being Russia and Ukraine.
- ✓ It was earlier known as Byelorussia or White Russia.
- ✓ It gained its independence in 1991 after the dissolution of the Soviet Union.
- ✓ Capital: Minsk
- ✓ Currency: Belarusian ruble
- ✓ President: Alexander Lukashenko

NEWLY PRESIDENT IN NEWS 2024-25

- Alexander Lukashenko : Belarus
- Zoran Milanovic : Croatia
- Maia Sandu : Moldova
- Mikheil Kavelashvili : Georgia
- John Mahama : Ghana
- Yamandu Orsi : Uruguay
- Donald Trump : USA (47th President)
- Duma Boko : Botswana
- Luong Cuong : Vietnam
- Kais Saied : Tunisia
- Claudia Sheinbaum : Mexico (First woman president)
- Paul Kagame : Rwanda
- Nicolas Maduro : Venezuela
- Paul Kagame : Rwanda
- Gitanas Nausėda : Lithuanian
- Masoud Pezeshkian : Iran

Q. What is the duration of the recently approved National Critical Mineral Mission?

- A) 5 years
- B) 7 years
- C) 3 years
- D) 2 years

Answer : B

- ✓ Government approves National Critical Minerals Mission with outlay of ₹34,300 crore in 7 years.
- ✓ The government of India has approved the National Critical Mineral Mission, which aims to make the country self-reliant in critical minerals by encouraging the exploration of minerals within India and encouraging Indian companies to acquire mineral blocks outside the country.
- ✓ The National Critical Mineral Mission was approved by the Union Cabinet in a meeting held in New Delhi on 29 January 2025 and was chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ The National Critical Mineral Mission was announced by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman in her 2024-25 budget speech delivered on 23rd July 2024.
- ✓ The proposed total outlay for the National Critical Mineral Mission is Rs 34,300 crore .
- ✓ The central government will provide Rs 16,300 crore for the mission through the union budget while the public sector and private companies are expected to invest Rs 18,000 crore.
- ✓ The duration of the Mission is seven years from 2024-25 to 2030-31
- ✓ Union Ministry of Mines is the apex nodal body for implementing the National Critical Mineral Mission in the country.

Q. Which Union ministry is the nodal body for implementing the recently approved National Critical Mineral Mission?

- A) Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers B) Ministry of Power
C) Ministry of Heavy Industries D) Ministry of Mines

Answer : D

- ✓ Union Ministry of Mines is the apex nodal body for implementing the National Critical Mineral Mission in the country.
- ✓ Union Ministry of Mines has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the International Energy Agency (IEA) to help improve India's decision-making capabilities and strategic resource management in the critical mineral sectors.

Q. What is the total outlay for the recently approved National Critical Mineral Mission?

- A) Rs 34,300 crore B) Rs 16,200 crore
C) Rs 24,500 crore D) Rs 44,100 crore

Answer : A

- ✓ The proposed total outlay for the National Critical Mineral Mission is Rs 34,300 crore .
- ✓ The central government will provide Rs 16,300 crore for the mission through the union budget while the public sector and private companies are expected to invest Rs 18,000 crore.
- ✓ The duration of the Mission is seven years from 2024-25 to 2030-31

Q. Which of the following is not a Critical Minerals?

- A) Phosphate B) Antimony
C) Rhenium D) Asbestos

Answer : D

- ✓ What are Critical Minerals?
- ✓ Critical minerals are those minerals that are considered essential for the national security and economic development of a country.
- ✓ The government of India has identified 30 minerals -Molybdenum, Antimony, Beryllium, Vanadium, Zirconium, Bismuth, Cobalt, Copper, Gallium, Germanium, Graphite, Niobium, Nickel, PGE, Phosphate, Potash, REE, Rhenium, Hafnium, Indium, Lithium, Silicon, Strontium, Tantalum, Tellurium, Tin, Titanium, Tungsten, Selenium, and Cadmium- as critical minerals.

Q. Who has become India's first steel company to develop pipes for hydrogen transportation?

- A) JSW Steel
B) Tata Steel
C) Steel Authority of India Ltd
D) Jindal Steel And Power

Answer : B

- ✓ Tata Steel becomes India's first to develop hydrogen transport pipes.
- ✓ Tata Steel claimed that it has become India's first steel company to develop pipes for hydrogen transportation, marking a significant milestone in the country's hydrogen mission
- ✓ The pipes, processed at Tata Steel's Khopoli plant using steel manufactured at its Kalinganagar plant, have successfully met all the critical properties required for hydrogen transportation

Q. Which state Tableaux has won the best Tableaux award of the 2025 Republic Day?

- A) Gujarat
B) Tripura
C) Andhra Pradesh
D) Uttar Pradesh

Answer : D

- ✓ Uttar Pradesh Bags the Best State Tableaux Award of Republic Day Parade 2025.
- ✓ Union Ministry of Defence has announced the winners of the best Marching Contingents and Tableaux of the Republic Day Parade 2025.
- ✓ The Uttar Pradesh Tableaux, which showcased the grandeur of the Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj, was adjudged the best amongst the State and the Union Territories category.
- ✓ The Republic Day functions are organised by the Ministry of Defence, Government of India, in which there is an impressive march past by the Armed Forces/Central Armed Police Force (CAPF) and the other police forces.
- ✓ There is also a display of the vibrant culture, and traditions of India and its history depicted through Tableaux.
- ✓ 15 States/Union Territories and 10 Ministries/departments of central governments displayed their tableaux at the Kartavya Path in New Delhi on 26 January 2025.
- ✓ Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto was the Chief Guest at the 76th Republic Day celebration
- ✓ Following are the Winners in the Official Category.
- ✓ Tableaux .
- ✓ State and Union Territories
- ✓ 1st Position - Uttar Pradesh with a theme of 'Mahakumbh 2025 - Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas'.
- ✓ 2nd Position- Tripura with a theme of 'Eternal Reverence: The worship of 14 Deities in Tripura - Kharchi Puja'.
- ✓ 3rd Position- Andhra Pradesh with a theme of 'Etikoppaka Bommalu - Eco-Friendly Wooden Toys'.
- ✓ Central Ministries/Departments
- ✓ Ministry of Tribal Affairs with a theme of Janjatiya Gaurav Varsh.
- ✓ Special Prize:
- ✓ Central Public Works Department with a theme of '75 years of Constitution of India'.
- ✓ Jayati Jai Mamah Bharatam Dance Group.

Q. Which state Tableaux has won the best Tableaux award of the 2025 Republic Day In the Popular Choice category?

- A) Uttarakhand
B) Uttar Pradesh
C) Gujarat
D) Andhra Pradesh

Answer : C

- ✓ Popular Choice Category
- ✓ Tableaux .
- ✓ State and Union Territories
- ✓ 1st Position- Gujarat with a theme of 'Swarnim Bharat: Virasat Aur Vikas'.
- ✓ 2nd Position – Uttar Pradesh with a theme of 'Mahakumbh 2025 - Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas'.
- ✓ 3rd Position - Uttarakhand with a theme of 'Uttarakhand: Cultural Heritage and Adventure Sports'.
- ✓ Marching Contingents
- ✓ Best Marching Contingent among Services - Signals Contingent of the Indian Army.
- ✓ Best Marching Contingent among CAPFs/other auxiliary Forces - Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF) Marching Contingent.
- ✓ Central Ministries/Departments.
- ✓ Ministry of Women & Child Development with a theme of 'Multifaceted journey of women and children nurtured under the Ministry's comprehensive schemes'

Q. Which one of the following is correct about 'Pinaka'?

- A) It is a multi-barrel rocket system B) It is a type of battle tank
C) It is an advanced submarine D) It is an indigenously developed drone system

Answer : A

- ✓ Union Cabinet has cleared a Rs 10,200-crore deal for procuring ammunition for the Pinaka multi-barrel rocket launcher system.
- ✓ Two contracts will be signed for the same by March 31. The two deals are Rs 5,700 crore for high-explosive pre-fragmented ammunition and Rs 4,500 crore for area denial ammunition.
- ✓ The two types of ammunition will be produced by the Nagpur-based private sector Solar Group and state-owned Munitions India Limited.
- ✓ The deal was signed with Nagpur-based private sector Solar Group and state-owned Munitions India Limited.
- ✓ The two companies will produce the ammunition in a 60:40 ratio
- ✓ Pinaka is a multiple rocket launcher produced in India and developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation for the Indian Army.
- ✓ It was developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- ✓ The current range of the system is 75 km, but DRDO plans to expand it to 150 km and eventually up to 300 km.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the PM Surya Ghar Scheme:

1. It aims to boost solar rooftop capacity and enable residential households to generate their own electricity.
2. The scheme aims to help India meet its climate commitments by achieving 100% renewable energy dependency by 2040.

Which of the statement(s) given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ PM Surya Ghar Scheme Overview:
- ✓ Launched on February 15, 2024, with a budget of ₹75,000 crore, aiming to install rooftop solar systems in 1 crore households across India.
- ✓ 8.5 lakh households have successfully installed rooftop solar connections within a year.
- ✓ Progress & Targets:
- ✓ The scheme is expected to reach the 1 crore target within the next 2-3 years, according to Union Minister Pralhad Joshi.
- ✓ Challenges: The Parliamentary Standing Committee raised concerns about the slow pace of installations, with only 5 lakh installations completed out of 20 lakh applications by October 2024.
- ✓ Delays were attributed to rain-related factors, but the Ministry plans to cover 12 lakh households in FY 2024-25.
- ✓ Increased Pace: The number of daily installations has increased from 3,000 to 9,000.
- ✓ Subsidy Structure:
- ✓ 60% subsidy for systems up to 2 kW capacity and 40% subsidy for systems between 2 kW and 3 kW, capped at 3 kW.
- ✓ Subsidy examples:
- ✓ ₹30,000 for 1 kW system
- ✓ ₹60,000 for 2 kW system
- ✓ ₹78,000 for 3 kW system or higher

- ✓ Minister's Remarks on India's Renewable Energy Growth:
- ✓ India's renewable capacity has increased by 200% in the last decade, from 75.52 GW in 2014 to 220 GW today.
- ✓ India aims to add 50 GW of new renewable capacity annually in the coming years.
- ✓ The tariff for grid-connected solar power has decreased by 80%, from ₹10.95 per unit in 2010-11 to ₹2.15 per unit today, making India a leader in affordable renewable energy.
- ✓ The scheme does not specifically aim to achieve 100% renewable energy dependency by 2040. Instead, India has set a target of achieving 500 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030 as part of its climate commitments.

Q. Who has become first state to introduce E-Way Bill (EWB) for transportation of gold?

- A) Kerala
B) Maharashtra
C) Gujarat
D) Madhya Pradesh

Answer : A

- ✓ Kerala has become first state to introduce E-Way Bill (EWB) for transportation of gold.
- ✓ This has been made mandatory for the movement of gold and precious stones costing ₹10 lakh and above within the state (intra state) with effect from January 20.
- ✓ As per Rule 138 of the CGST Rules, 2017, every registered person involved in the movement of goods (which may not necessarily be on account of supply) of consignment value of more than ₹50,000 (can be lower for intra-state movement) is required to generate an e-way bill.

Q. What is the Axiom-4 Mission (Ax-4), recently seen in the news?

- A) A scientific mission to study asteroid impacts on Earth.
B) A commercial space mission sending astronauts to the Moon.
C) A mission to send a crew to Mars for the first time.
D) A private astronaut mission to the International Space Station

Answer : D

- ✓ Shubhanshu Shukla, an Indian Air Force (IAF) officer and ISRO astronaut, was recently named the pilot for Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4).
- ✓ About Axiom-4 Mission (Ax-4):
- ✓ Ax-4 is the fourth private astronaut mission to the International Space Station (ISS).
- ✓ It is organized by Axiom Space in collaboration with NASA.
- ✓ The Ax-4 crew will launch aboard a SpaceX Dragon spacecraft to the ISS from NASA's Kennedy Space Center in Florida.
- ✓ Once docked, the private astronauts plan to spend up to 14 days aboard the ISS.
- ✓ The mission will send the first Indian astronaut to the station as part of a joint effort between NASA and the Indian space agency.
- ✓ The private mission also carries the first astronauts from Poland and Hungary to stay aboard the ISS.

Q. Who is the head of the Judicial Commission set up by the Uttar Pradesh government to inquire into the stampede during the Maha Kumbh in Prayagraj in January 2025?

- A) Justice Dipak Misra
B) Justice Harsh Kumar
C) Justice Sanjiv Khanna
D) Justice Mehr Chand Mahajan

Answer : B

- ✓ Justice Harsh Kumar to head Judicial Commission on Maha Kumbh Stampede.

- ✓ Uttar Pradesh government of Yogi Adityanath has set up a three-member judicial committee headed by retired judge of the Allahabad High Court Justice Harsh Kumar, to inquire into the stampede incident in Maha Kumbh at Prayagraj on 29 January 2025.
- ✓ According to the Uttar Pradesh Government, 30 people were killed and 60 were injured in the pre-dawn stampede at the Sangam area of the Maha Kumbh as millions of people rushed to take a holy dip on the occasion of Mauni Amavasya (new moon day) on 29 January 2025.
- ✓ Members of the Inquiry Committee.
- ✓ The three-member Inquiry Committee consists of Justice (retd.) Harsh Kumar, former Director General of Police V K Gupta, and retired IAS officer D K Singh.
- ✓ The commission will examine the cause and circumstances that led to the stampede and will recommend measures to prevent such incidents in the future.

Answer : D

Q. Which university is set to become the first UK university to open a campus in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City)?

Answer : A

- ✓ Queen's University Belfast is set to become the first UK Russell Group university to open a campus in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City, India), with the first cohort of students expected to start in January 2026.
- ✓ It will be the third foreign education institution to open an international campus in Gift City after two Australian universities - Deakin university and Wollongong university

Q. World Employment and Social Outlook report, recently seen in the news, is published by:

- A) World Bank
- B) International Monetary Fund
- C) World Economic Forum
- D) International Labour Organization

Answer : D

- ✓ International Labour Organization's (ILO) published the World Employment and Social Outlook (WESO): Trends 2025 in Geneva.
- ✓ The WESO provides a detailed analysis of the state of global labour markets, highlighting key trends and challenges.
- ✓ It explores issues such as the slowdown in labour market recovery, the persistence of youth unemployment, and the widening global jobs gap.
- ✓ **Key highlights of the Report:**
- ✓ In 2024, global employment grew in line with the labour force, keeping the unemployment rate steady at 5%.
- ✓ Geopolitical tensions, the rising costs of climate change and unresolved debt issues are the challenges before the recovery and the reasons for putting labour markets under pressure.
- ✓ The labour force participation rates have dropped in low-income countries while increasing in high-income nations, mainly among older workers and women, the report pointed out.
- ✓ International Labour Organization (ILO)
- ✓ Formation : 11 April 1919
- ✓ Headquarters : Geneva, Switzerland
- ✓ Director-general : Gilbert Houngbo (Togo)

Q. The annual meeting of the World Economic Forum is held in which of the following places?

- A) Australia
- B) China
- C) Switzerland
- D) France

Answer : C

- ✓ The Annual Meeting 2025 of The World Economic Forum will take place at Davos-Klosters, Switzerland from 20th to 24th January 2025
- ✓ The World Economic Forum's (WEF) 2025 Annual Meeting in Davos follows the theme of "Collaboration for the Intelligent Age".
- ✓ World Economic Forum
- ✓ The World Economic Forum was established by German Klaus Schwab in 1971 as a non-profit international organisation that promotes Public-Private Cooperation.
- ✓ Headquarters of WEF: Cologny, Switzerland
- ✓ Report Released by WEF
- ✓ Global Gender Gap Report,
- ✓ Global Competitiveness Report,
- ✓ Energy Transition Index,
- ✓ Global Travel and Tourism Report,
- ✓ Global IT Report in collaboration with INSEAD and Cornell University.

Q. Which institution is collaborating with C-DOT to develop an indigenous 6G optical chipset?

- A) IIT Bombay
- B) IIT Delhi
- C) IISc Bangalore
- D) NIT Trichy

Answer : A

- ✓ IIT Bombay has partnered with the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) to develop an "Optical Transceiver Chipset for High-Bandwidth 6G Wireless Links."
- ✓ This initiative, under the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF), aims to enhance India's leadership in 6G technology.
- ✓ The chipset will support high-speed communication, especially in rural and challenging terrains, while promoting affordability and sustainability.
- ✓ This project aligns with India's vision of "Atmanirbhar Bharat" and aims to create a robust 6G ecosystem, reinforcing the country's capabilities in next-generation telecom innovation.

Q. Which organization has signed a contract with the Ministry of Defence for the supply of Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missiles (MRSAM) for the Indian Navy?

- A) Hindustan Aeronautics Limited
- B) Defence Research and Development Organisation
- C) Bharat Electronics Limited
- D) Bharat Dynamics Limited

Answer : D

- ✓ The Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a Rs. 2,960 crore contract with Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) for the supply of Medium-Range Surface-to-Air Missiles (MRSAM) to the Indian Navy.
- ✓ The contract was finalised in New Delhi in the presence of Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh.
- ✓ The MRSAM system will be integrated onboard multiple Indian Naval ships, enhancing the Navy's defensive capabilities significantly
- ✓ Features
- ✓ Range: MRSAM has a range of 70 km.
- ✓ Guidance: MRSAM uses a dual guidance system, including a Command and Active Radar Seeker (RF).
- ✓ Propulsion: MRSAM uses a dual pulse solid motor.
- ✓ Warhead: MRSAM has a pre-fragment warhead.
- ✓ Fuse: MRSAM has a proximity fuse (RPF).
- ✓ Flight time: MRSAM has a flight time of 230 seconds.
- ✓ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI) jointly developed the MRSAM.
- ✓ Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) manufactures the MRSAM.

Q. Which crop did ISRO successfully germinate in space using its Compact Research Module for Orbital Plant Studies (CROPS)?

- A) Wheat
- B) Lobia
- C) Rice
- D) Maize

Answer : B

- ✓ ISRO achieved a groundbreaking milestone in space agriculture by germinating black-eyed pea (lobia) seeds aboard its Compact Research Module for Orbital Plant Studies (CROPS).
- ✓ This experiment demonstrates the potential for growing sustainable food sources in space, crucial for long-duration missions.
- ✓ By simulating Earth-like conditions, ISRO's initiative addresses challenges like microgravity, radiation, and limited sunlight, paving the way for self-sustaining food systems for astronauts on extended space explorations.

Q. Who has been appointed as the Ombudsman and Ethics Officer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)?

- A) Justice D.Y. Chandrachud B) Justice N.V. Ramana
C) Justice Arun Mishra D) Justice S.A. Bobde

Answer : C

- ✓ Justice Arun Mishra, a former Supreme Court judge, has been appointed as the Ombudsman and Ethics Officer of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI). Known for his extensive legal expertise and leadership experience, he will address ethical issues and disputes in Indian cricket.

Q. Which country launched Pakistan's first indigenous Electro-Optical Satellite (PRSC-EO1) on January 17, 2025?

- A) China B) United States
C) Japan D) European Space Agency

Answer : A

- ✓ China successfully launched Pakistan's first indigenous Electro-Optical Satellite (PRSC-EO1) from the Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center using the Long March-2D rocket.
- ✓ This satellite is equipped with advanced electro-optical sensors to enhance Pakistan's capabilities in Earth observation, disaster management, resource monitoring, and urban planning.
- ✓ This launch signifies a continuation of China-Pakistan collaboration in space technology, building on earlier satellite launches and cooperative projects for communication and lunar exploration.

Q. Which country recently celebrated 60 years of diplomatic ties with India, unveiling a commemorative logo?

- A) Malaysia B) Singapore
C) Indonesia D) Thailand

Answer : B

- ✓ India and Singapore marked 60 years of diplomatic relations with a commemorative logo unveiled by President Droupadi Murmu and Singapore President Tharman Shanmugaratnam.
- ✓ The logo features elements from the flags and national flowers (lotus and orchid) of both countries. Singapore, an island country in Southeast Asia, has strong cultural ties with India, as ethnic Indians constitute around 9% of its resident population.

Q. SSI Mantra, recently in news, is a:

- A) constellation discovered by the NASA
B) place named on Mars by the ISRO
C) new crypto currency launched by the RBI
D) surgical tele-robotic system

Answer : D

- ✓ India's first indigenous surgical tele-robotic system, SSI Mantra successfully conducted two complex heart surgeries with patient in Jaipur and the operating surgeon in Gurgaon.
- ✓ SSI Mantra is a robotic system developed by medical technology company, SSI Ltd which is the first-of-its-kind system in India.
- ✓ It has been approved by the Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO) in India under Class B and Class C surgical devices.

- ✓ These approvals affirm the safety, efficacy, and regulatory compliance of the system for use in hospitals across India.
- ✓ It facilitates complex surgery such as Totally Endoscopic Coronary Artery Bypass (TECAB).

Q. The Indian men's team defeated which team in the final to win the first Kho Kho World Cup 2025?

- A) Brazil
B) Nepal
C) Peru
D) Sri Lanka

Answer : B

- ✓ Indian men and women's team wins inaugural Kho Kho World Cup 2025.
- ✓ The Indian women's and men's teams made a clean sweep at the inaugural edition of the World Kho Kho by winning the respective titles.
- ✓ In the final of the World Cup played at the Indira Gandhi Indoor Stadium in New Delhi, the Indian men's and women's teams defeated Nepal in both finals.
- ✓ The Kho Kho Federation of India organised the First Kho Kho World Cup 2025 with support from the Indian Olympic Association in New Delhi from 13-19 January 2025.
- ✓ The World Cup was inaugurated by Vice-President Jagdeep Dhankhar inaugurated the World Cup on 13 January 2025.
- ✓ The 20 countries' men's teams and 19 countries' women's teams participated in the World Cup.
- ✓ Indian team vanquishes Nepal to win the Title
- ✓ In the men's final India team outplayed Nepal to win the final with 54-36 points.
- ✓ The Indian men's team placed in Group A won all its group matches by defeating Brazil, Nepal, and Peru

Q. Who won the women's title of the first Kho Kho World Cup 2025?

- A) India
B) Nepal
C) South Korea
D) Malaysia

Answer : A

- ✓ In the final, the Indian women's team defeated Nepal by 78-40 points.
- ✓ The Indian team was placed in Group A along with Iran, Malaysia, and South Korea and it won all its group matches to top the group.

Q. Who was awarded the INSA Fellowship for 2025 for contributions to vaccine development?

- A) Dr. S. Somanath
B) Dr. Krishna Ella
C) Dr. Renu Swarup
D) Dr. Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw

Answer : B

- ✓ Dr Krishna Ella, founder of Bharat Biotech, received the INSA Fellowship for 2025 in recognition of his exceptional contributions to vaccine development, notably Covaxin.
- ✓ The fellowship, starting January 1, 2025, places him among distinguished scientists like Dr. S. Somanath of ISRO.
- ✓ Bharat Biotech has developed 18 vaccines, delivered nine billion doses globally, and introduced innovations like the intranasal vaccine iNCOVACC.

Q. Which region's Virgin Coconut Oil recently received the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag?

- A) Kerala
B) Goa
C) Lakshadweep
D) Andaman and Nicobar

Answer : D

- ✓ The Virgin Coconut Oil (VCO) from Nicobar district in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands was recently awarded the prestigious Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- ✓ This achievement highlights the region's unique production and quality standards.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi, during the 118th episode of "Mann Ki Baat," emphasized this milestone as a step towards empowering women through self-help groups (SHGs) and specialized training in marketing and branding

Q. Which country has been admitted as a “partner country” of the BRICS bloc in January 2025?

- A) Iran
B) Vietnam
C) Turkey
D) Nigeria

Answer : D

- ✓ Nigeria has been admitted as a “partner country” of the BRICS bloc.
- ✓ BRICS was formed in 2009 to counterbalance the G-7 industrialized nations.
- ✓ Nigeria is the ninth partner, joining countries Belarus, Bolivia, Cuba, Kazakhstan, Malaysia, Thailand, Uganda, and Uzbekistan.
- ✓ With Africa’s largest population and a major economy, Nigeria aligns with BRICS on South-South cooperation and global governance reform.
- ✓ The bloc is exploring alternatives to the US dollar for international payments.
- ✓ About BRICS
- ✓ BRICS is an intergovernmental organisation that originally consisted of four countries: Brazil, Russia, India, and China.
- ✓ British economist Jim O'Neill, working for Goldman Sachs, coined the acronym BRIC (Brazil, Russia, India, and China) in 2001.
- ✓ He believed that these countries would dominate global economic growth by 2050.
- ✓ The first summit meeting of the leaders of the BRIC countries was held in June 1996 in Yekaterinburg, Russia.
- ✓ The group's name was changed to BRICS after South Africa joined the group in 2010.
- ✓ The BRICS countries are economically an important group in the world. Around half of the world's population lives in BRICS countries.
- ✓ Their contribution in world crude oil production and export is around 40 per cent.
- ✓ They contribute to around 25 percent of the global economy and their contribution in global trade in goods is around two-fifth.
- ✓ Full form of BRICS (10) : Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Indonesia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and UAE.
- ✓ Russia hosted the 16th BRICS summit meeting and the first BRICS Outreach/BRICS plus summit meeting at Kazan from 22 to 24 October 2024.
- ✓ Brazil will host the next 17th BRICS summit meeting in 2025

Q. Who has been appointed as the Director General of the CRPF?

- A) Anish Dayal Singh
B) Gyanendra Pratap Singh
C) Vitul Kumar
D) Rakesh Asthana

Answer : B

- ✓ Gyanendra Pratap Singh, a 1991 batch IPS officer from the Assam-Meghalaya cadre, has been appointed as the Director General of the CRPF, with tenure extending till November 30, 2027.
- ✓ He succeeds Anish Dayal Singh and follows the interim charge held by Vitul Kumar
- ✓ Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
- ✓ Founded : 1939
- ✓ Headquarters : New Delhi
- ✓ Motto : Service and Loyalty

- ✓ Director General : Gyanendra Pratap Singh

NEW UPDATED LIST OF CHIEF AND DIRECTOR GENERAL

- Gyanendra Pratap Singh : Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
- Paramesh Sivamani : Indian Coast Guard (ICG)
- Amrit Mohan Prasad : Sashastra Seema Bal (SSB)
- Daljit Singh Chawdhary : Border Security Force (BSF)
- Rajwinder Singh Bhatti : Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
- B. Srinivasan: National Security Guard (NSG)
- Vikas Lakhera : Assam Rifles
- Lieutenant General Upendra Dwivedi : 30th Chief of the Army Staff
- Admiral Dinesh Kumar Tripathi : 26th Chief of the Naval Staff
- Air Marshal Amar Preet Singh : 28th Chief of the Air Staff
- Rahul Rasgotra : Indo-Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)
- Lieutenant General Anil Chauhan : Chief of Defence Staff (CDS)
- Lieutenant General Gurbirpal Singh : National Cadet Corps (NCC)

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Pralay Missile:

1. It is long-range surface-to-surface missile.
2. It has been indigenously developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : B

- ✓ Indigenously developed Pralay missile will be showcased during Republic Day Parade for the first time, Defence Secretary stated recently.
- ✓ About Pralay Missile:
- ✓ It is an indigenously developed short-range, quasi-ballistic surface-to-surface missile.
- ✓ It has been developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) based on the Prithvi Defence Vehicle from the Indian ballistic missile programme.
- ✓ It has been developed for deployment along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) and Line of Control (LoC).
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ It is powered by a solid-propellant rocket motor.
- ✓ The missile has a range of 150-500 km and can be launched from a mobile launcher.
- ✓ It has a payload capacity of 500-1,000 kg.
- ✓ The missile is capable of carrying conventional warheads.
- ✓ It is equipped with guidance systems that provide a Circular Error Probable (CEP) of less than 10 meters.
- ✓ The missile reaches terminal speeds of Mach 6.1 and can engage targets such as radar installations, command centers, and airstrips.

Q. The historical Ratnagiri site, which was in the news recently, is located in which state?

- A) Andhra Pradesh
B) Tamil Nadu
C) Bihar
D) Odisha

Answer : D

- ✓ Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) has discovered significant Buddhist remains during renewed excavations at the historic Ratnagiri site in Jajpur district adding another chapter to its 1,200-year-old legacy.
- ✓ Location: It is located 100 km northeast of Bhubaneswar, Odisha.
- ✓ The site stands on a hill between Birupa and Brahmani rivers and is Odisha's most famous — and the most excavated Buddhist site.
- ✓ It is part of the famous Diamond Triangle of Odisha along with Udaygiri and Lalitgiri, Ratnagiri – translated as the 'Hills of Jewels'

Q. Donald Trump has ordered the withdrawal of the United States of America from which international Organisation?

- A) World Trade Organization B) World Health Organisation
C) International Labour Organization D) United Nations Industrial Development Organization

Answer : B

- ✓ Donald Trump: US to withdraw from WHO and Paris Climate Accord.
- ✓ American President Donald Trump on the first day of his office signed several Executive Orders to implement his election promise of America first.
- ✓ The Executive Order signed on 20 January 2025 includes several controversial issues and reverses the previous Joe Biden administration decisions.
- ✓ The order includes the American withdrawal from the World Health Organisation (WHO), and the Paris Climate Change Agreement 2015, ending automatic citizenship rights for foreign parent's children born in the USA.
- ✓ The order also includes a declaration of state of emergency along the Mexican border to curb illegal migrants seeking asylum in the USA by crossing the Mexican border to the USA.
- ✓ The withdrawal of the US from the international agreements will take place after 12 months after the signing of the President's Executive Orders.
- ✓ Withdrawal From WHO
- ✓ Donald Trump In his first term as President in 2020, had ordered the American withdrawal from the WHO due to its mishandling of the Covid-19 pandemic. But before the process could be completed he was replaced as the American President by Joe Biden.
- ✓ In his second term as President Donald Trump again signed an order for withdrawal from the WHO.
- ✓ Reason for withdrawal
- ✓ The mishandling of the COVID-19 pandemic and other international health crises by the WHO.
- ✓ In an apparent reference to China, the Trump administration accused the WHO of failing to act independently from the inappropriate political influence of WHO member states.
- ✓ Contribution made by the United States government is unfairly onerous as compared to countries like China.
- ✓ Contribution to the WHO
- ✓ All the 194 member countries of the WHO are mandated to contribute to the WHO. The size of the contribution depends on the size of the country's economy and the member countries can contribute above their mandatory contribution voluntarily.
- ✓ The WHO also accepts donations from non-governmental organisations like the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundations etc.
- ✓ The United States of America is the largest contributor to the WHO contributing around 18% of its overall funding of the WHO.
- ✓ After the United States, the largest contributor to WHO is the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, though it funds the polio eradication program of the WHO.
- ✓ The next-largest state donor in terms of combined mandatory and voluntary contributions is Germany.
- ✓ India is the 18th largest contributor country of the WHO.
- ✓ Impact of the United States Move

- Q.** Donald Trump has ordered the withdrawal of the United States of America from which international Treaty?
- A) Kyoto Protocol B) Basel Convention
- C) Ramsar Convention D) Paris Agreement

- ✓ Withdrawal from the Paris Climate Agreement 2015.
- ✓ Donald Trump also signed an order for the withdrawal of the United States from the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement which came into effect in 2016. The US will now join Iran, Yemen, and Libya as the only countries to currently stand outside the agreement.
- ✓ This is the second time that Trump has withdrawn from the Paris Agreement.
- ✓ In 2017, Donald Trump withdrew the United States of America from the Paris Agreement but when Joe Biden became the President of America the United States rejoined it in February 2021.
- ✓ About Paris Agreement
- ✓ The Paris Agreement is a legally binding agreement that seeks to limit greenhouse gas emissions from member countries to prevent climate change.
- ✓ It also seeks to limit the rise in global temperature from more than two degrees Celsius compared to pre-industrialisation levels.
- ✓ China is the largest emitter of greenhouse gases in the world followed by the United States and India.
- ✓ Reason for Withdrawal
- ✓ Donald Trump plans to increase the use of fossil fuels in the country to produce cheap electricity in the country and boost economic growth.
- ✓ The United States has sizable reserves of oil and gas and the Trump administration aims to export the oil and gas.

- Answer : C

- ✓ Halt on Foreign Aid
- ✓ President Trump also ordered a halt on all aid provided by the American government to foreign governments and organisations for the next 90 days.
- ✓ He said that the government will review whether the aid serves the American national interests or not.
- ✓ He also said that US foreign aid had served to “destabilize world peace by promoting ideas in foreign countries that do not further harmonious and stable relations within the country and among the countries.”

- Answer : B

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- ✓ In the last financial year, India's coffee exports reached 1.29 billion dollars, nearly doubling from 719 million dollars in 2020-21.
- ✓ Karnataka leads in coffee production, followed by Kerala and Tamil Nadu, which are key contributors to this achievement.

Q. What is the minimum support price for raw jute announced by the government of India for the 2025-26 agricultural season?

- A) Rs 5350 per quintal B) Rs 6220 per quintal
C) Rs 4780 per quintal D) Rs 5650 per quintal

Answer : D

- ✓ MSP of Raw Jute increased to Rs.5,650 per quintal for 2025-26 season.
- ✓ The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has approved the minimum support price (MSP) of raw jute (TD-3 grade) for the agricultural marketing season 2025-26 at Rs 5650 per quintal.
- ✓ The meeting of the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs was held in New Delhi on 22 January 2025 and was chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ Increase of Rs 315 per quintal for Raw Jute in 2025-26 season.
- ✓ The MSP of Rs.5,650/- per quintal for 2025-26 season is an increase of Rs 315 per quintal as compared to the 2024-25 season.
- ✓ The government has been consistently increasing the MSP for raw jute over a period of time. In 2014-15 the MSP was Rs.2400 per quintal which has been increased to Rs.5,650/- per quintal in 2025-26.
- ✓ The MSP of Rs.5,650 per quintal in 2025-26 would ensure a return of 66.8 percent over the all India weighted average cost of production.
- ✓ About the Golden Fiber- Jute
- ✓ Jute is also known as the golden fiber and India is the largest producer of raw jute in the world.
- ✓ In India ,Jute is the second most important cash crop after cotton.
- ✓ Jute is grown in six states of India- West Bengal, Assam, Bihar, Odisha, Tripura and Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ West Bengal is the major producer of jute in India followed by Assam and Bihar.
- ✓ Around 40 lakh farming families are directly or indirectly dependent on Jute Industry.

Q. Who won the men's singles title of the 2025 India Open Badminton Tournament?

- A) Viktor Axelsen B) Lee Cheuk Yiu
C) Kim Won-ho D) Seo Seung-jac

Answer : A

- ✓ 2024 Paris Olympic gold medal winner Denmark's Viktor Axelsen and South Korea's An Se-young respectively won the men's and women's singles title of the 2025 India Open Badminton Tournament.
- ✓ The Indian Open Badminton Tournament was held in New Delhi from 14-19 January 2025.
- ✓ Third Indian Open Singles Title for Viktor Axelsen.
- ✓ Viktor Axelsen who was appearing in the final of the Indian Open for the sixth time in the last 10 years defeated Lee Cheuk Yiu of Hong Kong China 21-16, 21-8 to win his third India Open Title.
- ✓ Viktor Axelsen had previously won the Indian Open singles title in 2017 and 2019.
- ✓ World number 4 ranked Viktor Axelsen won the prize money of USD 66,500 for his title win and Lee Cheuk Yiu pocketed USD 32,300 prize money for his effort.

Q. Who won the women's singles title of the 2025 India Open Badminton Tournament?

- A) An Se-young B) Pornpawee Chochuwong
C) Arisa Igarashi D) Ayaka Sakuramoto

Answer : A

- ✓ Paris Olympic gold medal winner An Se-young of South Korea had little trouble in defeating Pornpawee Chochuwong of Thailand in the final by 21-12, 21-9 in just 39 minutes.
- ✓ This was the second India Open Badminton singles title for An Se-young having won it in 2023.
- ✓ In 2025 this was the second title for An Se-young having won the 2025 Malaysia Open singles title.
- ✓ 2nd India Open Title for An Se-young
- ✓ 2025 India Open Badminton Tournament

Event	Winner (Nationality)	Runners-Up (Nationality)
Men (Singles)	Viktor Axelsen (Denmark)	Lee Cheuk Yiu (Hong Kong China)
Women (Singles)	An Se-young (South Korea)	Pornpawee Chochuwong(Thailand)
Men (Doubles)	Goh Sze Fei and Nur Izzuddin (Malaysia)	Kim Won-ho and Seo Seung-jae (South Korea)
Women (Doubles)	Arisa Igarashi and Ayaka Sakuramoto (Japan)	Kim Hye-jeong and Kong Hee-yong (South Korea)
Mixed Double	Jiang Zhenbang and Wei Yaxin (China)	Thom Gicquel and Delphine Delrue (France)

Q. What was the rank of India in the Global Firepower Index 2025?

- A) 5th
B) 4th
C) 3rd
D) 2nd

Answer : B

- ✓ India ranked 4th on the Global Firepower Index 2025.
- ✓ India has been ranked as having the 4th most powerful military in the world after the United States of America, Russia and China by the Global Firepower Index 2025.
- ✓ Bhutan was ranked at the
- ✓ bottom of the index at 145th position. Pakistan which was ranked 9th in 2024 dropped to 12th position in the 2025 ranking.
- ✓ There has been no change in the ranking of the top four countries in the world as compared to 2024 Global Firepower Index.
- ✓ The Global Firepower Index has been released by a website Globalfirepower.com annually since 2006

Q. Which country's military was ranked as the most powerful in the world by the Global Firepower Index 2025?

- A) USA
B) Russia
C) China
D) India

Answer : A

- ✓ In 2050 ,India is projected to be just behind North America in the global consumption share. North America is projected to have a global consumption share of 17 % in 2050.
- ✓ The report titled “Dependency and Depopulation: Confronting the Consequences of New Demographic Reality” was released by World Data Lab recently.
- ✓ Purchasing Power Parity refers to the rate of currency conversion that makes the purchasing power of different currencies equal by eliminating the price difference between the countries due to different inflation rates.
- ✓ Reason for increase in Global Share of India
- ✓ According to the World Data Lab report the share of India in the global consumption In 1997 was 4 % which later increased to 9 percent in 2023. It is expected to increase to 16 % in 2050.
- ✓ Some of the reason mentioned y the report for the increase in India’s share of global consumption are as follows;
- ✓ Decline in Support Ratio
- ✓ The Support Ratio in India is expected to drop to 4.8 in 2050 and further to 1.9 by 2100 from 9.8 in 2023.
- ✓ The Support Ratio or the Old age dependency ratio refers to the number of working age people (15-64 years) for every person above 65 years whom they have to support.
- ✓ Thus a support ratio of 9.8 means that for every 9.8 old age person in the country there are 100 working age people.
- ✓ Share in world population to decline
- ✓ According to the World Data Lab , the share of Indian population in the world population is expected to decline from 23 % in 2023 to 17% in 2050. It is expected to further decline to 15 % by 2100.
- ✓ Increase in Demographic Dividend
- ✓ The report states that between 1997 to 2023, the demographic dividend added 0.7 per cent on average to the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) per capita growth.
- ✓ Demographic dividend refers to the increase in GDP per capita growth due to increase in the working age population in the country.
- ✓ Focus on Women participation in workforce
- ✓ The report advocates greater participation of the women in the country’s labour force.
- ✓ It says that the Indian GDP per capita will increase by 4-5% if the women labour force increases by 10 %.
- ✓ About World Data Lab
- ✓ The World Data Lab was set up by former World Bank economist Wolfgang Fengler and Homi Kharas in 2014.
- ✓ World Data Lab employs advanced data science methodologies to forecast consumer trends, category spending, demographic shifts, and cities.
- ✓ Headquarters: Vienna, Austria

Q. According to the World Data Lab recent report, India will become the second largest global consumption economy on the purchasing power parity basis by which year?

- A) 2030 B) 2040
C) 2050 D) 2070

Answer : C

- ✓ According to a recent report published by the World Data Lab, India is projected to account for 16 % of global consumption on the basis of purchasing power parity by 2050

Q. Prabowo Subianto, the chief guest of Republic Day 2025, is the President of which country?

- A) Sri Lanka B) Malaysia
C) Singapore D) Indonesia

Answer : D

- ✓ This year the chief guest of Republic Day 2025 will be the President of Indonesia Prabowo Subianto.
- ✓ This is an important occasion as we mark the completion of 75 years of diplomatic relations between India and Indonesia.
- ✓ Let us tell you that in the year 2025, India will celebrate its 76th Republic Day.

Q. Which institution has won the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2025?

- A) Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS)
- B) Sustainable Environment and Ecological Development Society (SEEDS)
- C) Gujarat Institute of Disaster Management
- D) National Institute of Disaster Management (NIDM)

Answer : A

- ✓ INCOIS gets Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar 2025.
- ✓ The Hyderabad-based Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) has been selected for the 2025 Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar in the Institutional category.
- ✓ No individual has been chosen for the award this year.
- ✓ The Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar is announced by the government of India on the occasion of the birth anniversary of Netaji Subhash Chandra Bose on 23 January every year.
- ✓ Since 2021, the government of India has celebrated 23rd January as the Parakram Diwas every year
- ✓ The theme of the 2025 Parakram Diwas was "Netaji: Courage, Determination and Patriotism".
- ✓ About the INCOIS (Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services)
- ✓ The Indian National Centre for Ocean Information Services (INCOIS) is an autonomous body under the Union Ministry of Earth Sciences.
- ✓ It was established in 1999 in Hyderabad, Telangana.
- ✓ Role in Disaster Management
- ✓ INCOIS has established and manages the Indian Tsunami Early Warning Centre (ITEWC) which provides tsunami alerts within 10 minutes to India and 28 Indian Ocean countries.
- ✓ Recognised by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) as a top Tsunami Service Provider.
- ✓ Provides cyclone, high-wave, and storm surge-related forecasts.
- ✓ Its Search and Rescue Aided Tool (SARAT) helps the Indian Coast Guard, Navy, and the Coastal Security Police, in locating individuals or objects lost at sea.
- ✓ Operates the SynOPS visualization platform which integrates real-time data to strengthen response coordination during extreme events.

Q. What is the prize money for the Institutional winner of the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar?

- A) Rs 5 lakhs
- B) Rs 25 lakhs
- C) Rs 51 lakhs
- D) Rs 75 lakhs

Answer : C

- ✓ About the Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar
- ✓ The Subhash Chandra Bose Aapda Prabandhan Puraskar was instituted by the government of India in 2019.
- ✓ The award is administered by the Disaster Management Division of the Union Ministry of Home Affairs.
- ✓ The awards are given in the Individual and Institutional categories to an Indian citizen or institution.
- ✓ The award is given for excellence in the areas of Disaster Management; like Prevention, Mitigation, Preparedness, Rescue, Response, Rehabilitation, Relief, Research/ Innovations, or Early Warning.

- ✓ For the Institutional winners, the cash prize is Rs. 51 lakh and a certificate and in the case of an individual, the cash prize is Rs 5 lakh and a certificate.

Q. Where was the GI Tag Samagam 2025 held ?

- A) Hyderabad
- B) New Delhi
- C) Bengaluru
- D) Mumbai

Answer : B

- ✓ Government set a target of 10,000 GI Tag by 2030
- ✓ The Government of India has set a target of 10,000 Geographical Indication (GI) tags for the Indian products by 2030.
- ✓ According to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) 605 Indian products have been issued GI tags till date.
- ✓ Darjeeling tea was the first product to be given a GI in 2003.
- ✓ The new target for the GI tag was announced by the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal at the GI Samagam held in New Delhi on 22 January 2025.
- ✓ The GI Samagam was organised by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry in collaboration with the India Today Group.
- ✓ The theme of the GI Samagam was "Preserving Heritage, Fostering Innovation", we aim to connect culture, commerce, and innovation."

Q. The government of India set a target of 10,000 Geographical Indication (GI) tags for the Indian products by which year?

- A) 2030
- B) 2035
- C) 2028
- D) 2032

Answer : A

- ✓ The Government of India has set a target of 10,000 Geographical Indication (GI) tags for the Indian products by 2030.
- ✓ According to the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) 605 Indian products have been issued GI tags till date.
- ✓ Uttar Pradesh has the most Geographical Indication (GI) tags in India , reaching a total of 75.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu currently holds the second highest number of Geographical Indication (GI) tagged products in India, with a total of 58 registered products

Q. What is the validity of the Geographical Indication tag given to a product?

- A) 5 years
- B) 7 years
- C) 8 years
- D) 10 years

Answer : D

- ✓ About the Geographical Indication (GI) Tag and its Features
- ✓ A Geographical Indication tag is given to a product having distinct characteristics associated with a definite territory.
- ✓ The GI tag provides legal protection for the product and It prevents the unauthorised use of a Registered Geographical Indication by others for commercial use.
- ✓ Legal framework
- ✓ The legal framework for the GI Tag is laid down by the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act 1999 passed by the parliament.
- ✓ The registrar of the GI tag is the Controller General of Patents, Designs, and TradeMarks, under the DIPT.

- ✓ Geographical Indications Registry - Chennai, Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ Products on which GI tag is given
- ✓ In India the GI tag is given to the producer of three categories of goods;
- ✓ Agricultural Goods - It includes the production, processing, trading, or dealing with such goods.
- ✓ Natural Goods-It includes exploiting, trading, or dealing in such goods.
- ✓ Handicrafts or Industrial goods -It include making, manufacturing, trading, or dealing in such types of goods.
- ✓ Validity of the GI Tag
- ✓ The geographical indication registration is valid for 10 years.
- ✓ It can be renewed from time to time for 10 years each.

Q. With reference to KaWaCHaM System, consider the following:

1. It is an advanced disaster warning system.
2. It is developed with funding from the National Disaster Management Authority and the World Bank.
3. It is an initiative of the India Meteorological Department of India.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1, 2, 3
D) None

Answer : A

- ✓ Kerala government launched KaWaCHaM, one of the world's fastest weather alert systems.
- ✓ 'KaWaCHaM' stands for Kerala Warnings Crisis and Hazards Management System, and the word kavacham in Malayalam translates to 'shield', symbolising protection.
- ✓ It is an advanced disaster warning system that integrates alerts, sirens, and global weather models to improve the state's early disaster preparedness and public safety.
- ✓ It is designed to enhance rescue and rehabilitation efforts during extreme weather events driven by climate change.
- ✓ Funding: It is developed with funding from the National Disaster Management Authority and the World Bank as part of the National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project.
- ✓ KaWaCHaM collects data from various sources, including weather networks such as India Meteorological Department, INCOIS, and CWC, private and public agencies, social media networks, and the Internet.
- ✓ The KaWaCHaM system has been developed by the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority (KSDMA) with funding support from the National Disaster Management Authority, the government of India, and the World Bank. It is a part of the National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Project.
- ✓ Implementation
- ✓ The project is being implemented in two phases in 8 coastal states of India.
- ✓ Phase I
- ✓ Andhra Pradesh & Odisha
- ✓ Phase II
- ✓ Goa, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Maharashtra, and West Bengal.

Q. Which state is set to host the first Olympic Research Conference as part of India's ambition to host the 2036 Olympics?

- A) Maharashtra
B) Uttar Pradesh
C) Gujarat
D) Rajasthan

Answer : C

- ✓ Gujarat will host the first Olympic Research Conference, a significant step in India's ambition to host the 2036 Olympics.
- ✓ The event, organized by the Indian Olympic Association (IOA) in collaboration with the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports, will bring together experts and officials to discuss strategies for sustainable sports infrastructure, economic models, and global competitiveness.
- ✓ Key themes include sustainability, financing, gender equity, and learning from successful Olympic host cities.
- ✓ This four-day event plays a critical role in shaping India's Olympic aspirations for 2036

Q. Where was the ninth foreign ministers level meeting of the Quad Foreign Minister held in January 2025?

A) Washington D.C, USA	B) New Delhi, India
C) Tokyo, Japan	D) Canberra, Australia

Answer : A

Q. Which country will host the 7th Quad leaders summit meeting in 2025?

A) India	B) USA
C) Japan	D) Australia

Answer : A

- ✓ Indian External Affairs Minister Dr S.Jaishankar attended the Quad foreign ministers meeting in Washington D.C, the United States of America on the 21st of January 2025.
- ✓ The foreign ministers of the Quad group consisting of India, Japan, Australia, and the United States of America were in the United States of America to attend the swearing-in ceremony of Donald Trump as the 47th President of the United States of America on 20 January 2025.
- ✓ Donald Trump is the oldest person to become the President of the United States of America.
- ✓ US Secretary of State Marco Rubio hosted the ninth foreign ministers level meeting of the Quad group.
- ✓ The meeting was attended by the Indian External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar, Japan's Foreign Minister Takeshi Iwaya, and Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong.
- ✓ The 8th Foreign Ministers Meeting of Quad was held in Japan on 29 July 2024.
- ✓ India will host the 7th Quad Leader Summit meeting in 2025
- ✓ Marco Rubio was the first member of the Donald Trump administration to be confirmed by the Senate of the United States Congress.
- ✓ Dr. Jaishankar was the first foreign country's foreign minister to meet Marco Rubio after his swearing-in as the Secretary of State of the United States.

Q. Fiscal Health Index, recently in news, is published by:

A) Reserve Bank of India	B) World Bank
C) World Economic Forum	D) NITI Aayog

Answer : D

- ✓ The Chairman of the 16th Finance Commission launched the inaugural issue of NITI Aayog's report titled "Fiscal Health Index (FHI) 2025" in New Delhi.
- ✓ It provides a comprehensive assessment of the fiscal health of 18 major States of India.
- ✓ It is based on five key sub-indices: Quality of Expenditure, Revenue Mobilisation, Fiscal Prudence, Debt Index, and Debt Sustainability, along with insights into state-specific challenges and areas for improvement.
- ✓ It aims to throw light on the fiscal status at the sub-national level and guide policy reforms for sustainable and resilient economic growth.
- ✓ It has been developed using data from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG).

Q. With reference to the NVS-02 satellite, consider the following:

1. It will replace an older NavIC satellite, Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System 1E.
2. It will be placed in a geosynchronous transfer orbit by GSLV-F15.
3. It is first time using atomic clock for accurate timekeeping.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1 and 3 only D) 1, 2 and 3

Answer : A

- ✓ India's space agency, Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO), has rolled out its Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) rocket, carrying the NVS-02 satellite, as part of the NavIC navigation system.
- ✓ It is the second of the five second-generation satellites developed by the space agency to replace the existing satellites in the country's navigation constellation Indian Regional Navigation Satellite System.
- ✓ It will be placed in a Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit by GSLV-F15.
- ✓ NVS-01 was launched on board GSLV-F12 in 2023 and for the first time, an indigenous atomic clock was flown in NVS-01.
- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) is set to mark milestone with its 100th launch. Scheduled for January 29, 2025, the GSLV-F15 mission will deploy the NVS-02 satellite from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre.
- ✓ Features.
- ✓ It is weighing 2,250 kg and has a power capacity of around 3 kW.
- ✓ It is configured with navigation payload in three frequency bands L1, L5 and S bands in addition to ranging payload in C-band like its predecessor-NVS-01
- ✓ It also has a precise atomic clock called the Rubidium Atomic Frequency Standard (RAFS) for accurate timekeeping.
- ✓ It has a longer lifespan of 12 years and also equipped with indigenously developed, more accurate atomic clocks.
- ✓ It will replace an older NavIC satellite, IRNSS-1E, and be positioned at 111.75°E in orbit.
- ✓ It is designed, developed, and integrated at the U R Satellite Centre (URSC).
- ✓ Significance
- ✓ It will help improve NavIC's services, which are used for navigation, precision agriculture, emergency services, fleet management, and even mobile device location services.
- ✓ By incorporating new L1 band signals, NVS-02 improves NavIC's compatibility with global navigation systems, ensuring wider adoption and better service.

Q. What is the Samudrayaan project under the Deep Ocean Mission?

- A) A project to develop renewable energy from the ocean.
B) A project to monitor climate change in coastal regions.
C) A project to develop a manned submersible for ocean exploration.
D) A project for underwater mining of rare minerals.

Answer : C

- ✓ The Ministry of Earth Sciences recently announced that the country is set to launch its first human underwater submersible (Deep-Sea Manned Vehicle) as part of the Deep Ocean Mission.
- ✓ About Deep Ocean Mission:
- ✓ It is a mission-mode project to support the Blue Economy Initiatives of the Government of India.

- ✓ It is a high-level multi-ministerial, multidisciplinary programme for a better understanding of the deep sea living and non-living resources of the Indian Ocean.
- ✓ It was launched as a Central Sector Scheme with the overall estimated cost of Rs 4,077 crores for two phases of the Mission period during 2021-2026.
- ✓ The Ministry of Earth Sciences (MoES) will be the nodal Ministry implementing this multi-institutional Mission.
- ✓ The Samudrayaan project under the Deep Ocean Mission is for the development of a manned submersible to carry three people to a depth of 6000 meters in the ocean with a suite of scientific sensors for ocean exploration and observation.
- ✓ The vehicle is called Matsya 6000.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the SANJAY Surveillance System:

1. It is battlefield automated surveillance system which integrates the inputs from all ground and aerial battlefield sensors.
2. It is jointly developed by the Indian Army and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Minister of Defence flagged-off 'SANJAY - The Battlefield Surveillance System (BSS)' from South Block, New Delhi.
- ✓ It is a battlefield automated surveillance system which integrates the inputs from all ground and aerial battlefield sensors, processing them to confirm their veracity, preventing duplication and fusing them to produce a Common Surveillance Picture of the battlefield over secured Army Data Network & Satellite Communication Network.
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ It is equipped with state-of-the-art sensors and cutting-edge analytics.
- ✓ It will monitor the vast land borders, prevent intrusions, assess situations with unparalleled accuracy and prove to be a force multiplier in Intelligence, Surveillance & Reconnaissance.
- ✓ These systems will be inducted to all operational Brigades, Divisions & Corps of the Indian Army in three phases w.e.f. March to October of 2025, which has been declared as 'Year of Reforms' in the Ministry of Defence (MoD).
- ✓ Developed by: It has been indigenously & jointly developed by the Indian Army and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL).
- ✓ Its induction will be an extraordinary leap towards data and network centricity in the Indian Army.

Q. Micheal Martin has been appointed as the Prime Minister of which country?

- A) Ireland
B) Finland
C) Sweden
D) Norway

Answer : A

- ✓ Micheal Martin became the (taoiseach) Prime Minister of the Republic of Ireland for the second time on 23rd January 2025.
- ✓ He was previously the Prime Minister of Ireland from 2020 to 2022.
- ✓ The member of the lower
- ✓ house of Ireland's Parliament, Dail voted 95 to 76 in support of the Fianna Fail political party leader Micheal Martin

- ✓ The Parliament of Ireland is known as Oireachtas and it is bicameral. The upper house of the Parliament is called Éireann (Senate) and the lower house is called Dail.
- ✓ About Republic of Ireland
- ✓ Capital: Dublin
- ✓ Currency: Euro
- ✓ President: Michael D. Higgins
- ✓ Prime Minister : Micheal Martin

Q. Where was the 2nd BIMSTEC expert group on Cyber Security Cooperation meeting held?

- A) New Delhi B) Mumbai
C) Bengaluru D) Hyderabad

Answer : A

- ✓ New Delhi hosts 2nd BIMSTEC expert group on Cyber Security Cooperation.
- ✓ The second meeting of the BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation) Expert Group on Cyber Security Cooperation was held in New Delhi on 21 January 2025.
- ✓ This was the second time that India was hosting the meeting having hosted the first edition in New Delhi in 2022.
- ✓ The BIMSTEC Expert Group on Cyber Security Corporation was organized by the National Security Council Secretariat, Government of India.
- ✓ The main aim of the meeting was to formulate an Action Plan to bolster coordination and collaboration amongst the BIMSTEC member countries for strengthening Cyber Security in the use of information and communication technology (ICT).
- ✓ About BIMSTEC
- ✓ BIMSTEC was founded as BIST-EC (Bangladesh India Sri Lanka and Thailand Economic Cooperation) on 6 June 1997 to promote cooperation amongst the member countries.
- ✓ Members: seven members - India, Bhutan, Nepal, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Thailand and Myanmar.
- ✓ Secretariat: Dhaka, Bangladesh
- ✓ Secretary General - Indra Mani Pandey (Indian Citizen)

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Shompens:

1. They are one of the least studied Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India.
2. They reside in dense tropical rain forests of the Andaman Islands.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ The director of the Andaman and Nicobar Tribal Research Institute (ANTRI), recently underscored the findings of his report on the Shompens, one of the primary aboriginal communities inhabiting the interior forests and coastal areas of the Great Nicobar Islands (GNI).
- ✓ About Shompens:
- ✓ They are one of the most isolated tribes on Earth.
- ✓ They are one of the least studied Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in India.
- ✓ They reside in dense tropical rain forests of the Great Nicobar Island of Andaman and Nicobar group of Islands. Around 95% of the island is covered in rainforest.
- ✓ Shompen have different origins from most Nicobarese, although both groups have Mongoloid ancestry.

- Q.** Consider the following statements regarding Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS), recently seen in the news:

2. It has a range of over 500 km.

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

- ✓ The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) recently showcased a model of the indigenous Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS) on its tableau during the 76th Republic Day parade.
- ✓ About Advanced Towed Artillery Gun System (ATAGS):
- ✓ It is a large calibre Gun system with the capability to program and fire future Long Range Guided Munitions (LRGM) to achieve precision and deep strike.
- ✓ This gun is developed indigenously by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), and the production partners of these ATAGS are two private sector companies—Pune-based Bharat Forge and Tata Advanced Systems.
- ✓ Features:
- ✓ It is a 155mm, 52-calibre howitzer.
- ✓ The ATAGS boasts an impressive range of 48 km, placing it among the longest-range towed artillery systems globally.
- ✓ The gun is towed by a 6×6 platform, providing excellent mobility across varied terrains

A) Indian Oil Corporation

B) Bharat Petroleum

C) Hindustan Petroleum

D) Oil and Natural Gas Corporation

- ✓ Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) is the bronze sponsor for the 38th National Games, which will be hosted in Uttarakhand for the first time.
- ✓ The event features "Mouli," the mascot inspired by the Monal, Uttarakhand's state bird, and the tagline "Sankalp Se Shikhar Tak," symbolizing a journey from resolution to achievement.

A) Brazil

B) USA

C) Nepal

D) Australia

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- ✓ Haryana's young mountaineer Shivangi Pathak celebrated India's 76th Republic Day by hoisting the Indian tricolor on Australia's highest peak Mount Kosciuszko.
- ✓ Early in life, Shivangi started her mountaineering adventure. At just sixteen, she became the youngest Indian to ascend Mount Everest, which led to the 2019 Prime Minister's Bal Shakti Puraskar.
- ✓ She carried on her quest to climb Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa on July 24, 2018, and Mount Elbrus in Europe on September 2, 2018. Her name appears also in the Limca Book of World Records as the youngest mountaineer to reach notable mountains

Q. Which company's bid cleared the technical evaluation for the P-75I submarine project in collaboration with TKMS of Germany?

- A) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders B) Larsen & Toubro
C) Hindustan Shipyard Limited D) Cochin Shipyard Limited

Answer : A

- ✓ The bid from Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), in collaboration with Germany's Thyssenkrupp Marine Systems (TKMS), cleared the technical evaluation for the ₹43,000 crore P-75I submarine project.
- ✓ The project involves the acquisition of six advanced conventional submarines with a focus on indigenous content and technological upgrades.
- ✓ MDL-TKMS's offering is based on the Class 214 submarine design, known for its operational success and proven Air Independent Propulsion (AIP) module, a key criterion for qualification.

Q. What was the theme for Republic Day 2025?

- A) Unity in Diversity B) Golden India: Heritage and Progress
C) Vibrant India: Growth and Harmony D) India@75: Glory and Aspirations

Answer : B

- ✓ The theme for Republic Day 2025 was 'Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas', which translates to 'Golden India: Heritage and Progress'.
- ✓ This theme highlighted India's rich cultural heritage while emphasizing its strides in development and progress.
- ✓ The celebration also featured Indonesian President Prabowo Subianto as the Chief Guest, symbolizing India's commitment to fostering international relations.

Q. Who was recently awarded the ECI Media Award?

- A) Sansad TV
B) DD National
C) All India Radio
D) Doordarshan

Answer : D

- ✓ Doordarshan has been awarded the ECI Media Award for Voter Awareness in the Electronic Media category.
- ✓ The award was given for his extensive campaign titled Chunav Ka Parv Desh Ka Garv, which emphasized the importance of informed voting.
- ✓ The campaign, conducted across the nation during the Parliamentary Elections 2024, showcased Doordarshan's commitment to fostering an informed and active citizenry.

Event	Winner (Nationalities)	Runners-UP (Nationalities)
Men's Single	Jannik Sinner (Italy)	Alexander Zverev (Germany)
Women's Single	Madison Keys (USA)	Aryna Sabalenka (Belarus)
Men's Double	Harri Heliövaara (Finland) Henry Patten (Britain)	Simone Bolelli and Andrea Vavassori (Both Italian)
Women's Double	Katerina Siniakova (Czech Republic) and Taylor Townsend (USA)	Su- Wei Hsieh (Taiwan) Jelena Ostapenko (Latvia)
Mixed Doubles	Olivia Gadecki and John Peers (Both from Australia)	Kimberly Birrell and John Patrick Smith (both from Australia)

- ✓ **About the Australian Open**
- ✓ The Australian Open is the first Grand Slam tournament of a calendar year.
- ✓ The first Australian Open was first held in 1905 as the Australasia Open.
- ✓ It was renamed the Australian Championships in 1927 and finally into the Australian Open in 1969.
- ✓ It was held on grass courts until 1987 before switching to hard courts in 1988.
- ✓ Most successful player since 1969.
- ✓ Novak Djokovic of Serbia has won the titles 10 times .
- ✓ Serena Williams of the United States of America has won it seven times.

Q. Nagoba Jatara is a tribal festival held in which one of the following states?

- A) Karnataka B) Odisha
C) Chhattisgarh D) Telangana

Answer : D

- ✓ Nagoba Jatara, the eight-day holy pilgrimage event of Mesram clan Adivasi Gonds, is slated to start at Keslapur village in north Telangana's tribal heartland of Indervelli mandal in Adilabad district.
- ✓ About Nagoba Jatara:
- ✓ Nagoba Jatara is a tribal festival held in January/February in Keslapur village, Adilabad district, Telangana.
- ✓ It is the second biggest tribal festival in India, after the Sammakka Saralamma Jatara, held in Telangana itself.

Q. JSW Group will invest Rs 2,600 crore to develop and operate two copper mines and establish a copper concentrator plant in which state?

- A) Karnataka B) Tamil Nadu
C) Telangana D) Jharkhand

Answer : D

- ✓ Sajjan Jindal's JSW Group will invest Rs 2,600 crore to develop and operate two copper mines and establish a copper concentrator plant in Jharkhand, marking its entry into the copper business.
- ✓ This initiative aims to reduce India's dependency on copper imports and support industrial growth, with mines expected to become partially operational in the latter half of 2026-27.
- ✓ The Mine Operator and Developer (MDO) contract is for 20 years and further extendable for the next 10 years.

Q. Who was appointed as the Director of ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) in January 2025?

- A) Dr. A.E. Muthunayagam B) Dr. K. Sivan
C) Dr. S. Somanath D) M. Mohan

Answer : D

- ✓ M. Mohan was appointed as the Director of ISRO's Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC) in Thiruvananthapuram on January 25, 2025.
- ✓ He succeeded Dr. V. Narayanan, who became the ISRO Chairman earlier that month.
- ✓ M. Mohan has been an integral part of ISRO's propulsion initiatives and his expertise in liquid propulsion systems has played a significant role in advancing India's space capabilities.
- ✓ The LPSC has been central to the development of liquid propulsion stages for India's launch vehicles and spacecraft, contributing to key missions like PSLV, GSLV, Chandrayaan, and Mangalyaan.

Q. Who won the inaugural edition of the Women's Hockey India Leagues 2024-25?

- A) Ranchi Royals B) JSW Soorma Hockey Club
C) Odisha Warriors D) Punjab Panthers

Answer : C

- ✓ Odisha Warrior wins inaugural Women's Hockey India League 2025.
- ✓ The Odisha Warriors Club won the inaugural edition of the Women's Hockey India League 2024-25 title by defeating Soorma Hockey Club 2-1 in the final played at the Marang Gomke Jaipal Singh Munda Astro Turf Hockey Stadium in Ranchi on 26 January 2025.
- ✓ The Women's Hockey India League is a franchise club tournament based on the Cricket's Indian Premier League (IPL) model.
- ✓ About Hockey India League
- ✓ The Hockey India League is a premier hockey league in India that is organised by the sports governing body Hockey India. It was started in 2013 and was for men's hockey only.
- ✓ The last edition of the Hockey India League was held in 2017 and after a gap of seven years, it is being held in 2024-25. The men's Hockey India league is being held at the Birsa Munda Hockey Stadium in Rourkela, Odisha from 28 January to December 28, 2024, and will run till February 1, 2025.
- ✓ In the inaugural Women's Hockey India League four franchise teams- Soorma Hockey Club, Delhi SG Pipers, Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers, and Odisha Warriors- participated.
- ✓ 2024-25 Women's Hockey India League 2024-25 Awards
- ✓ Best Goalkeeper: Savita Punia (Soorma Hockey Club)
- ✓ Upcoming Player: Sonam (Soorma Hockey Club)
- ✓ Top Scorers: Yibbi Jansen (Odisha Warriors), Charlotte Englebert (Soorma Hockey Club)
- ✓ Player of the Tournament: Jyoti (Soorma Hockey Club)

Q. Which article of the Indian constitution provides for a Uniform Civil Code?

- A) Article 21 B) Article 40
C) Article 44 D) Article 32

Answer : C

- ✓ Uttarakhand becomes the first state to implement a Common Civil Code.
- ✓ Uttarakhand became the first state in India after the promulgation of the constitution, to implement the Uniform Civil Code.
- ✓ The state government issued a notification to this effect on 27 January 2025.
- ✓ Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami also launched the Uniform Civil Code Portal, where marriages can be registered under the provisions of the Uniform Civil Code.
- ✓ Registration of marriage is compulsory under the Uniform Civil Code.
- ✓ Goa implemented the uniform civil code in 1869 but it was under Portuguese rule at that time.
- ✓ The Uniform Civil Code seeks to promote legal equality across people of the state irrespective of their castes or religions.
- ✓ The Uniform Civil Code will apply to all the residents of Uttarakhand, except Scheduled Tribes and protected authority-empowered persons and communities.
- ✓ The committee was headed by the Retired Supreme Court judge Justice Ranjana P Desai.
- ✓ About the Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code
- ✓ The Uttarakhand Uniform Civil Code simplifies and makes a single uniform law on matters relating to marriage, divorce, succession, and inheritance.
- ✓ It means that whether a person is Hindu or Muslim or of different castes the laws on these four matters will be the same.
- ✓ It makes the registration of marriage compulsory.
- ✓ Marriages solemnized before March 26, 2010, or those outside the state will be eligible for registration if the legal conditions are met.
- ✓ It sets a common marriageable age for men (minimum 21 years) and women (minimum 18 years) and provides for common grounds and procedures to be followed in case of divorce across all religions.
- ✓ It banned triple talaq (practiced amongst the Muslim community), polygamy (a man having more than one wife), and 'halala' (a practice where a woman must marry another man and then divorce him before remarrying her previous husband).
- ✓ It also provides for equal rights in case of succession and inheritance.
- ✓ It recognises Live-in Relationships but it requires compulsory registration.
- ✓ Constitutional provision regarding the Uniform Civil Code
- ✓ Article 44 of the Indian constitution under Chapter IV entitled Directive Principle of State Policy (DPSP) provides that the State shall endeavour to secure a uniform civil code for the citizens of India throughout the territory of India”.
- ✓ Uttarakhand is the first state in India to enact a law under the provision of Article 44.

Q. Which state government has launched the Rythu Bharosa scheme to provide financial assistance of Rs 12,000 per year to eligible state farmers?

A) Madhya Pradesh	B) Andhra Pradesh
C) Rajasthan	D) Telangana

Answer : D

- ✓ Telangana CM Revanth Reddy launches 4 welfare schemes on Republic Day.
- ✓ Telangana Chief Minister A. Revanth Reddy launched the four welfare schemes of his government- Rythu Bharosa, Indiramma Atmiya Bharosa, Indiramma Indlu, and new ration cards on the occasion of the Republic Day on 26 January 2025.
- ✓ About the launched Schemes
- ✓ Rythu Bharosa- eligible farmers will be provided financial assistance of Rs. 12,000 per acre of arable land. The amount will be credited to the farmer's bank account.
- ✓ Indiramma Aathmeeya Bharosa- financial support of Rs. 12,000 annually will be provided to landless agricultural labour families.
- ✓ Indiramma Indlu- a housing scheme for, homeless Dalits, Tribals, and backward classes. They will receive financial assistance of Rs 5 lakh to construct homes. The government has set a target to construct 4,50,000 houses in 2024-2025 with a budget outlay of Rs 22,500 crore.

Q. What is India's global rank in the QS Future Skills Index 2025 in “Future of Work” category?

- A) 1st
B) 2nd
C) 3rd
D) 4th

Answer : B

- ✓ India has ranked 25th overall in the QS World Future Skills Index 2025, with a standout performance in the “Future of Work” category, where it ranked second globally, just behind the United States.
- ✓ About QS World Future Skills Index:
- ✓ What it is: A global ranking system that evaluates countries’ readiness to meet evolving job market demands through skill development, education, and economic transformation.
- ✓ Released by: London-based Quacquarelli Symonds (QS), known for its education and skills-related rankings.
- ✓ Aim: To assess how well countries are preparing their workforce for future skills such as digital competencies, AI, green technologies, and sustainability.
- ✓ India’s Rank:
- ✓ 25th overall globally.
- ✓ 2nd in the “Future of Work” category, showcasing high preparedness for tech-driven roles.
- ✓ Key criteria in the QS Future Skills Index:
- ✓ Skills Fit: Measures how aligned graduates’ skills are with current employer demands.
- ✓ Academic Readiness: Assesses higher education systems’ ability to prepare students for evolving job markets.
- ✓ Future of Work: Evaluates preparedness for roles requiring future-focused skills like AI, digital, and green technologies.
- ✓ Economic Transformation: Analyzes capacity for sustainable growth, innovation, and workforce efficiency.

QS World Future Skills Index 2025

Transforming Higher Education for the Skills Economy

INDIA

Indicator	Skills Fit	Academic Readiness	Future of Work	Economic Transformation	Overall
Score	59.1	89.9	99.1	58.3	76.6
Global position	37th	26th	2nd	40th	25th

Q. Where will the third launch pad of the Indian Space Research Organisation be constructed?

- A) Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre in Mahendragiri, Tamil Nadu
B) Dr Abdul Kalam Island in Bhadrak, Odisha
C) Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala
D) Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh

Answer : D

- ✓ Union Cabinet has given its approval for the construction of the third launch pad of the Indian Space Research organisation (ISRO) which will be equipped to launch the future human space flight of ISRO and its next generation rockets.

- ✓ The approval was given by the Union Cabinet in a meeting held in New Delhi and chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
- ✓ The launch pad will be constructed at the existing Space port of India-Satish Dhawan Space Centre in Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ The Satish Dhawan Space center already has two functional launch pads from where rockets are launched in space.
- ✓ Budget of the Third Launch Pad
- ✓ The government of India has approved a budget of Rs 3984.86 crore. The project is expected to be completed within 48 months or 4 years
- ✓ Launch Pad of ISRO
- ✓ The Indian space programme started with the launch of sounding rockets from the Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre, Thumba Equatorial Rocket Launch Station (TERLS), Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala on 21 November 1963.
- ✓ With the formation of ISRO in 1969 and expansion in the Indian space programme a need was felt to construct a new launch pad to launch heavier rockets.
- ✓ The Satish Dhawan Space Center was set up in the islands of Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh.
- ✓ The first rocket- a sounding rocket RH -125 was launched in 1971.
- ✓ At present the Center has two functional launch pads from where rockets are launched in space.

Q. What is the budget for the proposed third launch pad of the Indian Space Research Organisation?

- A) Rs 4123.95 crore B) Rs 3984.86 crore
C) Rs 2719.53 crore D) Rs 5178.11 crore

Answer : B

- ✓ The government of India has approved a budget of Rs 3984.86 crore. The project is expected to be completed within 48 months or 4 years.
- ✓ First Launch Pad.
- ✓ The first launch pad was built in the early 1990s and the first launch took place on 20th September 1993.
- ✓ The launch pad is capable of launching Polar Satellite Launch vehicle (PSLV) and Small Satellite Launch Vehicle (SSLV).
- ✓ Second Launch Pad
- ✓ The second launch pad became operational in 2005.
- ✓ The second launch pad is used to launch Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle (GSLV) and LVM3 (Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mk III). Both these rockets use cryogenic engines .
- ✓ The second launch pad is also used as a stand by for PSLV rockets.
- ✓ Chandrayaan -3 mission was also launched from the second launch pad.
- ✓ Requirement of Third Launch Pad
- ✓ The Government of India has set an ambitious target for the Indian Space programme during the Amrit Kaal.
- ✓ It includes establishing an operational Bharatiya Antriksh Station by 2035 and a manned mission to Moon by 2040.
- ✓ ISRO needs a new generation of heavier rockets with a new generation of propulsion system. The other two existing launch pads of the ISRO are not capable of launching these new classes of rockets.
- ✓ Thus the third launch pad is being constructed at the Satish Dhawan Space Center.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Bharat Rannbhoomi Darshan App:

1. It is aimed at promoting connectivity, tourism, and socio-economic development in border regions.
2. It is developed by the Ministry of Defence in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

A) 1 only

B) 2 only

C) Both 1 and 2

D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The “Bharat Ranbhoomi Darshan” app was launched by Defence Minister coinciding with Army Day celebrations.
- ✓ It is developed by the Ministry of Defence in collaboration with the Ministry of Tourism.
- ✓ This app opens the doors to India’s most iconic battlefields, offering citizens a chance to explore the country’s wartime history like never before.
- ✓ The move is aimed at promoting connectivity, tourism, and socio-economic development in border regions. The Army is collaborating with local civil authorities to facilitate these efforts while maintaining high operational preparedness.
- ✓ It features details on various battlefields and border areas, offering virtual tours, historical narratives, and interactive content.
- ✓ The Indian Army, in conjunction with the Ministry of Tourism, has shortlisted Galwan (the river valley in Ladakh) Doklam which is a tri-junction between India, Bhutan and China and 75 other forward sites alongside the country’s border that have witnessed military action in the past for “battlefield tourism.
- ✓ Most of these sites fall along India’s borders with China (Line of Actual Control) and Pakistan (Line of Control) that have had a history of wars after independence and other clashes in recent times — the 1962 war with China and the 1967 war, at Nathu La in Sikkim.
- ✓ Along the Western border, the Battle of Longewala was one of the first major engagements during the India-Pakistan war of 1971, fought at the Indian border post of Longewala in the Thar desert.

Q. Who has been reappointed as the Chairperson of the Executive Council of the Prime Ministers Museum and Library Society?

A) Utpal Kumar Singh

B) T. V. Somanathan

C) Nripendra Mishra

D) Vandana Gumani

Answer : C

- ✓ Nripendra Mishra reappointed Chairperson of PM Museum & Library Society.
- ✓ The Government of India has reconstituted the Executive Council of the Prime Ministers Museum and Library Society and reappointed Nripendra Mishra as the Chairperson of the Executive Council of the Society.
- ✓ The Executive Council is the highest decision-making body of the Prime Ministers Museum and Library Society.
- ✓ The Prime Minister is the ex-officio President of the Prime Ministers Museum and Library Society and the Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh is currently the Vice-Chairman.
- ✓ The Prime Minister Museum and Library Society was set up by the government of India on 1st April 1966 to manage the Nehru Memorial Museum and Library which is now known as the Prime Minister Museum and Library.
- ✓ According to the notification of the Union Ministry of Culture, the former Principal Secretary to the Prime Minister, Nripendra Mishra has been re-appointed as the Chairperson of the Executive Council for a term of 5 years.
- ✓ Former Union Minister Smriti Irani, noted filmmaker Shekhar Kapur, former NITI Aayog Vice-chairman Rajiv Kumar, Sanjeev Sanyal, member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister, retired Army officer Syed Ata Hasnain, and Sanskar Bharati’s Vasudev Kamath have also been appointed to the Executive Council.
- ✓ The term of the newly appointed member of the Executive Council will be five years.

Q. What is the term of the newly appointed Chairperson and members of the Executive Council of the Prime Ministers Museum and Library Society?

- A) 4 years
B) 3 years
C) 5 years
D) 2 years

Answer : C

- ✓ The term of the newly appointed member of the Executive Council will be five years

Q. What is the name of the first orbital rocket launched by Jeff Bezos's company Blue Origin?

- A) New Glenn
B) New Shepard
C) Atlas V
D) Falcon Heavy

Answer : A

- ✓ Amazon founder Jeff Bezos's company 'Blue Origin' has launched its first orbital rocket 'New Glenn' from Launch Complex 36 at Cape Canaveral Space Force Station, Florida.
- ✓ New Glenn carry a payload — Blue Ring Pathfinder, which will test key systems for the Defense Innovation Unit's Orbital Logistics programme.
- ✓ New Glenn which is 98 m tall, is the largest and most powerful rocket ever built and launched.
- ✓ It is named after NASA astronaut John Glenn, the first American astronaut to orbit Earth, completing three orbits in 1962.
- ✓ Blue Origin announced that New Glenn successfully completed the crucial hot-fire test. It was the first test of the integrated launch vehicle.

Q. When is National Startup Day celebrated in India?

- A) 14th January B) 15th January
C) 16th January D) 17th January

Answer : C

- ✓ National Startup Day is celebrated annually on 16th January to recognize and promote the entrepreneurial spirit in India.
- ✓ It was first announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in 2022 to celebrate the contribution of startups to the Indian economy.
- ✓ The day highlights the role of startups in driving innovation, job creation, and economic growth across various sectors.

Q. Exercise LA PEROUSE, recently in news, is a:

- A) bilateral army exercise
B) multinational air force exercise
C) patrolling exercise
D) multinational naval exercise

Answer : D

- ✓ The indigenously designed and built guided missile destroyer INS Mumbai is participating in the Exercise LA PEROUSE.
- ✓ It is the fourth edition of the multinational naval exercise.
- ✓ Participating organizations: This edition will witness participation of personnel/ surface and sub-surface assets from various maritime partners including Royal Australian Navy, French Navy, Royal Navy, United States Navy, Indonesian Navy, Royal Malaysian Navy, Republic of Singapore Navy and Royal Canadian Navy.

- ✓ It aims to develop common Maritime Situational Awareness by enhancing the cooperation in the field of maritime surveillance, maritime interdiction operations and air operations along with the conduct of progressive training and information sharing.

Q. Global Risk Report, recently in news, is published by:

- A) United Nations Environment Programme
- B) World Bank
- C) World Metrological Organisation
- D) World Economic Forum

Answer : D

- ✓ World Economic Forum published Global Risk Report.
- ✓ The first edition of the report was published in 2006 in which extreme weather events have been categorised under “environmental risks.”
- ✓ This year’s report presents the findings of the Global Risks Perception Survey 2024- 2025 (GRPS).
- ✓ Key points of the report
- ✓ These risks are assessed over both short-term (1-2 years) and long-term (10 years) horizons to guide policymakers in balancing immediate concerns with future challenges.
- ✓ It classified global risks across economic, environmental, geopolitical, societal and technological domains.
- ✓ The evolving global risk landscape is shaped by the interaction of four critical spheres: technological, geostrategic, climatic and demographic.

Q. With reference to New Sanchar Saathi Mobile App, consider the following:

1. It is designed to fortify telecom security and empower citizens.
2. It has a feature of directly reporting suspected calls and SMS using app from mobile phone logs.
3. It helps in verifying the authenticity of mobile handsets.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 Only
- B) 2 and 3 Only
- C) 1, 2, 3
- D) None

Answer : C

- ✓ The Union Minister of Communications launched a suite of citizen-focused initiatives namely the Sanchar Saathi Mobile App and the National Broadband Mission (NBM) 2.0.
- ✓ It is a user-friendly platform designed to fortify telecom security and empower citizens.
- ✓ It provides users with critical tools to secure their telecom resources and combat telecom frauds.
- ✓ Key features include:
- ✓ Chakshu - Reporting Suspected Fraud Communications (SFC): Users can report suspected calls and SMS using app and directly from mobile phone logs.
- ✓ Know Mobile Connections in Your Name: Citizens can identify and manage all mobile connections issued in their name, ensuring no unauthorized usage.
- ✓ Blocking Your Lost/ Stolen Mobile Handset: Lost or stolen mobile devices can be swiftly blocked, traced and recovered.
- ✓ Know Mobile Handset Genuineness: The app offers an easy way to verify the authenticity of mobile handsets, ensuring users purchase genuine devices.
- ✓ What is National Broadband Mission (NBM) 2.0?
- ✓ It builds on the success of NBM 1.0 which is part of the National Digital Communications Policy, 2018.

- ✓ The Prime Minister recently lauded the Indian space startup Digantara at the success of Mission SCOT.
- ✓ About SCOT Mission:
- ✓ SCOT (Space Camera for Object Tracking) is Digantara's (an Indian space startup) inaugural mission dedicated to space surveillance.
- ✓ It is one of the world's first commercial Space Situational Awareness (SSA) satellites.
- ✓ It was launched aboard SpaceX's Transporter-12 mission.
- ✓ SCOT is built to track Resident Space Objects (RSOs).
- ✓ It is purpose-built to monitor smaller RSOs, deliver higher revisit rates, and provide better tracking accuracy—filling a gap left by current systems.
- ✓ SCOT will be deployed in a sun-synchronous orbit, allowing it to track objects in Low Earth Orbit (LEO) with more efficiency than existing sensors, which are restricted by fields of view (FoV), weather conditions, and geographic limitations.
- ✓ Unlike these traditional systems, SCOT will ensure surveillance of objects as small as 5 cm orbiting the Earth to ensure safer space operations.
- ✓ Backed by Aditya Birla Ventures and SIDBI, it aims to support national security and space operations

Q. Upper Karnali Hydro-electric Project is located in which country?

- A) Bangladesh
- B) Bhutan
- C) Nepal
- D) Myanmar

Answer : C

- ✓ The Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency Ltd. (IREDA) has entered into a Joint Venture Agreement with SJVN Ltd., GMR Energy Ltd., and Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA) for the development of the 900 MW Upper Karnali Hydro-electric Project in Nepal.
- ✓ About Upper Karnali Hydro-electric Project:
- ✓ It is a 900 MW run-of-the-river hydropower project being developed on the Karnali River in Nepal.
- ✓ The project will supply power to Nepal, India, and Bangladesh for a contracted period of 25 years.
- ✓ The project is being developed by GMR Upper Karnali Hydro Power Limited (GUKHL), a subsidiary of GMR Group India, Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA), and SJVN Green Energy.
- ✓ The project is being developed on a build-own-operate-transfer (BOOT) basis.
- ✓ GUKHL and NEA are currently owning the project, having ownership stakes of 73% and 27%, respectively.
- ✓ Development status: The project construction is expected to commence from 2027. Subsequent to that it will enter into commercial operation by 2031.

Q. Which institute has been chosen by ICMR to establish South India's first Infectious Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (IRDL)?

- A) Stanley Medical College
- B) Andhra Medical College
- C) Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute
- D) Madras Medical College

Answer : C

- ✓ Bangalore Medical College and Research Institute (BMCRI) has been selected by Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) to host South India's first Infectious Disease Research and Diagnostic Laboratory (IRDL).
- ✓ The lab will focus on research and diagnostics for bacterial, fungal, and parasitic infections, enabling quicker and more accurate disease management.

- ✓ This is part of a nationwide initiative to enhance medical research infrastructure in India. The lab will also study antibiotic resistance, fungal infections, and tropical diseases

Q. Which Indian company has launched India's first private hyperspectral imaging satellite constellation named Firefly?

- A) Resourcesat
- B) GalaxEye Space
- C) Pixxel
- D) Antrix Corporation

Answer : C

- ✓ Pixxel launches India's 1st private satellite constellation with SpaceX
- ✓ Google-backed Indian space start-up company Pixxel has become the first Indian private company to launch its commercial satellite constellation named Firefly on board a Space X rocket on 14 January (15 January in India) 2025.
- ✓ Firefly Constellation of Pixxel
- ✓ Bengaluru-based Pixxel company is building the world's highest-resolution hyperspectral satellite constellation named Firefly constellation.
- ✓ The Firefly constellation initially consists of six satellites which are to be launched in two phases. In the first phase, three satellites were launched on 14 January 2025 and the other three will be launched in the second quarter of this year.
- ✓ The satellites will be placed in a sun-synchronous orbit at
- ✓ roughly 550 km.
- ✓ The company plans to send 18 more satellites in the future to complete its Firefly constellation.
- ✓ When the company starts offering the service it will be the first private company in India to offer hyperspectral imaging satellite service to consumers. At present in India, only the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) offers this service.
- ✓ The Firefly satellite are world's highest-resolution commercial-grade satellite with a 5-meter resolution. Satellites in this category normally have a 30-meter resolution

Q. Which Indian company has launched the world's first commercial satellite for surveillance of space objects orbiting the Earth?

- A) AgniKul Cosmos
- B) Dhruva Space
- C) Skyroot Aerospace
- D) Digantara

Answer : D

- ✓ The SpaceX rocket carried the world's first commercial satellite for surveillance of space objects orbiting the earth, made by an Indian space company, Digantara.
- ✓ Digantara's SCOT Satellite
- ✓ Bengaluru-based space startup company Digantara launched the world's first commercial satellite for surveillance of space objects orbiting the Earth.
- ✓ The satellite named Space Camera for Object Tracking (SCOT) aims to enhance space safety and optimize space traffic management.
- ✓ SCOT satellite will be placed in the sun-synchronous orbit which will track objects in Low Earth Orbit (LEO).
- ✓ The floating debris in space like man-made objects not in use (used satellites, rocket parts, etc) poses a significant challenge to safe space navigation.
- ✓ The SCOT satellite will continuously monitor objects in the LEO orbit and issue alerts so that space navigation becomes safe.
- ✓ The SCOT satellites are the world's first commercial Space Situational Awareness satellite

Q. Which company launched the satellite of Pixxel and Digantara's satellite in January 2025?

- A) Blue Origin
- B) Virgin Galactic
- C) Axiom Space
- D) SpaceX

Answer : D

- ✓ Both the Pixxel and Digantara satellites were launched by Elon Musk's company SpaceX.
- ✓ The satellites were launched aboard the Transporter-12 rideshare mission of SpaceX onboard the Falcon 9 rocket from the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, the United States of America

Q. Kappad beach and Chal beach have recently received Blue Flag Certification. Both the beaches are situated in which Indian state or UT?

- A) Andaman & Nicobar
- B) Lakshadweep
- C) Kerala
- D) Puducherry

Answer : C

- ✓ Kerala's famed Kappad beach in Kozhikode and Chal beach in Kannur have been bestowed with the coveted Blue Flag certification by Denmark-based Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE).
- ✓ About Blue Flag Certification:
- ✓ It is a globally recognized eco-label accorded by the Foundation for Environment Education in Denmark (FEE).
- ✓ The Blue Flag programme was started in France in 1985 and in areas out of Europe in 2001.
- ✓ It is one of the world's most recognised voluntary awards for beaches, marinas, and sustainable tourism boats.
- ✓ It promotes sustainable development in freshwater and marine areas through four main criteria: water quality, environmental management, environmental education and safety.
- ✓ The mission of Blue Flag is to promote sustainability in the tourism sector, through environmental education, environmental protection and other sustainable development practices.
- ✓ The other Indian beaches in the blue list are Shivrajpur-Gujarat, Ghoghla-Diu, Kasarkod and Padubidri-Karnataka, Kappad-Kerala, Rushikonda- Andhra Pradesh, Golden-Odisha, Radhanagar-Andaman and Nicobar, Kovalam in Tamil Nadu and Eden in Puducherry beaches, Minicoy Thundi Beach, Lakshadweep, Kadmat Beach, Lakshadweep.

Q. In which state the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India has established its first astronomical observatory of the Eastern region of the country?

- A) Odisha
- B) Kerala
- C) West Bengal
- D) Madhya Pradesh

Answer : C

- ✓ 1st astronomical observatory of Eastern India inaugurated in Bengal.
- ✓ The first astronomical observatory of Eastern India and the sixth in the country under the Department of Science and Technology, Union Ministry of Science and Technology has been inaugurated atop the Panchet Hill in the Garpanchkot area of Purulia district in West Bengal.
- ✓ It is the sixth such observatory in India after Ladakh, Nainital (Uttarakhand), Mount Abu (Rajasthan), Girbani Hills in Pune, and Kavalur in Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ About the Observatory
- ✓ The project to build the observatory commenced in 2012 and it is built on 4.9 acres of land.
- ✓ The observatory at present has one 14-inch diameter telescope and another 1-metre diameter telescope will be installed soon.
- ✓ The observatory has been set up at an altitude of 600 meters above the sea level and at a longitude of approximately 86° East, in a non-polluted area and away from city lights.

- ✓ There are very few observatories in the world along the 86 degrees East longitude stretching from the Arctic Ocean in the north to Antarctica in the south. This observatory is expected to fill this gap.
- ✓ The observatory will help the students and scientists to conduct basic research in the field of Astronomy and Astrophysics, and Atmospheric Sciences.

Q. What is the name of the recently inaugurated sixth astronomical observatory set up under the Department of Science, Government of India?

- A) Satyendra Nath Bose Astronomical Observatory
- B) Kodaikanal Solar Observatory
- C) Gauribidanuru Radio Observatory
- D) Vainu Bappu Observatory

Answer : A

- ✓ Satyendra Nath Bose Astronomical Observatory
- ✓ The observatory set up in Garpanchkot Hills has been named after famous scientist Satyendra Nath Bose. The observatory has been established by the Satyendra Nath Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences.
- ✓ The Satyendra Nath Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Sidhu Kanu Birsa University, Purulia for running the observatory and sharing resources.
- ✓ The Satyendra Nath Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences was set up by the Department of Science and Technology, Government of India in 1986 at Kolkata, West Bengal.

Q. Which among the following best describes 'Bhargavastra', recently seen in the news?

- A) It is an artificial intelligence-based surveillance system
- B) It is a laser-guided anti-tank missile.
- C) It is a next-generation armored vehicle.
- D) It is a micro-missile system.

Answer : D

- ✓ India has successfully tested the Bhargavastra, its first micro-missile system designed to counter swarm drones.
- ✓ About Bhargavastra:
- ✓ It is India's first indigenous micro-missile system designed to take on the threat of swarm drones.
- ✓ It was developed by the Economic Explosives Ltd.
- ✓ It can quickly deploy on a mobile platform and hit targets over 2.5 km.
- ✓ It is capable of detecting even small incoming flying machines at over 6 km and can take them down using micro munitions that can be guided towards the threat.
- ✓ The system can simultaneously fire more than 64 micro missiles.
- ✓ Designed to meet the requirements of the Army Air Defence, this is the first counter-drone system that uses micro missiles.

Q. Who commissioned the Indian Navy's warship and submarine INS Nilgiri, INS Surat and INS Vagsheer in a function in Mumbai in January 2025?

- A) Rajnath Singh
- B) Amit Shah
- C) Draupadi Murmu
- D) Narendra Modi

Answer : D

- ✓ PM Modi commissions Satpura, Nilgiri and Vagsheer of the Indian Navy
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi commissioned three frontline naval warships and submarines - INS Surat, INS Nilgiri and INS Vagsheer at the Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai, Maharashtra on 15 January 2025.
- ✓ INS Nilgiri is a stealth frigate and is the lead ship of the Indian Navy's Project 17A, to develop stealth frigates .
- ✓ INS Surat is the last of the four guided missile destroyer class ships to be constructed under Project 15B and INS Vagsheer is the sixth and final submarine of the Kalvari class built under Project 75 of the Indian Navy.
- ✓ The commissioning of these frontline warships is expected to boost the defence capabilities of the Indian Navy and strengthen India maritime security

Q. Which Indian defence shipbuilder has constructed the Indian Navy's warship and submarine INS Nilgiri, INS Surat and INS Vagsheer?

- A) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited
- B) Cochin Shipyard Limited
- C) Modest Infrastructure Limited
- D) Hindustan Shipyard Limited

Answer : A

- ✓ INS Surat, INS Nilgiri has been indigenously designed and constructed by the defence shipyards - Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai.
- ✓ The INS Vagsheer submarine is an Indo-French collaboration which has been constructed by MDL with technology transfer from French Naval Group.

Q. What is the code name of the project to build four Visakhapatnam class guided missile destroyers for the India Navy?

- A) Project 75
- B) Project 15 B
- C) Project 17 A
- D) Project 75 A

Answer : B

- ✓ Project 15B
- ✓ The Indian Navy's Project 15 B, also called the 'Visakhapatnam' class destroyers was launched in 2011.
- ✓ It is a Guided Missile Destroyer which has been designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and constructed by Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL), Mumbai.
- ✓ The first ship under Project 15 B, INS Visakhapatnam was launched in April 2015 followed by INS Mormugao, INS Imphal and INS Surat.
- ✓ The ships are 163 meters long and 17 meters wide with a maximum speed of 30 knots.
- ✓ The overall indigenous content of the project is around 75%.
- ✓ The ship can carry two helicopters and has modern stealth features. It can carry the indigenously developed Medium Range Surface-to-Air missile Barak Missile, Brahmos missile, Torpedo Tube Launchers, Anti-Submarine Indigenous Rocket Launchers and Guns.

Q. The recently commissioned Indian Navy's INS Shivalik stealth frigate is being developed under which Project of the Indian Navy?

- A) Project 17A
- B) Project 15A
- C) Project 75B
- D) Project 75A

Answer : A

- ✓ India is the largest producer and exporter of turmeric in the world which is also known as Indian Saffron or Golden Spice.
- ✓ The National Turmeric Board was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal through video conferencing in New Delhi.
- ✓ The headquarters of the National Turmeric Board is in Nizamabad, Telangana.
- ✓ Around 30 % of the turmeric exports from India are contributed by Telangana

Q. Who is the first chairperson of the newly established Turmeric Board of India?

- A) Abusaleh Shariff
B) Ravinder Kaur
C) Vinod K Duggal
D) Palle Ganga Reddy

Answer : D

- ✓ The Chairperson of the Turmeric Board is appointed by the government of India. The first chairperson of the Turmeric Board is Palle Ganga Reddy.

Q. Under which ministry of the government of India the Turmeric Board of India has been set up?

- A) Ministry of Commerce and Industry
B) Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers
C) Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare
D) Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises

Answer : A

- ✓ The National Turmeric Board is under the Department of Commerce, Union Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Q. Which country is the largest producer, consumer, and exporter of Turmeric in the world?

- A) China
- B) Indonesia
- C) India
- D) Russia

Answer : C

- ✓ India is the world's largest producer, exporter, and consumer of turmeric.
- ✓ Export .
- ✓ Total export of Turmeric from India in 2023-24 was 1.62 lakh tonnes worth Rs 1875.86 crores or \$ 226.5 million.
- ✓ The top buyers of Indian turmeric in 2023-24 were Bangladesh followed by the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Malaysia, and the United States of America.
- ✓ The government of India has set a target of export of Rs 8000 crore of turmeric by 2030
- ✓ Production of Turmeric
- ✓ According to the Spice Board of India, the total estimated production of turmeric in 2023-24 is 1074526 tonnes.
- ✓ The top turmeric-producing states in India were; Maharashtra (325643 tonnes), followed by Telangana (117049 tonnes), Karnataka (129399 tonnes), Tamil Nadu (114141 tonnes), and Tamil Nadu (88649 tonnes).
- ✓ Around 30 varieties of turmeric are grown in 20 states of India.

- Q.** Which organisation organised Akhand Bharat Seminar on the occasion of its 150th foundation day and where neighboring countries were invited?
- A) National Centre for Medium-Range Weather Forecasting
B) Indian Institute of Tropical Meteorology
C) National Meteorological Service provider
D) Indian Meteorological Department

Answer : D

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched Mission Mausam in New Delhi on the occasion of the 150th foundation day of the India Meteorological Department (IMD) on 14 January 2025.
- ✓ The Mission aims to strengthen India's research and development capability in weather and climate-related science and make the country a weather-ready and climate-smart nation.
- ✓ The IMD was set up by the British India government on 15 January 1875.
- ✓ During the function the Prime Minister also released a Rs 150 Commemorative coin issued by the Union Ministry of Finance to mark the 150th year of the IMD.
- ✓ He also released the 20247 Vision document of the IMD which outlines a roadmap for weather resilience and climate change adaptation for the country by 2047.
- ✓ The Modi government has set a target to make India a developed country by 2047.
- ✓ 150th Year of the Indian Meteorological Department
- ✓ The Indian Meteorological Department was set up by the British Government in India in 1875 at Kolkata, bringing all meteorological observatories in the country under a central authority.
- ✓ The Indian Meteorological Department is the National Meteorological Service provider of the country and is the principal government agency in all matters relating to meteorology and allied subjects.
- ✓ Headquarters of IMD : New Delhi
- ✓ Director General : Dr Mrutyunjay Mohapatra

- Q.** Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) has signed an agreement with which Institute for the development of "Building Blocks for THz Communication Front Ends" for 6G under the Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF)?
- A) IIT Madras
B) IIT Bombay
C) IIT Delhi
D) IIT Kanpur

Answer : C

- ✓ Recently, the Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT) has signed an agreement with the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) for the development of "Building Blocks for THz Communication Front Ends" for 6G under the Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF).
- ✓ It has been setup under Universal Services Obligation Fund (USOF) of Department of Telecom (DOT), Government of India.
- ✓ It aims to promote the ecosystem for research, design, prototyping, proof of concept testing, IPR creation, field testing, security, certification and manufacturing of products etc. in telecommunication field.
- ✓ Aims
- ✓ To fund R&D in rural-specific communication technology applications and form synergies among academia, start-ups, research institutes, and the industry to build and develop the telecom ecosystem.

- Q.** Who is the co-founder and CEO of Dunzo app?
- A) Kabeer Biswas
B) Kunal Bahl
C) Rohit Bansal
D) Binny Bansal

Answer : A

- ✓ Dunzo goes offline after cofounder Kabeer Biswas joins Flipkart.
- ✓ The Dunzo app and website have shut down, and now display an error message to users following the departure of cofounder and CEO Kabeer Biswas
- ✓ Reliance-backed hyperlocal delivery app Dunzo has gone offline following the departure of cofounder and CEO Kabeer Biswas after he joined Flipkart.
- ✓ Dunzo, which was once at the top of India's quick commerce space, was already struggling for the past 12-18 months and was on a steep decline.
- ✓ Kabeer Biswas has joined rival Flipkart's quick commerce business called Minutes.

Q. Who has been appointed as the chairman of the newly-formed Athletes Commission of Athletics Federation of India (AFI)?

- A) Neeraj Chopra
B) Bajrang Punia
C) PT Usha
D) Anju Bobby George

Answer : D

- ✓ Anju Bobby George has been appointed as the chairperson of the newly-formed Athletes Commission of the Athletics Federation of India (AFI).
- ✓ This commission consists of nine members including six women.
- ✓ Two-time Olympic medallist and star javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra is one of the nominated members.

Q. Which company is setting up India's first Green Hydrogen Hub project under the National Green Hydrogen Mission?

- A) JSW Energy Ltd
B) Adani Green Energy Ltd
C) Adani New Industries Limited
D) NTPC Green Hydrogen Limited

Answer : D

- ✓ PM Modi lays foundation stone of 1st Green Hydrogen Hub in Andhra.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi laid the foundation stone of the country's first Green Hydrogen Hub Project under the National Green Hydrogen Mission at Pudimadaka near Visakhapatnam in Andhra Pradesh on 8 January 2025.
- ✓ The Prime Minister who was on a visit to Vishakhapatnam also laid the foundation stone of various projects worth over Rs. 2 lakh crore in the state.
- ✓ First Green Hydrogen Hub at Pudimadaka .
- ✓ The first Green Hydrogen Hub at Pudimadaka near Visakhapatnam is being set up by NTPC Green Energy Limited.
- ✓ The Hub will be India's largest integrated green hydrogen production facility.
- ✓ The Hub will produce 1500 tonnes per day of Green Hydrogen and 7500 tonnes per day of Green Hydrogen derivatives like Green Methanol, Green Urea, and Sustainable Aviation Fuel.
- ✓ Total investment - around Rs 1,85,000 crore.
- ✓ The hub will also include establishing 20 gigawatts of renewable energy capacities.
- ✓ The Green Hydrogen Hub will help in achieving the National National Green Hydrogen Mission target of 5 MMT (Million Metric Tonne) per annum of Green Hydrogen and the addition of 125 GW of renewable energy capacity by 2030.
- ✓ Green hydrogen refers to the splitting of water into hydrogen and oxygen molecules through electrolysis. The energy that is needed for electrolysis is produced through a renewable source of energy like water, sun, wind, etc.
- ✓ Bulk Drug Park at Nakkapalli in Anaparthi District.
- ✓ The foundation stone of the Krishnapatnam Industrial Area (KRIS City) was laid by Prime Minister Modi.

- ✓ Kris City is located in the Tirupati district of Andhra Pradesh and is part of the Chennai Bengaluru Industrial Corridor.
- ✓ The proposed South Coast Railway Zone headquarters foundation stone was laid in Visakhapatnam.
- ✓ At present the Indian Railways has 17 Zones and 69th division. Jammu is the latest railway division

Q. Which javelin thrower has been named as the best javelin athlete of 2024 by the American Magazine Track and Field News?

- A) Anderson Peters B) Neeraj Chopra
C) Arshad Nadeem D) Julian Weber

Answer : B

- ✓ Tokyo Olympics gold medalist Neeraj Chopra of India has been named the best javelin thrower of the 2024 by the respected American magazine Track and Fields News. Anderson Peters of Grenada was ranked second by the magazine.
- ✓ 27-year- old Neeraj Chopra competed in six international events in 2024, won two and finished runners up in four events.
- ✓ Neeraj Chopra won a silver medal in the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics behind Arshad Nadeem of Pakistan who won the gold medal.
- ✓ Arshad Nadeem was ranked 6th by the Magazine as he competed in only two international events in 2024.
- ✓ The first competition of Neeraj Chopra in 2024 was the Doha Diamond league in May where he finished second behind Czechia's Jakub Vadlejch.
- ✓ He won the Paavo Nurmi Games in Finland held in June and the National Federation Senior Athletics Competition in India.
- ✓ Neeraj Chopra achieved his career best throw of 89.49 meters at the Lausanne Diamond League, and concluded the 2024 season in the Diamond League Final, held at Brussels, Belgium in September 2024.
- ✓ In both the Lausanne and Brussels events Neeraj Chopra finished second behind Paris 2024 bronze medallist Anderson Peters of Grenada
- ✓ Chopra was also the top-ranker in the men's javelin throw rankings of 2023
- ✓ Founded in 1948, the magazine, which claims itself to be 'The Bible Of The Sport', publishes world and American rankings every year. The magazine is considered an authority in global track and field circles.

Q. Who has been roped in as the International Event Ambassador for the 20th edition of the Tata Mumbai Marathon?

- A) Fred Kerley B) Akani Simbine
C) Noah Lyles D) Mo Farah

Answer : D

- ✓ Mo Farah, the legendary distance runner, has been roped in as the International Event Ambassador for the 20th edition of the Tata Mumbai Marathon, to be held on January 19 in south Mumbai, Maharashtra.
- ✓ Four-time Olympic and six-time world champion long distance runner Mo Farah of Great Britain was named the international event ambassador for the Mumbai Marathon 2025, scheduled to be held on January 19.
- ✓ Mo Farah, a Somalia-born former British athlete, is the first man in history to retain the 5000m and 10000m titles at the Olympics as well as the World Championships.
- ✓ He won the titles at the London 2012 and Rio 2016 Olympics Games and Moscow 2013 and Beijing 2015 editions of the World Championships.
- ✓ This will be the 20th edition of the Mumbai Marathon, a World Athletics Gold Label Road Race event.

- ✓ The iconic Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus will be the starting point for the Mumbai Marathon 2025

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the INS Vaghsheer:

1. It is the sixth submarine belongs to Kalvari-class submarines for the Indian Navy.
2. It consists of indigenously developed systems like internal communication network and the Ku-Band SATCOM system.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Mumbai based Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited (MDL) marked a key milestone in India's defence capabilities with the delivery of the sixth and final Scorpene-class submarine, INS Vaghsheer, to the Indian Navy.
- ✓ It is the sixth submarine of the first batch of six Kalvari-class submarines for the Indian Navy.
- ✓ It is named after the sand fish, a deadly deep-sea predator of the Indian Ocean.
- ✓ It was launched in April 2022 and underwent extensive trials, testing its endurance, stealth features, and combat efficiency.
- ✓ Other five submarines of Kalvari class are Kalvari, Khanderi, Karanj, Vela, Vagir.
- ✓ It is designed for a wide range of missions, from anti-submarine warfare to intelligence gathering, and is fully capable of operating in diverse maritime environments.
- ✓ It consists of indigenously developed systems like the air-conditioning plant, internal communication network, and the Ku-Band SATCOM system

Q. With reference to Silver Notice, consider the following:

1. It is the latest addition to Interpol's suite of colour-coded alerts.
2. It allows participating nations to request information on assets linked to criminal activities such as fraud and corruption.
3. India is not a part of this new initiative of Interpol.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only
B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1 and 3 only
D) 1, 2 and 3

Answer : A

- ✓ International Criminal Police Organisation, or Interpol, has introduced its first 'Silver Notice'.
- ✓ It is the latest addition to Interpol's suite of colour-coded alerts, designed to help countries track and retrieve criminally obtained assets.
- ✓ This notice allows participating nations to request information on assets linked to criminal activities such as fraud, corruption, drug trafficking, and environmental crimes.
- ✓ It aimed at tracing assets laundered across international borders.
- ✓ This initiative, part of a pilot project involving 52 countries, including India, was launched following a request from Italy to locate the assets of a senior mafia member.
- ✓ The project will run until at least November 2025, with 500 notices available for distribution among the participating countries
- ✓ India is a participant in this pilot project and stands to benefit significantly.
- ✓ International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)

- ✓ Headquarters : Lyon, France
- ✓ President : Ahmed Nasser Al Raisi (UAE)
- ✓ Secretary General : Jurgен Stock (Germany)
- ✓ Total Member : 195
- ✓ Main function of INTERPOL Red Notice - To seek the location and arrest of wanted persons wanted for prosecution or to serve a sentence



Q. The National Youth Day is organized every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of which Indian leader?

- A) Subhas Chandra Bose B) Swami Vivekananda
C) Bhagat Singh D) A.P.J. Abdul Kalam

Answer : B

- ✓ This year, the annual National Youth Festival (NYF), held on January 10-12 at Bharat Mandapam, will undergo a transformative reimagining as the Viksit Bharat Young Leaders Dialogue.
- ✓ About National Youth Festival (NYF):
- ✓ Under the component 'Promotion of National Integration' of the National Programme for Youth and Adolescent Development (NPYAD), a NYF is organised during the month of January every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of Swami Vivekananda (12 January), which is celebrated as National Youth Day.
- ✓ The Theme of NYF 2025 is Innovation in Science and Technology.
- ✓ NYF 2025 main event will be held at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi

Q. What is the length of the Z-Morh Tunnel or Sonmarg Tunnel in Kashmir?

- A) 6.5 km B) 9.5 km
C) 8.5 km D) 7.5 km

Answer : A

- ✓ Prime Minister Modi inaugurates Z-Morh Tunnel in Kashmir.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the Z-Morh tunnel in Gagangir in the Sonamarg area of the Ganderbal district of central Kashmir on 13 January 2025.

- ✓ The tunnel is part of the central government's India-China Border Roads initiative which seeks to build road infrastructure along the northern and northeastern border.
- ✓ It is also expected to boost tourism in the area and provide uninterrupted connectivity between Srinagar and Ladakh.
- ✓ About the Z-Morh Tunnel or Sonmarg Tunnel
- ✓ The Z-Morh Tunnel is situated at an altitude of 8,652 feet above the mean sea level.
- ✓ The 6.5 km two-lane tunnel is built on the Srinagar-Leh National Highway which links Gagangir with the Sonmarg town in Ganderbal district of Kashmir.
- ✓ It is called Z-Morh due to the Z-shaped stretch of road it bypasses. The tunnel bypasses the avalanche-prone section of the route which is blocked during the winter month due to heavy snowfall.
- ✓ Construction of the 2,400 crore Z-Morh tunnel began in May 2015 under the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).
- ✓ The tunnel is part of the broader Zoji La Tunnel project which aims to provide round-the-clock road access between Srinagar and Ladakh.
- ✓ The tunnel was completed in February 2024 but it was officially inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in January 2025.

Q. What are 'Sonobuoys', recently mentioned in news?

- A) A Stealth guided missile destroyer
- B) A satellite used for monitoring sea levels
- C) A small, expendable device used in underwater acoustics to detect and sonar systems
- D) None of the Above

Answer : C

- ✓ The US approved a \$52.8 million deal to sell Anti-Submarine Warfare Sonobuoys to India.
- ✓ These Sonobuoys will be used with the Indian Navy's Romeo helicopters.
- ✓ Sonobuoys are small devices that detect underwater sounds, mainly to track submarines.
- ✓ They are crucial for anti-submarine warfare, helping track submarines in oceans and coastal areas.
- ✓ They assist in precision attacks using air-launched torpedoes.
- ✓ Sonobuoys were first used in World War II to detect German U-boats.
- ✓ They are deployed from aircraft, ships, or submarines, sinking to a set depth to listen for signals.
- ✓ The final assembly of sonobuoys from the U.S., meant for detecting submarines underwater, will be done in India and an operational production line is expected to be ready in 2027.
- ✓ The systems will be co-produced in India in partnership with defence public sector undertaking Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL).

Q. Which country will host the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Parliaments of Commonwealth Countries (CSPOC) in 2026?

- A) China
- B) Azerbaijan
- C) Brazil
- D) India

Answer : D

- ✓ India to host 28th CSPOC with focus on AI and social media: Lok Sabha Speaker.
- ✓ India will host the 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Parliaments of Commonwealth Countries (CSPOC) in 2026, Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla announced at the CSPOC Standing Committee Meeting in Guernsey.
- ✓ The event will focus on the use of artificial intelligence and social media in parliamentary processes.
- ✓ The CSPOC platform was described as a space for enhancing cooperation and exchanging parliamentary practices among member countries. Birla said that India's role as host is an opportunity to reflect the country's traditions and its focus on inclusivity.

- ✓ Quoting Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, a concept that means “the whole world is one family,” Birla called for cooperation among nations to address issues such as poverty, inequality, and malnutrition.
- ✓ The Standing Committee set the agenda for the 2026 CSPOC and discussed challenges facing parliaments globally. Birla highlighted India’s history of hosting the conference in 1970-71, 1986, and 2010, and invited presiding officers from Commonwealth nations to join the 2026 event in New Delhi.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Nag Mk 2 Missile:

1. It is a third-generation Anti-Tank Fire-and-Forget Guided Missile.
2. It is developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Raksha Mantri has congratulated DRDO on successful Field Evaluation Trials of Nag Mk 2 missile.
- ✓ It is an indigenously-developed third-generation Anti-Tank Fire-and-Forget Guided Missile.
- ✓ Features
- ✓ Third-Generation Fire-and-Forget Technology: Enables precision targeting with minimal operator intervention post-launch.
- ✓ Versatile Performance: Capable of neutralising modern armoured vehicles equipped with explosive reactive armour (ERA).
- ✓ Field Evaluation Trials of this missile were successfully conducted recently at Pokhran Field Range.
- ✓ The Nag Missile Carrier version-2 was also field evaluated. With this, the entire weapon system is now ready for induction into the Indian Army.
- ✓ It is developed by the DRDO.

Q. The Makaravilakku festival, recently seen in the news, is celebrated in which Indian state?

- A) Tamil Nadu
B) Madhya Pradesh
C) Odisha
D) Kerala

Answer : D

- ✓ Sabarimala is fully prepared for the Makaravilakku festival, with 5,000 police deployed and enhanced security measures.
- ✓ About Makaravilakku:
- ✓ It is a significant annual festival celebrated at the Sabarimala temple in Kerala.
- ✓ It takes place on the day of Makara Sankranti.
- ✓ The festival marks the culmination of the annual pilgrimage season to the temple.
- ✓ On Makaravilakku day, the sacred Thiruvabharanam, the royal ornaments of Lord Ayyappa are brought to the temple from the Pandalam Palace.
- ✓ The highlight of the Makaravilakku festival is the sighting of a celestial light, known as the “Makarajyothi” or “Makaravilakku.”
- ✓ According to popular belief, the light is a divine manifestation of Lord Ayyappa himself.

Q. Who becomes 34th state to implement Ayushman Bharat Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (AB PM-JAY) scheme?

- A) Assam
B) Chhattisgarh
C) West Bengal
D) Odisha

Answer : D

Q. The 1020 MW Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project is being developed in which country?

- A) Nepal
B) Afghanistan
C) Bangladesh
D) Bhutan

Answer : D

- ✓ The government of India-owned Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has successfully commissioned two units of the 6×170 MW Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project in Bhutan.
- ✓ The 1020 MW Punatsangchhu-II Hydroelectric Project is being developed by the Punatsangchhu II Hydroelectric Project Authority, under an Agreement between the Royal Government of Bhutan and the Government of India.
- ✓ BHEL is the supplier of turbines and other electro-mechanical equipment necessary for the operation of hydroelectric plants.
- ✓ in Bhutan, the BHEL has executed major projects like 4x84 MW Chukha, 4x15 MW Kurichhu, 6x170 MW Tala, and 4x180 MW Mangdechhu hydel projects.

Q. Who has been appointed as the Revenue Secretary and Finance Secretary of India?

- A) Tuhin Kanta Pandey
B) Arunish Chawla
C) T.V. Somanathan
D) Mukhmeet S. Bhatia

Answer : A

- ✓ Tuhin Kanta Pandey appointed new Revenue Secretary.
- ✓ The Secretary, DIPAM Tuhin Kanta Pandey has been appointed by the government of India as the new Revenue Secretary, Union Ministry of Finance.
- ✓ Tuhin Kanta Pandey has also been designated as the Finance Secretary of India.
- ✓ Tuhin Kanta Pandey is a 1987 batch Orissa cadre IAS officer. He was the longest serving DIPAM Secretary .
- ✓ DIPAM looks after the disinvestment of the central public sector enterprises and during his tenure the disinvestment of Air India and Neelanchal Ispat Nigam Ltd took place.

NEWLY FAMOUS SECRETARY 2024 -25

- Tuhin Kanta Pandey : Revenue Secretary
- Tuhin Kanta Pandey : Finance Secretary
- Arunish Chawla : Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) Secretary
- Govind Mohan : Home Secretary
- Rajesh Kumar Singh : Defence Secretary
- Vikram Misri : Foreign secretary
- Deepti Umashankar : Secretary to the President.
- Manoj Govil : Expenditure Secretary
- T V Somanathan : Cabinet Secretary
- Pramod Kumar Mishra : Principal Secretary to Prime Minister
- Ajay Seth : Economic Affairs Secretary
- Tarun Kapoor : Advisor to Prime Minister

Q. What is India's rank in the recently released 2025 Henley Passport Index?

- A) 85
B) 80
C) 86
D) 82

Answer : A

- ✓ According to the recently released Henley Passport Index 2025, India has slipped to 85th rank from 80th last year, in the world's most powerful passports list.

- ✓ Singapore retained its status as the most powerful passport in the world.
- ✓ The United States passport rank declined from 7th in 2024 to 9th in 2025.
- ✓ Afghanistan retained its status as the worst passport in the world.
- ✓ About Henley Passport Index
- ✓ The United Kingdom-based Henley and Partners firm releases the Henley Passport Index
- ✓ The Henley Passport Index is based on the data provided by the International Air Transport Association (IATA)
- ✓ A country's passport strength is ranked based on the number of countries that permit visa-free travel to its citizens.
- ✓ That country's passport is considered the strongest whose citizens can visit a maximum of countries visa-free.
- ✓ The citizens of a country who can visit visa-free the fewest countries will be ranked at the bottom.
- ✓ The index includes 199 country's passports and 227 travel destinations worldwide.
- ✓ The index is updated every month.

Q. According to the 2025 Henley Passport Index, which country's passport is the most powerful in the world?

- A) Singapore
- B) Japan
- C) France
- D) Germany

Answer : A

Rank	Country name	Citizens can travel Visa-free to countries
1	Singapore	195
2	Japan	193
3	France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Finland, South Korea	192
4	Austria, Denmark, Ireland, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sweden, Norway	191
5	Belgium, New Zealand, Portugal, Switzerland, United Kingdom	190
6	Greece, Australia	189
7	Canada, Poland, Malta	188
8	Hungary, Czechia	187
9	Estonia, United States	186
10	Lithuania, Latvia, Slovenia, United Arab Emirate	185

Q. According to the recently released 2025 Henley Passport Index, an Indian passport holder can visit visa-free to how many countries in the world?

- A) 58
B) 57
C) 76
D) 45

Answer : B

- ✓ Indian rank declines to 85
- ✓ In 2024 the Indian passport was ranked 82nd in the world, declining to 85th in 2025.
- ✓ Indian passport holders can travel to 57 countries without the requirement of a visa.
- ✓ India shares the 85th rank with the African countries of Equatorial Guinea and Niger

Q. Which country was ranked at the bottom of the 2025 Henley Passport Index?

- A) Iraq
B) Afghanistan
C) Yemen
D) Syria

Answer : B

- ✓ Pakistan retains the World's fourth-worst Passport status.
- ✓ Pakistan's Passport has been ranked the fourth worst passport in the world for the fifth consecutive year.
- ✓ It is ranked 103rd in the index along with war-torn Yemen and a Pakistani citizen can visit 33 countries visa-free.
- ✓ Afghanistan's passport is ranked at the bottom at 106th position.
- ✓ War-torn Syria has been ranked 105th and Iraq 104th.

Q. Who has been appointed as the Chairman cum Managing Director of National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO)?

- A) Sunil Kumar Gupta
B) Brijendra Pratap Singh
C) Vivek Mehrotra
D) Hirdyesh Mohan

Answer : B

- ✓ Brijendra Pratap Singh new CMD of NALCO
- ✓ Brijendra Pratap Singh has assumed the charge as the Chairman-cum-Managing Director (CMD) of the central public sector enterprise National Aluminium Company Ltd (NALCO). Before joining NALCO, he was the director-in-charge of the Bumpur and Durgapur Steel Plants of the Steel Authority of India (SAIL).
- ✓ About NALCO
- ✓ The National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) was founded in 1981 and it started its commercial operations in 1987.
- ✓ It is owned by the government of India and it was granted a Navaratna status in 2008.
- ✓ NALCO operates an Alumina refinery at Damanjodi, Koraput, Odisha, and an Aluminium Smelter & Captive Power Plant at Angul, Odisha.
- ✓ NALCO also holds the distinction of being the lowest-cost producer of Alumina and Bauxite in the world.
- ✓ It is the second-highest foreign exchange earner amongst the central public sector enterprises.
- ✓ Headquarters: Bhubaneswar, Odisha
- ✓ CMD: Brijendra Pratap Singh

Q. Which country has officially joined the BRICS as a full member in January 2025?

- A) Singapore
- B) Mauritius
- C) Indonesia
- D) Malaysia

Answer : C

- ✓ Indonesia officially joined BRICS as a full member, announced by Brazil. Indonesia called its membership a strategic step for partnerships with developing nations.
- ✓ As the fourth most populous country, Indonesia aimed to strengthen Global South alliances.
- ✓ BRICS focuses on strengthening cooperation among nations in the Global South.
- ✓ BRICS has recently expanded its membership.
- ✓ New members include Indonesia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and the UAE.
- ✓ This expansion showcases BRICS' increasing influence among developing nations.

Q. Which country will hold the 17th Summit meeting of BRICS in 2025?

- A) Brazil
- B) Russia
- C) China
- D) South Africa

Answer : A

- ✓ Russia hosted the 16th BRICS summit meeting and the first BRICS Outreach/BRICS plus summit meeting at Kazan from 22 to 24 October 2024.
- ✓ Brazil will host the next 17th BRICS summit meeting in 2025

Q. Which of the following is not a BRICS country?

- A) UAE
- B) Egypt
- C) Ethiopia
- D) Argentina

Answer : D

- ✓ Full form of BRICS (10) : Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa, Indonesia, Egypt, Ethiopia, Iran, and UAE.

Q. The 'Anji Khad Bridge', recently seen in the news, is located in:

- A) Arunachal Pradesh
- B) Assam
- C) Jammu and Kashmir
- D) Uttarakhand

Answer : C

- ✓ Indian Railways continues to showcase its engineering excellence with the newly completed Anji Khad Bridge, the country's first cable-stayed rail bridge.
- ✓ About Anji Khad Bridge:
- ✓ It is India's first cable-stayed rail bridge, located in the Reasi district of Jammu and Kashmir.
- ✓ A critical component of the ambitious Udhampur-Srinagar-Baramulla Rail Link (USBRL) Project, this engineering marvel connects Katra and Reasi.
- ✓ The project's prime focus is on enhancing connectivity between the Kashmir Valley and the rest of India.
- ✓ It is constructed over the Anji River, a tributary of the Chenab River.
- ✓ The Indian Railways collaborated with IIT Roorkee and IIT Delhi for site-specific investigations to ensure the bridge's stability.
- ✓ Spanning 725.5 metres, the bridge features a 193-metre-tall main pylon, soaring 331 metres above the riverbed.

- ✓ Its design allows it to withstand wind speeds of up to 213 km/h and safely support train operations at speeds of 100 km/h.

Q. 'The Future of Jobs Report 2025' has been released by which organisation?

- A) World Economic Forum (WEF) B) World Bank (WB)
C) International Monetary Fund (IMF) D) United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)

Answer : A

- ✓ In the next five years, artificial intelligence (AI), big data, and security management specialists will be the fastest-growing jobs, showed the World Economic Forum's (WEF) Future of Jobs Report 2025.
- ✓ About Future of Jobs Report 2025:
- ✓ It was published by the World Economic Forum (WEF).
- ✓ It is a result of data gathered from more than 1,000 leading global companies, collectively representing over 14 million workers across 22 industry sectors and 55 economies from across the world.
- ✓ Highlights:
- ✓ Job disruption will equate to 22 percent of jobs by 2030.
- ✓ It says 170 million new jobs will be created and 92 million jobs will be displaced, resulting in a net increase of 78 million jobs by 2030.
- ✓ The WEF emphasises that 59% of the global workforce will need reskilling or upskilling by 2030 to remain competitive.
- ✓ It mentioned the top 10 fastest-growing skills by 2030. It said Artificial Intelligence (AI) and big data will emerge at the top of the list, followed by networks and cybersecurity.

Q. Which Portal has been launched by the government of India to make the genome data accessible to researchers under the GenomeIndia Project?

- A) Biodiversity Heritage Library Portal B) Biomarker Insights Portal
C) UniProt knowledgebase Portal D) Indian Biological Data Centre Portal

Answer : D

- ✓ India has become self-sufficient in genomic data as India has successfully decoded 10,000 whole genome samples under the GenomeIndia Project.
- ✓ To make the genome data accessible to the researchers in India & abroad the government of India has launched a dedicated Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC) Portal.
- ✓ The Portal was launched at the Genome India Data Conclave held in New Delhi on 9 January 2025.
- ✓ The Indian Biological Data Centre is the first national repository for life science data in India.
- ✓ The Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC) Portal was inaugurated by the Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology Dr. Jitendra Singh, in New Delhi.
- ✓ The 'Indian Biological Data Centre (IBDC)' maintains all life science data generated from publicly funded research in India.
- ✓ The data center is under the Department of Biotechnology (DBT).
- ✓ The Data Center has been set up at the DBT's Regional Centre of Biotechnology, Faridabad, Haryana in collaboration with the National Informatics Centre.
- ✓ The GenomeIndia Project was launched by the Department of Biotechnology under the Union Ministry of Science and Technology in January 2020.

Q. Who has been elected as the President of Lebanon?

- A) Joseph Aoun B) Ziad Baroud
C) Elias Murr D) Ghazi Aridi

Answer : A

- ✓ Lebanese Armed Forces Chief General Joseph Aoun was elected as the President of Lebanon by the Lebanese Parliament on 9 January 2025.
- ✓ The term of the President is six years.
- ✓ About Lebanon
- ✓ Lebanon is a small country situated in West Asia along the Mediterranean Sea
- ✓ Capital: Beirut
- ✓ Currency: Lebanese Pound
- ✓ President: Joseph Aoun

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Project VISTAAR (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources):

1. It is a digital platform designed to integrate information about start-ups in the agriculture and allied sectors.
2. It enables farmers to access high-quality advisory services on crop production and marketing.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) Madras has announced a collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare on Project VISTAAR (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources).
- ✓ It is a digital platform designed to integrate information about start-ups in the agriculture and allied sectors.
- ✓ The initiative aims to enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the agricultural extension system through digitalisation.
- ✓ This will help farmers and other stakeholders access the capabilities and offerings of these start-ups more easily.
- ✓ It contains details on over 12,000 start-ups in the agriculture and farming sectors.
- ✓ This database serves as a valuable resource for connecting farmers with relevant technological solutions and services.
- ✓ The digitalisation of the agricultural extension system will substantially expand its outreach, enabling every farmer to access high-quality advisory services on crop production, marketing, value addition, and supply chain management

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Open Data Kit (ODK) Platform:

1. It is a digital platform which allows the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) to collect and manage data securely.
2. It can only use the English language for its surveys.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) is using the Open Data Kit (ODK) platform a new digital tool to improve transparency and accountability in public spending.
- ✓ It is a digital platform which allows the CAG to collect and manage data securely.

- ✓ It is used for designing, collecting, and managing data to enhance transparency in public spending and accountability in government schemes.
- ✓ Features
- ✓ It is integrated with CAG's own operating system called OIOS.
- ✓ It is an end-to-end encrypted online portal.
- ✓ It is used to collect information for identifying problem areas warranting additional review.
- ✓ It also helps CAG in launching surveys in multiple languages at the same time.
- ✓ ODK toolkit was deployed to ascertain patient satisfaction while gathering evidence in auditing the performance of the AIIMS at Mangalagiri in Guntur district and the AIIMS at Bibinagar in Hyderabad.

Q. Who has been sworn in as the 42nd Governor of Bihar?

- A) Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar B) Arif Mohammad Khan
C) K. Vinod Chandran D) Ramesh Chandra

Answer : B

- ✓ Arif Mohammad Khan was sworn in as the 42nd Governor of Bihar, succeeding Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar.
- ✓ The swearing-in ceremony was held at the Raj Bhawan, where Patna High Court Chief Justice K. Vinod Chandran administered the oath.
- ✓ Prominent political figures, including Chief Minister Nitish Kumar and Leader of Opposition Tejashwi Yadav, attended the event, marking a significant political transition in the state
- ✓ List of newly appointed Governors
- ✓ Bihar - Arif Mohammed Khan
- ✓ Kerala- Vishwanath Arlekar
- ✓ Manipur - Ajay Kumar Bhalla
- ✓ Mizoram- Retd. General Vijay Kumar Singh
- ✓ Odisha - Hari Babu Kambhampati

Q. On which date will the first Lokpal Day be celebrated in 2025?

- A) January 16 B) January 12
C) January 4 D) January 9

Answer : A

- ✓ The first Lokpal Day is scheduled for January 16, 2025, at Zorawar Auditorium, Delhi Cantt.
- ✓ The event will feature prominent dignitaries, including the Chief Justice of India Shri Justice Sanjiv Khanna, the Attorney General, and Shri Anna Hazare.
- ✓ The celebration aims to highlight the Lokpal's role in ensuring accountability and discuss its future direction.
- ✓ The day marks a significant step in promoting transparency and integrity in governance.

Q. Which city is hosting the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention 2025?

- A) Bhubaneswar, Odisha B) Guwahati, Assam
C) Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh D) Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh

Answer : A

- ✓ Bhubaneswar to host the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention 2025.
- ✓ Bhubaneswar the capital city of Odisha will host the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention from 8-10 January 2025. It is the first time that Bhubaneswar is hosting the biannual Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention.

- ✓ As part of the Bharatiya Divas Convention, the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be held in Bhubaneswar on 8 January 2025.
- ✓ In India, the 9th of January is observed as the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas since 2003 to mark the contribution of the Pravasi Bhartiya (Overseas Indian) community to the development of India.
- ✓ The 17 Pravasi Bharatiya Divas Conventions were held in Indore, Madhya Pradesh from 8 – 10 January 2023.
- ✓ The Union Ministry of External Affairs is organising the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention in association with the Odisha state government.
- ✓ The Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be organised by the Ministry of External Affairs in partnership with the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports and the Odisha government.
- ✓ Theme of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention
- ✓ The theme of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention is "Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat".
- ✓ About the Pravasi Bhartiya Divas /Convention
- ✓ The Pravasi Bhartiya Divas is celebrated by the government of India every year on 9th January on the recommendation of Dr. L.M. Singhvi's 'High-Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora'.
- ✓ The day was chosen to mark the return of Mahatma Gandhi to India on 9 January 1915 to India onboard the ship S.S.Arabia in Mumbai (then Bombay).
- ✓ The Ministry of External Affairs organises a three-day event known as Pravasi Bhartiya Convention to mark the Pravasi Bharatiya Divas.
- ✓ The first Pravasi Bhartiya Divas/Convention was organised in 2003 in New Delhi from 9-11 January 2003.

Q. What is the theme of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention 2025?

- A) Contributing to Aatmanirbhar Bharat
- B) Role of Indian Diaspora in building a New India
- C) Redefining engagement with the Indian diaspora
- D) Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat

Answer : D

- ✓ The theme of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention is "Diaspora's Contribution to a Viksit Bharat".
- ✓ The 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention will be inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 9th January 2025.
- ✓ PM Modi will virtually flag off the first special tourist train for the Indian diaspora, Pravasi Bharatiya Express, a. The train will depart from Nizamuddin Railway Station in Delhi covering multiple destinations of tourist and religious importance.
- ✓ President Droupadi Murmu will address the valedictory session of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention on 10th January 2025.
- ✓ President Murmu will also confer the Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award to 27 individuals.
- ✓ The Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Award is given to Non-Resident Indians (NRI), Persons of Indian Origin (PIO), or an organisation/institution established and run by the NRI/PIO in recognition of their outstanding achievements both in India and abroad.

Q. Who is the chief guest of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention 2025?

- A) Prabowo Subianto
- B) Lula da Silva
- C) Christine Carla Kangaloo
- D) Ngozi Okonjo-Iweala

Answer : C

- ✓ Chief Guest of the 18th Pravasi/Youth Bharatiya Divas Convention

- ✓ The Chief Guest of the 18th Pravasi Bhartiya Divas Convention will be Christine Carla Kangaloo, President of Trinidad & Tobago. She will address the convention virtually on 9 January 2025.
- ✓ The Chief Guest of the Youth Pravasi Bharatiya Divas will be Dr. Dev Pragad, CEO of the American magazine Newsweek.

Q. Which institution in India has developed indigenous technology to develop Paracetamol drugs?

- A) Serum Institute of India Pvt Ltd B) Gennova Biopharmaceuticals Limited
C) Bharat Biotech D) Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)

Answer : D

- ✓ Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Science and Technology Dr Jitendra Singh announced that the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) has developed the technology to produce Paracetamol indigenously.
- ✓ The technology has been transferred to the Karnataka-based Satya Deeptha Pharmaceuticals Ltd to manufacture the affordable paracetamol domestically
- ✓ This was announced by Dr Jitendra Singh at the 40th Foundation Day of the Department of Scientific and Industrial Research (DSIR) in New Delhi on 5 January 2025.
- ✓ The Department of Scientific and Industrial Research is a part of the Union Ministry of Science and Technology.
- ✓ The Director General of the CSIR is the Secretary of the DSIR. The current Secretary of DSIR
- ✓ Dr. N. Kalaiselvi, and Professor A.K. Sood, Principal Scientific Advisor to the government of India were also present on the occasion.

Q. Who is the author of the book titled "How India Scaled Mt G20 : The Inside Story Of G20 Presidency"

- A) Vinod Kumar Paul B) S. Venkatasubramanian
C) Arvind Virmani D) Amitabh Kant

Answer : D

- ✓ How India scaled Mt G20: The inside story of the G20 Presidency By Amitabh Kant.
- ✓ Former CEO of Government's think tank NITI Aayog, Amitabh Kant, has been selected as the India's new Sherpa for the G-20.
- ✓ Amitabh Kant has authored a new book titled "Made In India: 75 Years of Business and Enterprise"

Q. Which of the following statements is true about veteran nuclear scientist Rajagopala Chidambaram, who recently passed away?

- A) He was instrumental in India's nuclear tests of 1975 (Smiling Buddha) and 1998 (Pokhran-II).
B) He was honored with Padma Shri (1975) & Padma Vibhushan (1999).
C) He served as Principal Scientific Adviser (2001–2018)
D) All are correct

Answer : D

- ✓ Eminent physicist Rajagopala Chidambaram, who was a key figure in India's nuclear tests in 1974 and 1998, passed away
- ✓ Chidambaram played a significant role in India's nuclear program.
- ✓ He contributed to the first nuclear test in 1974 and led the Department of Atomic Energy team during the Pokhran-II nuclear tests in 1998.
- ✓ Chidambaram was awarded the Padma Shri in 1975 and the Padma Vibhushan in 1999
- ✓ Chidambaram was chairman of the board of Governors of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) during 1994–95.

- ✓ He was also a member of the Commission of Eminent Persons appointed by the Director-General, IAEA, in 2008 to prepare a report on "The Role of the IAEA to 2020 and Beyond".
- ✓ Chidambaram was born into a Brahmin Hindu family and completed his early education in Meerut and Chennai, Tamil Nadu.

Q. Omkareshwar Floating Solar Project is inaugurated in which state recently?

- A) Karnataka
B) Himachal Pradesh
C) Madhya Pradesh
D) Manipur

Answer : C

- ✓ Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy Shri Pralhad Joshi visited the Omkareshwar Floating Solar Park, located in Khandwa district of Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ Recognized as the largest floating solar park in India, this 600 MW capacity project developed marks a significant step forward in India's renewable energy journey.
- ✓ Currently, the Omkareshwar Floating Solar Park has commissioned a total of 278 MW.
- ✓ The total estimated development cost of the park is ₹330 crore, supported by a Central Financial Assistance of ₹49.85 crore.
- ✓ Madhya Pradesh Government, and the Solar Power Park Developers – Rewa Ultra Mega Solar Limited, NHDC Ltd, AMP Energy Green Pvt Ltd, and SJVN Ltd – for the successful commissioning of a 278 MW Solar Park along with solar projects.
- ✓ As the project moves towards full capacity, the entire 600 MW will be fully operational. It will generate more than 4600 million units of clean energy over the next 25 years.

Q. The World's largest Floating solar energy project is to be constructed at Omkareshwar dam. This will be a solar power plant.

- A) 600 MW
B) 500 MW
C) 200 MW
D) 700 MW

Answer : A

- ✓ The World's largest Floating solar energy project is to be constructed at Omkareshwar dam.
- ✓ This will be a 600 MW solar power plant.
- ✓ The plant is situated on Omkareshwar dam in Madhya Pradesh, Khandwa district. When the water levels of the dam are low, the panels are automatically able to change their location.

Q. Who is the first male football player to be honoured with the US Presidential Medal of Freedom Award?

- A) Lionel Messi
B) Cristiano Ronaldo
C) Luka Modrić
D) Robert Lewandowski

Answer : A

- ✓ Lionel Messi: 1st Footballer to get US Presidential Medal of Freedom.
- ✓ Captain of Argentina men's football team Lionel Messi was among the 19 people to be honored with the United States of America's highest civilian award 'The Presidential Medal of Freedom' in a ceremony at the White House on 5 January 2025.
- ✓ Messi became the first men's football player and the second from the sport after female football player Megan Rapinoe, who won it in 2022.
- ✓ Presently Messi is playing for the Inter Miami football club in the Major League of the United States of America.
- ✓ The award was conferred to the 19 distinguished persons by the American President Joe Biden whose term as the 46th President of the United States ends on 19 January 2024.

- ✓ Donald Trump is expected to be sworn in as the 47th President of the country on 20 January 2025.
- ✓ About Lionel Messi
- ✓ Argentinian footballer Lionel Messi is considered to be one of the greatest football players of all time.
- ✓ He has won the Ballon d'Or awards for a record eight times. He was honoured with the FIFA Player Award in 2009.
- ✓ He played a crucial role in Argentina's third FIFA World Cup victory in Qatar 2022. He won the Golden Ball award in the 2022 edition, which is given to the competition's best player.

Q. Who is the author of the book titled "Wild Fictions : Essays"?

- A) Amitabh Ghosh
B) Aravind Adiga
C) Vikram Seth
D) Ruskin Bond

Answer : A

- ✓ Wild Fiction: Essays by Amitav Ghosh
- ✓ Wild Fictions brings together Amitav Ghosh's extraordinary writings on subjects that have obsessed him over the last twenty-five years: literature and language; climate change and the environment; human lives, travel and discoveries.
- ✓ The World After Gaza by Pankaj Mishra
- ✓ The Tamils: A Portrait of a Community by Nirmala Lakshman.
- ✓ Amitav Ghosh is an Indian writer and the winner of the 54th Jnanpith award, best known for his work in English fiction.
- ✓ Ghosh's works include:
- ✓ The Circle of Reason (his 1986 debut novel), The Shadow Lines (1988), The Glass Palace (2000), The Hungry Tide (2004), and Sea of Poppies (2008), River of Smoke (2011), and Flood of Fire (2015).

Q. In which state is the Soreng District where the country's first organic fisheries cluster has been inaugurated recently?

- A) Manipur
B) Nagaland
C) Sikkim
D) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer : C

- ✓ India's first Organic Fisheries Cluster launched in Sikkim.
- ✓ The Government of India has launched the country's first organic fisheries cluster in Soreng District of Sikkim.
- ✓ The fisheries cluster set up under the central government's Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) was inaugurated by Union Minister for Panchayati Raj; and Minister of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying Rajiv Ranjan Singh in Guwahati, Assam on 6 January 2025.
- ✓ Sikkim is the first fully organic state of India and was certified in 2016. Sikkim now aims to be the first state in India in organic fisheries.
- ✓ The Department of Fisheries, government of India has previously notified clusters such as the Pearl Cluster in Hazaribagh, Jharkhand, Ornamental Fisheries Cluster in Madurai, Tamil Nadu, Seaweed Cluster in Lakshadweep and Tuna Cluster in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- ✓ First Organic Fisheries Cluster .
- ✓ The first organic fisheries cluster under the PMMSY will be funded by the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD).
- ✓ NABARD will support the fisheries cluster by funding infrastructure, capacity building, and forming fisheries-based Farmer Producer Organizations (FFPOs).
- ✓ These clusters will promote organic fisheries and aquaculture free from harmful chemicals, antibiotics and pesticides.

Q. Who has been appointed as the 11th Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)?

- A) K. Radhakrishnan
B) K. Kasturirangan
C) Shailesh Nayak
D) V Narayanan

Answer : D

- ✓ The government of India has appointed a senior Indian Space Organisation (ISRO) scientist V. Narayanan as the 11th chairman of ISRO and secretary of the Department of Space (DOS).
- ✓ He will succeed the current chairman S.Somanth and assume office on 14 January 2025.
- ✓ The name of V. Narayanan was approved by the apex Appointments Committee of the Cabinet in a meeting held on 7 January 2025 in New Delhi.
- ✓ The meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi and attended by the Union Minister for Home Affairs and of Cooperation, Amit Shah
- ✓ Tenure of V.Narayanan as ISRO Chairman.
 - Narayanan has been appointed for a term of two years with effect from 14 January 2025, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.
- ✓ About V.Narayanan
- ✓ V Narayanan is a distinguished scientist and is an expert in Rocket and Space spacecraft propulsion. He joined ISRO in 1984 and later became the director of the Liquid Propulsion Systems Centre (LPSC).
- ✓ The Valiamala/Thiruvananthapuram headquartered LPSC is the major research and development center of ISRO. It is responsible for developing propulsion systems for the rockets launched by ISRO from Earth and for in-space propulsion systems for Spacecraft.
- ✓ V Narayanan was associated with Sounding Rockets and Augmented Satellite Launch Vehicle (ASLV) and Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) projects of ISRO's Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC).
- ✓ Dr. Vikram Sarabhai was the founder and chairman of ISRO.
- ✓ Dr. Vikram Sarabhai is also considered the father of the Indian space programme.
- ✓ Professor Satish Dhawan is the longest-serving chairman of ISRO.
- ✓ Shortest Tenure : Prof. M.G.K Menon, 9 months as chairman of ISRO.

Q. What is the tenure of V. Narayanan as the Chairman of Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)?

- A) 2 years
B) 3 years
C) 4 years
D) 5 years

Answer : A

- ✓ Narayanan has been appointed for a term of two years with effect from 14 January 2025, or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the BHARATPOL Portal:

1. It will streamline the processing of all requests for international assistance through INTERPOL.
2. It is developed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation will launch BHARATPOL portal in New Delhi on 07th January, 2025 in Bharat Mandapam.
- ✓ It will streamline the processing of all requests for international assistance through INTERPOL, including the issuance of Red Notices and other colour-coded INTERPOL notices.

- ✓ The BHARATPOL portal will become a transformative tool for field-level police officers, enhancing their efficiency in dealing with crimes and security challenges. By facilitating easier and faster access to international assistance, it will strengthen India's efforts in combating transnational crimes.
- ✓ It will significantly facilitate Indian Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) enabling real-time information sharing for faster access to international police assistance.
- ✓ It is developed by the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

Q. Where is the headquarters of INTERPOL?

A) Vienna, Austria	B) Lyon, France
C) Berlin, Germany	D) Geneva, Switzerland

Answer : B

- ✓ About INTERPOL
- ✓ The INTERPOL or the International Police Commission was established in 1923 in Vienna, Austria.
- ✓ Functions.
- ✓ INTERPOL maintains a database of 19 criminal activities..
- ✓ The INTERPOL provides a point of contact between the law enforcement of the member countries. These law enforcement are known as the National Central Bureau.
- ✓ Member countries are connected to each other via a secure communications system called I-24/7. It also allows member countries' agencies to access INTERPOL's databases and services in real-time.
- ✓ Notice system:
- ✓ INTERPOL has a notice system which enables member countries to share alerts and requests for information regarding crime and criminals.
- ✓ The system of colour-coded international notices are;
- ✓ Red (request to arrest the person pending extradition or other legal actions), Yellow (missing persons), Blue (additional information), Black (unidentified bodies), Green (warnings and intelligence), Orange (imminent threats), Purple (modus operandi).
- ✓ It has also launched INTERPOL–United Nations Security Council Special Notice for groups and individuals under UN sanctions.
- ✓ Member - 196 countries
- ✓ Headquarters-Lyon, France
- ✓ President: Major General Ahmed Naser Al- Raisi (UAE)

Q. Bahadur Singh Sagoo has been elected as the President of which sports body of India?

A) Sports Authority of India	B) Fencing Association of India
C) All India Football Federation	D) Athletics Federation of India

Answer : D

- ✓ Bahadur Singh Sagoo has been unanimously elected as the new President of the Athletics Federation of India on 7 January 2025.
- ✓ Bahadur Singh Sagoo will replace Adille Sumariwalla who has been the President of the Athletics Federation of India since 2012.
- ✓ Bahadur Singh Sagoo and other Office bearer
- ✓ The newly elected office bearer of the Athletics Federation of India as follows;
- ✓ President - Bahadur Singh Sagoo
- ✓ Secretary General - Sandeep Mehta
- ✓ Treasurer - BE Stanley Jones .
- ✓ The term of the newly elected President, Secretary General and the Treasurer is four years (2025-2029).
- ✓ About Bahadur Singh Sagoo
- ✓ Bahadur Singh Sagoo is a distinguished sportsperson and an able administrator .

- ✓ He served as the Sports Secretary at Punjab Armed Police, Jalandhar.
- ✓ Presently, he is a Commandant of the 4th India Reserve Battalion (IRB) in Pathankot.
- ✓ As a sports person he won a gold medal in the shot put event at the 2022 Asian Games in Busan, South Korea.
- ✓ He is also a two time national champion in shot put.
- ✓ He competed in the 2000 Sydney (Australia) and 2004 Athens (Greece) Olympics
- ✓ He was honoured with India's fourth highest civilian award Padma Shri in 2006.
- ✓ About the Athletics Federation of India
- ✓ The Athletics Federation of India was established in 1946 as the governing body of sport in the country.
- ✓ Headquarters: New Delhi
- ✓ President : Bahadur Singh Sagoo.
- ✓ 2028 Summer Olympics, in Los Angeles, USA.
- ✓ 20th Asian Games to be held at Aichi -Nagoya in Japan in 2026.
- ✓ First Indian Open World Athletics Bronze Level Continental Tour in August 2025 in Bhubaneswar, Odisha.

Q. Which country unveiled the world's fastest high-speed train, the CR450?

- A) China
- B) Japan
- C) Germany
- D) France

Answer : A

- ✓ China introduced the CR450, the world's fastest high-speed train, capable of reaching speeds of 450 kmph.
- ✓ This innovation surpasses the CR400 Fuxing and sets new standards in speed, energy efficiency, and noise reduction.
- ✓ With plans to integrate the CR450 into its extensive 47,000 km high-speed rail network, China continues to lead in advancing rail technology and improving connectivity.

Q. India's longest glass bridge on the sea was recently inaugurated in which state?

- A) Bihar
- B) Kerala
- C) Karnataka
- D) Tamil Nadu

Answer : D

- ✓ CM Stalin inaugurate India's 1st glass bridge over sea in Kanyakumari.
- ✓ Tamil Nadu Chief Minister M K Stalin inaugurated India's first glass bridge over the sea in Kanyakumari on 31st December 2024.
- ✓ The glass bridge connects the Vivekananda Rock Memorial and the 133-foot Thiruvalluvar statue in the Kanyakumari district.
- ✓ The glass bridges are made of laminated glass or toughened glass, are transparent, and are built in tourist places especially in the mountainous regions so that the tourists can experience breathtaking scenes.
- ✓ The longest glass bridge in India is located in Vagamon, Kerala which is 40 meters long and at an altitude of 3600 feet.
- ✓ About the Glass Bridge in Kanyakumari
- ✓ The bridge in Kanyakumari is 77 meters long, 10 meters wide, and 133 feet high.
- ✓ The 37-crore project to build the glass bridge is part of the state government initiative to boost tourism in the area.
- ✓ Longest Glass Bridge in World and India
- ✓ Zhangjiajie Glass Bridge in the Hunan province of China is the world's highest and longest glass bridge. It is 430 meters long, 6 meters wide, and 300 meters above the ground.

- ✓ The longest glass bridge in India is located in Vagamon, Idukki district of Kerala. It is a cantilevered glass bridge that is 40 meters long and at an altitude of 3600 feet.
- ✓ Bihar has built an interesting 200 ft glass bridge which will be inaugurated by March 2021 in Rajgir, Nalanda district

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to the National e-Governance Awards Scheme:

1. Its objective is to recognize and promote excellence in the implementation of e-governance initiatives.
2. It will consist of a Trophy, Certificate and an incentive of Rs 10 lakh for Gold Awardees and Rs 5 Lakhs for Silver Awardees.
3. The Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions serves as its nodal ministry.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

A) Only one	B) Only two
C) All three	D) None

Answer : C

- ✓ Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions issued the scheme guidelines for the 28th National Awards for e-Governance (NAeG) 2025.
- ✓ About National e-Governance Awards Scheme:
- ✓ It is recognized amongst the most competitive and prestigious digital governance awards schemes in the country.
- ✓ The objective of the Scheme is to recognize and promote excellence in the implementation of e-Governance initiatives.
- ✓ The NAeG Awards, 2025 will consist of Trophy, Certificate and an incentive of Rs 10 lakh for Gold Awardees and Rs 5 Lakhs for Silver Awardees to be awarded to the district/organization for being utilized for implementation of project/programme or bridging resources gaps in any area of public welfare.
- ✓ This year 16 Awards are being conferred under the NAeG 2025. Of these 10 will be Gold Awards and 6 will be silver Awards.
- ✓ For the year 2025, there are six categories.
- ✓ Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions

Q. Who has been appointed as the Chief Executive Officer of the Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI)?

A) Bhuvnesh Kumar	B) Rajnish Kumar
C) Rahul Kumar	D) Ravish Kumar

Answer : A

- ✓ Bhuvnesh Kumar new CEO of the UIDAI.
- ✓ 1995 batch IAS officer of the Uttar Pradesh cadre, Bhuvnesh Kumar has taken over as the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) on 2 January 2025.
- ✓ He replaces Amit Aggarwal who has been appointed as the Secretary, of the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India.
- ✓ Bhuvnesh Kumar apart from being the CEO of the UIDAI will also be the Additional Secretary in the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.
- ✓ About the UIDAI
- ✓ The Unique Identification Authority of India (UIDAI) was set up in 2009 by the central government under the Planning Commission (now NITI Aayog).

- ✓ In 2015 the UIDAI was transferred to the Department of Electronics & Information Technology (DeitY) of the then Ministry of Communications and Information Technology.
- ✓ Presently it is under the Union Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY).
- ✓ It was made a statutory body in 2016 under the provisions of the Aadhaar (Targeted Delivery of Financial and Other Subsidies, Benefits and Services) Act, 2016 ("Aadhaar Act 2016).
- ✓ Nandan Nilekani was the first chairman of UIDAI.
- ✓ Function of UIDAI
- ✓ It issues Unique Identification numbers (UID), named "Aadhaar", to all residents of India.
- ✓ It is responsible for Aadhaar enrolment and authentication, including operation and management of all stages of the Aadhaar life cycle.
- ✓ It is responsible for developing the policy, procedure, and system for issuing Aadhaar numbers to individuals and performing authentication and the security of identity information and authentication records of individuals.
- ✓ About Aadhaar
- ✓ Aadhaar is a 12-digit alphanumeric biometric number that is a proof of identity and residence for residents of India.
- ✓ According to the Aadhaar Act, a resident means a person who has resided in India for a minimum period of 182 days or more in 12 months before applying for an Aadhaar.
- ✓ In 2019 the government of India allowed non-resident Indians (NRI) to apply for Aadhaar.
- ✓ A foreign citizen who has been living in India for 182 days in the past 12 months can also apply for Aadhaar.
- ✓ Aadhaar has been made mandatory for the filing of Income tax in India.
- ✓ The first Aadhaar number was issued on 29 September 2010 to a resident of Nandurbar, Maharashtra.

Q. Who has been appointed as the Secretary of the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India?

A) Ramesh Sharma	B) Abhishek Kumar
C) Pramod Singh	D) Amit Aggarwal

Answer : D

- ✓ Amit Aggarwal has been appointed as the Secretary, of the Department of Pharmaceuticals, Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, Government of India

Q. Which country became the full member of the Schengen Area on 1 January 2025?

A) Romania and Bulgaria	B) Cyprus and Ireland
C) Iceland and Norway	D) Slovakia and Spain

Answer : A

- ✓ Romania & Bulgaria become full member of EU's Schengen area.
- ✓ Romania and Bulgaria have officially become the full member of the European Union's (EU) Schengen area at the stroke of midnight on 1 January 2025.
- ✓ Until now both countries had partial membership of the Schengen area.
- ✓ Now 25 out of the 27 member countries of the European Union are members of the Schengen area except Cyprus and Ireland.
- ✓ Schengen areas facilitate free travel for the nationals of the member countries to travel to another country for work, business, tourism, etc purposes without any checks and border restrictions.
- ✓ Romania and Bulgaria Joins Schengen after 13 years
- ✓ Romania and Bulgaria joined the European Union in 2007. They partially joined the Schengen area in March 2024 and their citizens were allowed to enter the Schengen area through air or sea freely.
- ✓ About Schengen Area

- ✓ The Schengen area was established by the European Union in 1985 to permit document-free travel by the citizens of the member countries.
- ✓ Benefits of Schengen Area
- ✓ It guarantees free movement of European Union citizens, and non-European Union nationals living in the European Union or visiting the European Union as tourists, exchange students, or for business purposes without any border checks or verification
- ✓ Members of the Schengen Area
- ✓ Initially, France, Luxembourg, Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands joined the Schengen area in 1985.
- ✓ Over a period of time, its membership expanded, and presently it consists of 29 countries
- ✓ European Union member countries that are members of the Schengen area are as follows: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Portugal, Latvia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Croatia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Spain, and Sweden.
- ✓ Non European Union Members - Iceland, Norway, Switzerland, and Liechtenstein.

Q. What has the Defence Ministry designated 2025 as?

A) Year of Innovation	B) Year of Modernization
C) Year of Reforms	D) Year of Integration

Answer : C

- ✓ The Ministry of Defence declares 2025 as the 'Year of Reforms'.
- ✓ The focus would be on introducing integrated command units to increase the synergy of the three services and ensure simpler and time-sensitive military procurement with the broader objective of transforming the military into a technologically advanced force.
- ✓ The overall aim of the nine-point reforms planned by the Ministry of Defense would be to ensure deeper collaboration between key stakeholders, break down silos, eliminate inefficiencies and optimize the use of resources.
- ✓ The reforms would lay the foundations for "unprecedented" progress in defense preparedness and ensure India's security and sovereignty amid the challenges of the 21st century.

Q. Which state is conducting the country's first coastal and wader birds census?

A) Uttar Pradesh	B) Madhya Pradesh
C) Gujarat	D) Odisha

Answer : C

- ✓ India's first coastal and wader bird census in Jamnagar, Gujarat.
- ✓ India's first coastal and wader bird census will be conducted in the Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary in Jamnagar, Gujarat from 3 -5 January 2025.
- ✓ Wader birds are those birds which has long legs, long necks, and long bills, that are adapted for wading in shallow waters and live on fish, frogs, etc. Crane, stork, shoebill, ibis, heron, flamingo etc are some of the examples of wader bird.

Q. Where is the country's first Marine National Park and first Marine Sanctuary located?

A) Mathura, Uttar Pradesh	B) Jamnagar, Gujarat
C) Narmadapuram, Madhya Pradesh	D) Chamoli, Uttarakhand

Answer : B

- ✓ India's first coastal and wader bird census will be conducted in the Marine National Park and Marine Sanctuary in Jamnagar, Gujarat from 3 -5 January 2025

BEST MCQ WITH FACTS

DECEMBER 2024

Q. Which rocket was used by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to launch its space docking mission (SpaDex Mission)?

- A) PSLVC-62
B) PSLVC-60
C) PSLVC-61
D) PSLVC-59

Answer : B

- ✓ Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) has successfully launched its critical space docking mission (SpaDex Mission).
- ✓ The PSLVC-60 rockets carrying two satellites on board were launched from ISRO's Satish Dhawan Space Center SHAR, Sriharikota, Andhra Pradesh on 30 December 2024.
- ✓ The PSLV C-60 is 44.5 meters tall, a third-generation launch vehicle of ISRO, and is a four-stage rocket.
- ✓ If successful, it will make India the fourth country in the world after Russia, the United States of America, and China- to master the art of rendezvous, space docking, and undocking.
- ✓ The whole mission is crucial for the country's manned mission to the moon and supporting a space station.
- ✓ SpaDex mission is a technology demonstrator project of ISRO. It carries two small spacecraft SDX01(the Chaser) and SDX02(the Target), each weighing 220 kg..
- ✓ The two spacecraft will be deployed into a 470 km Low Earth Circular Orbit (LEO at 55° inclination.
- ✓ The chaser satellite will attempt to dock with the target satellite in a precision-controlled maneuver by the ISRO's ISTRAC (ISRO Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network), Bengaluru.
- ✓ Significance of the Mission
- ✓ The mastery of space docking is crucial for the building and operation of the Bharatiya Antariksh Station and a manned mission to the moon.
- ✓ Bhartiya Antariksh Station
- ✓ Bhartiya Antariksh Station (BAS) will be a fully functional manned space station in the Low Earth Orbit (LEO).
- ✓ This will enable ISRO to undertake medium to long-duration human spaceflight missions as part of its sustained human space program.
- ✓ The 1st module of the Antariksh Station is expected to be launched in 2028 and the target year of becoming fully operational with all modules is by 2035.
- ✓ Manned Mission to Moon
- ✓ The government of India has set a target to land an Indian astronaut (Gaganyatri) on the surface of the moon and bring them back safely to Earth by 2040.
- ✓ For this purpose, the Chandrayaan-4 mission will be launched which will demonstrate the technology needed to successfully land on the moon, bring samples from the moon, and successfully return to Earth.
- ✓ Gaganyaan Programme
- ✓ The Gaganyaan program of ISRO was approved by the government of India in 2018.
- ✓ The Gaganyaan program aims to make India self-sufficient in launching manned space flights.
- ✓ The scope of the Gaganyaan Programme was later expanded to include building a manned space station called Bhartiya Antariksh Station by 2035 and a manned mission to the moon by 2040.

Q. In which state are UK universities planning to establish campuses at GIFT City?

- A) Maharashtra
B) Tamil Nadu
C) Uttar Pradesh
D) Gujarat

Answer : D

- ✓ After Australia, two UK universities plan international campuses in Gujarat's GIFT City.
- ✓ Queen's University Belfast and Coventry University have received approval to establish campuses at Gujarat's GIFT City.
- ✓ The two Australian universities that have opened campuses in Gujarat's GIFT City are Deakin University and the University of Wollongong (UOW):
- ✓ The first foreign university to open a campus in GIFT City, Deakin University welcomed its first students in July 2024

Q. Who released the 18th India State of Forest Report 2023?

- A) Narendra Modi
- B) Bhupendra Yadav
- C) Amit Shah
- D) Draupadi Murmu

Answer : B

- ✓ The 18th India State of Forest Report 2023 was released by the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupendra Yadav at the Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, Uttarakhand.
- ✓ The first India of the state of Forest Report was released in 1987 and since then it has been released biennially.

Q. What was the total forest and tree cover in the country as per the 18th India State of Forest Report 2023?

- A) 6,99,123 sq km
- B) 9,35,876 sq km
- C) 7,87,367 sq km
- D) 8,27,357 sq km

Answer : D

- ✓ Forest and Tree cover is 8,27,357sq km which is 25.17 % of the geographical area of the country.
- ✓ Increase of 1445 sq km (156 sq km increase in Forest and 1289 sq km in Tree cover) as compared to 2021.
- ✓ In 2023 the total Forest Cover- is 7,15,343sq km (21.76%) and Tree Cover - is 1,12,014 sq km (3.41%).
- ✓ Performance of States/Union Territories
- ✓ Maximum increase in forest and tree cover areas - (1) Chhattisgarh (684 sq km) (2) Uttar Pradesh (559 sq km) (3) Odisha (559 sq km) (4) Rajasthan (394 sq km).
- ✓ Maximum decrease in forest and tree cover- (1) Madhya Pradesh (612.41sq km), (2) Karnataka (459.36 sq km), (3)Ladakh (159.26 sq km),(4) Nagaland (125.22 sq km).
- ✓ Maximum increase in forest cover- (1) Mizoram (242 sq km), (2) Gujarat (180 sq km), and (3) Odisha (152 sq km).
- ✓ Tree Cover
- ✓ Maximum tree cover - (1) Maharashtra (14,524.88 sq km) (2) Rajasthan (10,841.12sq km), (3) Uttar Pradesh (8,950.92 sq km).
- ✓ The maximum positive change as compared to 2021- (1) Chhattisgarh (702.75 sq km),(2) Rajasthan (478.26 sq km) (3) Uttar Pradesh (440.76 sq km).
- ✓ **Forest and Tree Covers in India at a Glance 2023**

Class	Area (sq km)	Percentage of Geographical Area
Forest Cover	7,15,342.61	21.76%
Tree Cover	1,12,014.34	3.41%
Total Forest and Tree Cover	8,27,356.95	25.17%
Scrub	43,622.64	1.33%
Non-Forest	24,16,489.29	73.50%
Geographical Area of the Country	32,87,468.88	100.00%

Q. Which State/Union Territory in India has the highest forest cover area wise?

- A) Maharashtra
B) Arunachal Pradesh
C) Madhya Pradesh
D) Andhra Pradesh

Answer : C

- ✓ State/UT having largest forest cover Area Wise and Percentage-wise
- ✓ Area wise top three states having largest forest and tree cover are Madhya Pradesh (85,724 sq km) followed by Arunachal Pradesh (67,083 sq km) and Maharashtra (65,383 sq km).
- ✓ Area wise top three states having largest forest cover are Madhya Pradesh (77,073 sq km) followed by Arunachal Pradesh (65,882 sq km) and Chhattisgarh (55,812 sq km).
- ✓ State/Union Territories having largest forest cover percentage-wise. - Lakshadweep (91.33 percent of its area is under forest cover) (2) Mizoram (85.34 percent) (3) Andaman & Nicobar Island (81.62 percent).
- ✓ State/UT having 33% or more area under forest cover .
- ✓ 19 states and UT have forest cover of 33 % or more in their geographical area.
- ✓ Eight states/UT - Mizoram, Lakshadweep, Andaman and Nicobar Island, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Meghalaya, Tripura, and Manipur have forest cover above 75 percent

Q. Which State/Union Territory in India has the highest forest cover percentage wise?

- A) Lakshadweep
B) Mizoram
C) Andaman & Nicobar Island
D) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer : A

- ✓ State/Union Territories having largest forest cover percentage-wise. - Lakshadweep (91.33 percent of its area is under forest cover) (2) Mizoram (85.34 percent) (3) Andaman & Nicobar Island (81.62 percent).
- ✓ Mangrove Forest in India
- ✓ Mangrove cover in the country is 4,991.68sq km, which is 0.15 % of the country's total geographical area.
- ✓ sq km decrease in mangrove forest as compared to 2021.
- ✓ Maximum decline in Gujarat(36.39 sq km).

- ✓ Maximum increase in Andhra Pradesh (13.01sq km), followed by Maharashtra (12.39sq km).
- ✓ Bamboo Cover in India
- ✓ Bamboo area- 1,54,670 sq km. An increase of 5,227 sq km as compared to 2021
- ✓ Maximum bamboo area - (1) Madhya Pradesh 20,421 sq km (2) Arunachal Pradesh 18,424 sq km (3) Maharashtra 13,572 sq km (4) Odisha 12,328 sq km.

Q. The Upper Siang Hydropower Project is located in which one of the following states?

- A) Sikkim
B) Arunachal Pradesh
C) Assam
D) Meghalaya

Answer : B

- ✓ Under the shadow of China's plan to build the world's largest dam, India pushes for a counter project in Arunachal Pradesh.
- ✓ About the Upper Siang Hydropower Project
- ✓ The Upper Siang Hydropower Project is a proposed 11,000 MW hydropower plant located on the Siang River in the Upper Siang district of Arunachal Pradesh.
- ✓ The Siang River is the upper course of the Brahmaputra River, revered as Aane Siang (Mother Siang) by locals.
- ✓ Key Details of the Project
- ✓ Developers: Jointly undertaken by the National Hydroelectric Power Corporation (NHPC) and the North Eastern Electric Power Corporation (NEEPCO).
- ✓ Pre-Feasibility Report (submitted in December 2022):
- ✓ Installed Capacity: 11,000 MW.
- ✓ Reservoir Storage: 9 billion cubic meters (BCM).
- ✓ Estimated Cost: ₹1,13,000 crore.
- ✓ The area is primarily inhabited by the Adi Tribe, an indigenous community with a strong connection to the Siang River.

Q. What rank did India achieve in the Network Readiness Index 2024?

- A) 49th
B) 50th
C) 55th
D) 60th

Answer : A

- ✓ India was ranked 49th in the Network Readiness Index 2024, published by the Portulans Institute and the Saïd Business School at the University of Oxford on November 21, 2024.
- ✓ Last year, it was ranked 60th, and this year, it has improved its rank by 11 positions.
- ✓ The Network Readiness Index 2024 ranks India at 49th place amongst 133 economies of the world, with a score of 53.63
- ✓ India has been ranked second among the low-middle-income countries after Vietnam.
- ✓ India secured the first rank in 'Artificial Intelligence (AI) scientific publications', 'AI talent concentration' and 'ICT services exports',
- ✓ The Network Readiness Index is built on four pillars: Technology, People, Governance, and Impact.
- ✓ The United States of America led the Network Readiness Index for the third consecutive year, followed by Singapore.
- ✓ The top five countries in the 2024 Network Readiness Index (NRI) are United States, Singapore, Finland, Sweden and Republic of Korea

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit (WAVES):

1. India will host the first-ever WAVES global summit covering the entire gamut of the Media and Entertainment industry.
2. It aims to empower global Media & Entertainment leaders with exclusive investment opportunities through the premiere platform of WAVES.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Prime Minister has said that India will host the World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit (WAVES) for the first time in February 2025.
- ✓ About World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit:
- ✓ WAVES would be the first-ever global summit covering the entire gamut of Media and Entertainment industry.
- ✓ The Summit will also highlight India's advancements in animation, gaming, entertainment technology and regional and mainstream cinema.

Q. Exercise Surya Kiran, recently seen in the news, is an annual joint military exercise between India and which one of the following countries?

- A) Sri Lanka
B) Malaysia
C) Nepal
D) Myanmar

Answer : C

- ✓ 18th India -Nepal Military exercise Surya Kiran to commence in Nepal.
- ✓ The 334-strong Indian Army contingent has departed to Nepal to participate in the 18th edition of the bilateral military exercise Surya Kiran.
- ✓ The exercise will be hosted by the Nepali Army in Saljhandi, Nepal from 31st December 2024 to 13th January 2025.
- ✓ The Surya Kiran military exercise is a battalion-level exercise. In the 18th edition of the military exercise, a 334-member contingent from the 11th Gorkha Rifles Regiment is participating.
- ✓ The 11th Gorkha Rifles was the first regiment of the Indian Army to be raised after Independence.
- ✓ The Srijung Battalion of the Nepali Army will participate in the military exercise.

Q. Who is the only Prime Minister to have served as the Governor of RBI?

- A) P.V. Narsimha Rao B) Manmohan Singh
C) Lal Bahadur Shastri D) Indira Gandhi

Answer : B

- ✓ Manmohan Singh is the only Prime Minister to have also served as the Governor of RBI.
- ✓ He was the Governor of RBI from 1982-1985.
- ✓ The 13th Prime Minister of India and architect of Indian economic reform Dr Manmohan Singh, passed away on 26 December 2024 at the age of 92 years.
- ✓ About Dr Manmohan Singh
- ✓ Dr Manmohan Singh was born on 26 September 1932 in Gah village in undivided Punjab (now in Pakistan).

- ✓ He studied at Cambridge and Oxford University in the United Kingdom. He taught Economics at the Punjab University and the Delhi School of Economics.
- ✓ Career with the Government of India.
- ✓ Appointed the Chief Economic Advisor in the Ministry of Finance in 1972.
- ✓ Dr Singh also worked as a Secretary in the Ministry of Finance;
- ✓ Deputy Chairman of the Planning Commission;
- ✓ 15th Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (1982-85);
- ✓ Advisor to the Prime Minister;
- ✓ Chairman of the University Grants Commission (UGC);
- ✓ Leader of Indian Delegations to the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Cyprus (1993) and the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna, Austria in 1993.
- ✓ He briefly worked in the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) Secretariat.
- ✓ Secretary General of the South Commission in Geneva, Switzerland from 1987 -1990.
- ✓ Architect of Economic Reform
- ✓ Dr Manmohan Singh is known as the chief architect of the New Economic Policy which was introduced during the tenure of Prime Minister PV Narasimha Rao from 1991-96.
- ✓ Before being appointed as the Union Finance Minister in 1991 he held the post of the Chairman of the UGC.
- ✓ Under his stewardship, India undertook a series of economic reforms which is considered to be a turning point in the economic history of Independent India.
- ✓ Singh was never a member of the Lok Sabha but served as a member of the Rajya Sabha, representing the state of Assam from 1991 to 2019 and Rajasthan from 2019 to 2024.
- ✓ In 2004 he became the 13th Prime Minister of India after the United Progressive Alliance (UPA) came into power. He was again sworn in as Prime Minister in 2009 for the second time.
- ✓ He was the Prime Minister for 10 years.
- ✓ Award and Honours
- ✓ Padma Vibhushan (1987)- India's second-highest civilian award:
- ✓ 1995- Indian National Science Congress's Jawaharlal Nehru Birth Centenary Award
- ✓ 1993 & 1994 -Asia Money Award for Finance Minister of the Year;
- ✓ 1993- Euro Money Award for Finance Minister of the Year;
- ✓ 1956- Adam Smith Prize of the University of Cambridge;
- ✓ 1955- Wright's Prize for Distinguished Performance at St. John's College in Cambridge.:

Q. In which year was Manmohan Singh awarded the Padma Vibhushan?

A) 1990	B) 1987
C) 2000	D) 2010

Answer : B

- ✓ Dr Manmohan Singh received 'Padma Vibhushan', the second-highest civilian honour of India in the year 1987.

Q. Who has been granted Honorary Membership of the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC) ?

A) Sachin Tendulkar	B) Ricky Ponting
C) Shane Warne	D) Michael Clarke

Answer : A

- ✓ Sachin Tendulkar, a legendary Indian cricketer, was awarded Honorary Membership of the Melbourne Cricket Club (MCC), a prestigious recognition given by one of Australia's oldest sports clubs and the manager of the Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG).

- ✓ His exceptional contributions to cricket include a remarkable performance at the MCG, where he has scored 449 runs in five Tests, with an average of 44.90, a century, and three fifties.
- ✓ Tendulkar's recognition by MCC adds to his earlier accolade of receiving the Order of Australia in 2012, showcasing his global influence in cricket.
- ✓ Sachin Ramesh Tendulkar is the global brand ambassador for Bank of Baroda.
- ✓ Sachin Tendulkar is the first sportsperson who has won the Bharat Ratna award.
- ✓ Sachin Tendulkar is also the youngest person to get the Bharat Ratna award.
- ✓ Sachin Tendulkar is a former Indian Cricket player known as "The God of cricket".
- ✓ He was awarded Bharat Ratna in 2014 along with C. N. R. Rao.
- ✓ Playing It My Way is the autobiography of former Indian cricket player Sachin Tendulkar.

Q. Who is the youngest woman in the world to climb the seven tallest peaks on the seven continents of the Earth?

A) Anshu Jamsenpa	B) Premlata Agarwal
C) Malavath Purna	D) Kaamya Karthikeyan

Answer : D

- ✓ Kaamya Karthikeyan: youngest girl to scale 7 highest peaks in world.
- ✓ 17-year-old school girl Kaamya Karthikeyan became the youngest female in the world to conquer the highest peaks on the seven continents of the earth.
- ✓ By climbing Vinson Massif in Antarctica along with her father Commander S. Karthikeyan on 24th December 2024
- ✓ She completed the challenge of climbing the highest mountain peaks in Asia (Mount Everest), Africa (Mount Kilimanjaro), Europe (Mount Elbrus), Australia (Mount Kosciuszko), South America (Mount Aconcagua) and North America (Mount Denali).

Q. Kilauea Volcano is located in which of the following places?

A) Hawaii, USA	B) Indonesia
C) Iceland	D) Philippines

Answer : A

- ✓ One of the world's most active volcanoes Hawaii's Kilauea is erupting again.
- ✓ About Kilauea Volcano:
- ✓ It is located in the southern part of Hawaii's Big Island, within Hawai'i Volcanoes National Park, U.S.A.

Q. What is the theme of the tabulex of the 2025 Republic Day Celebration?

- A) Participation of the common people
- B) We the People of India
- C) Life of Gandhi
- D) Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas

Answer : D

- ✓ The Union Ministry of Defence has chosen 'Swarnim Bharat: Virasat aur Vikas' as the theme of tableaux of the states/Union Territories and central government ministries/departments for the 2025 Republic Day celebration in New Delhi.
- ✓ The theme was decided by the ministry in consultation with the states and the Union Territories.
- ✓ The Republic Day celebration is held on the Kartavya path (earlier known as Rajpath) in New Delhi.

- Q.** Noted Malayalam writer and Jnanpith award winner M T Vasudevan Nair has passed away recently. He was awarded the Jnanpith award, India's highest literary honour in which year?
- A) 2002 B) 1995
- C) 1988 D) 2010

- ✓ MT Vasudevan Nair, legendary Malayalam writer and filmmaker, passes away at 91
- ✓ Madath Thekkepaattu Vasudevan Nair popularly known as M. T., was an Indian author, screenplay writer and film director.
- ✓ He was a prolific and versatile writer in modern Malayalam literature, and was one of the masters of post-Independence Indian literature.
- ✓ He won the National Film Award for Best Screenplay four times, for: Oru Vadakkan Veeragatha (1989), Kadavu (1991), Sadayam (1992), and Parinayam (1994), which is the most by anyone in the screenplay category.
- ✓ In 1995 he was awarded the highest literary award in India, Jnanpith, for his overall contribution to Malayalam literature.
- ✓ In 2005, India's third highest civilian honour, Padma Bhushan, was awarded to him.

- Answer : B

- Q.** Consider the following statements regarding Kaveri Engine:

- Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- Answer : C

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- ✓ It is developed by the Gas Turbine Research Establishment under the Defence Research and Development Organisation.
- ✓ Features
- ✓ The current dry version of the Kaveri engine produces approximately 49-51 kN of thrust.
- ✓ This thrust level is suitable for UAV applications like the Ghatak, India's stealth UCAV program. The DRDO plans to integrate an afterburner to increase the thrust to 73-75 kN for more demanding scenarios.
- ✓ The Kaveri engine has undergone extensive ground testing, modifications, and enhancements over the years.
- ✓ It has been tested in high-altitude simulations in Russia and ground trials in India.
- ✓ Significance : This signifies a major step for India's self-reliance in aero-engine technology, particularly for unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) like the Ghatak stealth UCAV program.

Q. Kanha, Bandhavgarh and Pench Tiger Reserves are located in which of the following States?

A) Madhya Pradesh	B) Assam
C) Gujarat	D) West Bengal

Answer : A

- ✓ The Madhya Pradesh government has announced the translocation of 15 tigers to the states of Rajasthan, Chhattisgarh, and Odisha.
- ✓ This initiative involves 12 tigresses and 3 tigers, subject to approval from the Central Government.
- ✓ The tigers will be relocated from the Bandhavgarh, Pench, and Kanha Tiger Reserves.
- ✓ About Kanha Tiger Reserve (KTR)
- ✓ Kanha Tiger Reserve, also known as Kanha National Park, is the largest national park in Madhya Pradesh.
- ✓ Location: Spread across Mandla and Balaghat districts, nestled in the Maikal range of Satpuras, forming part of the Central Indian Highlands.
- ✓ History: It was established as a national park on June 1, 1955, and Declared a Tiger Reserve in 1973.
- ✓ About Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve
- ✓ Located in the Umaria district of Madhya Pradesh, Bandhavgarh Tiger Reserve lies between the Vindhyan and Satpura ranges.
- ✓ History: It was declared a national park in 1968 and became a Tiger Reserve in 1993.
- ✓ About Pench Tiger Reserve
- ✓ Pench Tiger Reserve spans the Seoni and Chhindwara districts in Madhya Pradesh and extends into the Nagpur district in Maharashtra.

Q. Recently the Bald Eagle has been officially declared the national bird of which country?

- A) Sri Lanka
- B) France
- C) Argentina
- D) USA

Answer : D

- ✓ President Joe Biden signed a landmark law officially designating the bald eagle as the national bird of the United States.
- ✓ This decision corrects a long-standing oversight, as the bald eagle has been a symbol of American strength and freedom for nearly 250 years, but it was never formally recognized as the national bird in U.S. law.

- ✓ The cost of the project will be shared by the center and the states in a 90:10 ratio.
- ✓ The central government will provide Rs.39,317 crore of which Rs 36,290 crore will be in the form of grant and Rs 3,027 crore as loan.
- ✓ The rest of the amount will be contributed by the two states.
- ✓ The project seeks to transfer surplus water from Ken river to Betwa through the construction of Daudhan Dam and a canal linking the two rivers, the Lower Orr Project, Kotha Barrage -and Bina Complex Multipurpose Project.
- ✓ It will generate 103 MW of hydel power and 27 MW of solar power.

Q. On which day is the World Meditation Day observed?

- A) 19 December
B) 20 December
C) 21 December
D) 18 December

Answer : C

- ✓ UN Designates 21st of December as World Meditation Day.
- ✓ The world will observe 21st December 2024 as the first World Meditation Day.
- ✓ The United Nations designated 21st December as World Meditation Day in a resolution passed by the United Nations General Assembly on 29 November 2024.
- ✓ As part of World Meditation Day, a special programme was organised by the Permanent Mission of India at the United Nations headquarters in New York, the United States of America, on 20 December 2024.
- ✓ Renowned Indian spiritual leader and founder of the Art of Living Foundation, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar, was the chief guest at the special programme, and he conducted a live, global meditation session.
- ✓ The theme of the first World Meditation Day is “Inner Peace, Global Harmony”.

Q. Which company in India manufactures the K9 Vajra-T - Self-Propelled Tracked Artillery Guns?

- A) Larsen and Toubro
B) Krishna Defence & Allied Industries Ltd
C) Kalyani Strategic Systems Limited
D) Bharat Electronics Limited

Answer : A

- ✓ Union Ministry of Defence (MoD) has signed a contract with the Indian company Larsen and Toubro(L&T) to buy 100 K9 VAJRA-T Self-Propelled Tracked Artillery Guns for the Indian Army at the cost of Rs 7628.70 crore.
- ✓ This is the second deal for the K9 Vajra --T Artillery Gun with the L&T. In 2017, the MoD signed a Rs 4366 crore deal with L&T to procure 100 Artillery Guns.
- ✓ About the K9 VAJRA-T Artillery Guns
- ✓ The K9 Vajra-T Artillery Guns is an indigenous version of the South Korean mobile howitzer (K9) developed by the Samsung Techwin company, now known as Hanwha Defence.
- ✓ The Artillery Gun has been modified according to the needs of the Indian Army and has been co-produced by Larsen and Toubro Heavy Engineering and Hanwha Defence in India.
- ✓ The modified Artillery Gun is called K9 Vajra -T.
- ✓ The K9 Vajra-T Gun is being produced at the Talegaon plant of the L&T near Pune, Maharashtra.
- ✓ K9 Vajra -T is the first Artillery Gun produced by a private Indian company for the Indian Army.
- ✓ Features of the Vajra-T Artillery Guns
- ✓ The Vajrat-T Artillery Gun is a shoot-and-scoot type of artillery gun. The Indian Army normally uses towed artillery guns, which are attached to a vehicle and towed to a battlefield.
- ✓ The Vajra-T is a self-propelled artillery gun equipped with a 1,000-horsepower engine. It can move at over 60 km per hour and travel up to 450 km.
- ✓ The gun has a 155 mm/52 calibre ordnance with a maximum firing range of 40 km.

Q. 'Order of Mubarak Al-Kabeer', which was recently awarded to the Prime Minister of India, is the highest national award of:

- A) Saudi Arabia B) Kuwait
C) Indonesia D) Bangladesh

Answer : B

- ✓ Recently, the Prime Minister of India was awarded the Wisam Mubarak al-Kabeer, or the Order of Mubarak the Great, by Sheikh Meshal Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, the Amir of Kuwait.
- ✓ It is the highest national award of Kuwait.
- ✓ This is the 20th international honour given to Mr. Modi by a country.
- ✓ It is conferred by the Kuwaiti government on Heads of State, Sovereigns of foreign countries, and on members of foreign royal families as a sign of friendship and goodwill.
- ✓ Other recipients: Queen Elizabeth II of England, former American Presidents George HW Bush and Bill Clinton, King Salman of Saudi Arabia, former French President Nicolas Sarkozy.

Q. Which country has officially extended its visa exemption for 30 days Indian nationals until December 31, 2026?

- A) Indonesia
B) Malaysia
C) Maldives
D) Nepal

Answer : B

- ✓ Indians can travel to Malaysia without a visa for 30 days until Dec 2026.
- ✓ Malaysia has officially extended its visa exemption for Indian nationals until December 31, 2026, allowing them to visit the country without a visa for up to 30 days.
- ✓ This announcement was made by Datuk Awang Alik Jeman, the Secretary-General of the Home Ministry, who emphasized that the extension aligns with Malaysia's 2025 ASEAN chairmanship and the preparations for Visit Malaysia Year 2026
- ✓ Indian passport holders can visit Malaysia without a visa from December 1, 2023 to December 31, 2026. This visa-free entry allows for a stay of up to 30 days per visit.

Q. Consider the following statements with reference to the Quantum Satellite:

1. It is a communications satellite that uses quantum physics to secure its signals.
2. It aims to protect against threats from quantum computing.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ India aims to launch a quantum satellite for quantum communications within 2-3 years.
- ✓ Quantum Satellite
- ✓ Definition: A quantum satellite is a communications satellite that uses quantum physics to secure its signals.
- ✓ Purpose:
- ✓ Enhance Signal Security: Protect against threats from quantum computing.
- ✓ Facilitate Quantum Key Distribution (QKD): Enable unbreakable encryption through QKD
- ✓ National Quantum Mission (NQM):
- ✓ Objective: The NQM is a program by the Department of Science & Technology designed to accelerate the use of quantum physics in developing advanced communication and sensing systems.

- ✓ Shyam Bengal also taught at the Film and Television Institute of India (FTII), Pune between 1966 and 1973.
- ✓ He was the chairperson of the FTII from 1980-83 and again in 1989-92.
- ✓ Awards and Honours for Shyam Benegal
- ✓ He was honoured with India's highest film award DadaSaheb Phalke Award in 2005.
- ✓ He received 18 National Film Awards
- ✓ He was honoured with India's third-highest civilian award Padma Bhushan in 1991
- ✓ He was honoured with India's fourth highest civilian award Padma Shri in 1976.
- ✓ He was also a member of the jury at the 31st Moscow International Film Festival in 2009.
- ✓ His film Manthan based on Varghese Kurien's milk cooperative movement in Anand, Gujarat, starring Smita Patil, Naseeruddin Shah, and Girish Karnad, was restored and screened at the Cannes Classics segment in the Cannes Film Festival in 2024.
- ✓ Satyajit Ray is considered to be the pioneer of parallel cinema in India with his 'Pather Panchali'. Shyam Benegal's Ankur film is considered a new landmark in parallel cinema.

Q. Who has been appointed as the 9th Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission by the President of India?

A) Justice Arun Kumar Mishra	B) Justice V Ramasubramanian
C) Justice K.G. Balakrishnan	D) Justice H. L. Dattu

Answer : B

- ✓ President Droupadi Murmu appointed former Supreme Court judge V Ramasubramanian as the 9th Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission (NHRC) .
- ✓ President Droupadi Murmu also appointed Priyank Kanoongo and Dr. Justice Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi (Retd.) as Members of the NHRC.
- ✓ The post of the NHRC Chairperson has been lying vacant since the completion of the term of the 8th Chairperson of NHRC, Justice (ret'd) Arun Kumar Mishra on 1 June 2024.
- ✓ Justice (ret'd) V Balasubramanian will succeed Vijaya Bharathi Sayani, who was performing the duty of acting chairperson of the NHRC.
- ✓ Under the provisions of the Protection of Human Rights Act 1993, the government of India established the National Human Rights Commission of India on 12 October 1993.
- ✓ According to the Protection of Human Rights Act 1993 as amended in 2019 the Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission and its members are appointed by the President of India on the recommendation of a Selection Committee
- ✓ The Prime Minister heads the Selection Committee.
- ✓ The NHRC consists of a Chairperson who has been a retired Chief Justice of the Supreme Court or a retired Judge of the Supreme Court.
- ✓ Terms of the NHRC Chairperson and Members
- ✓ Three years or seventy years whichever is earlier.

Q. 'Thrissur Pooram', festival belongs to which one of the following States?

A) Kerala	B) Meghalaya
C) Odisha	D) Karnataka

Answer : A

- ✓ About Thrissur Pooram:
- ✓ It is a grand festival showcasing Kerala's cultural and spiritual essence.
- ✓ It is celebrated annually in the Malayalam month of Medam (April-May) at the Thekkinkadu Maidanam in Thrissur.
- ✓ Often referred to as the "mother of all Poorams", it is one of the largest temple festivals in Kerala.

- ✓ It was initiated by Raja Rama Varma, famously known as Sakthan Thampuran, the Maharaja of Cochin (1790–1805).

Q. Who was appointed Chairperson of the United Nations Internal Justice Council (IJC) for a term ending on November 12, 2028?

- A) Justice Madan B. Lokur B) Justice Bhuvneshwar Prasad
C) Justice Lalit Mohan D) Justice K Vinod Chandran

Answer : A

- ✓ Former Supreme Court judge Justice Madan B. Lokur was appointed Chairperson of the United Nations Internal Justice Council (IJC) for a term ending on November 12, 2028.
- ✓ It was established by the UN General Assembly as part of the new internal justice system in order to help ensure independence, professionalism and accountability in the administration of the justice system of the United Nations.
- ✓ The IJC members are appointed by the Secretary General.
- ✓ It is composed of five members consisting of

Q. Which country won the Women's T20 Under 19 Asia Cup 2024?

- A) India B) Bangladesh
C) South Africa D) Australia

Answer : A

- ✓ India clinched the inaugural Women's U-19 Asia Cup by defeating Bangladesh by 41 runs in the final on December 22, 2024, at Bayuemas Oval, Kuala Lumpur.
- ✓ India set a total of 117 runs, with G Trisha scoring a significant 52 runs
- ✓ About the inaugural ACC Women's U19 Asia Cup
- ✓ The inaugural ACC Women's U19 Asia Cup 2024 was organised by the cricket's governing body in Asia, the Asian Cricket Council in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia from 15-22 December 2024. The tournament was played in T20 format.
- ✓ Six teams - Malaysia, India, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Nepal participated in the tournament and were divided into two groups

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar:

1. It is awarded annually to children for exceptional achievements in Social Service, Sports, and Environment.
2. It is awarded to a child who is above the age of 5 years and not exceeding 18 years.
3. The award consists of a cash prize of Rs. 1, 00,000/- (one lakh), a citation and a certificate to each awardee.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 and 2 only B) 2 and 3 only
C) 1, 2 and 3 D) None

Answer : C

- ✓ The President of India will present the Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar to 17 children on December 26.
- ✓ It is organized to celebrate the energy, determination, ability, zeal and enthusiasm of our children.
- ✓ It is the highest civilian honor for children in India.

- ✓ The Pradhan Mantri Rashtriya Bal Puraskar organized by The Ministry of Women and Child Development Government of India
- ✓ It is awarded annually to children for exceptional achievements in seven categories:
- ✓ Art & Culture, Bravery, Innovation, Science & Technology, Social Service, Sports, and Environment.
- ✓ A child should be an Indian Citizen.
- ✓ A child above the age of 5 years and not exceeding 18 years (as of 31st July of respective year).
- ✓ The act/incident/achievement should have been within 2 years of the last date of receipt of application/nomination for the year of consideration.
- ✓ The award consists of a cash prize of Rs. 1, 00,000/- (one lakh), a citation and a certificate to each awardee.

Q. Who has been appointed as the new Governor of Manipur?

A) Suresh Kumar	B) Justice Anita Desai
C) Arvind Gupta	D) Ajay Kumar Bhalla

Answer : D

- ✓ President Droupadi Murmu appointed five new governors of the state including the former Union Home Secretary Ajay Kumar Bhalla as the governor of the troubled state of Manipur.
- ✓ The Governors of the five states were appointed by the President on 24 December 2024.
- ✓ Ajay Kumar Bhalla will take over from Assam Governor Lakshman Prasad Acharya who was holding the additional charge of Manipur.
- ✓ The 1984 Assam- Meghalaya batch (retd) IAS Ajay Kumar Bhalla is the longest-serving Home Secretary of the country Bhalla, retired in August 2024 after completing his five years tenure.

Q. Who has been appointed as the new Governor of Kerala?

A) Vishwanath Arlekar	B) Ajay Manikrao Khanwilkar
C) Navniti Prasad Singh	D) TB Radhakrishnan

Answer : A

- ✓ List of newly appointed Governors
- ✓ Bihar -Arif Mohammed Khan
- ✓ Kerala- Vishwanath Arlekar
- ✓ Manipur - Ajay Kumar Bhalla
- ✓ Mizoram- Retd. General Vijay Kumar Singh
- ✓ Odisha - Hari Babu Kambhampati

Q. Which city in India will host the 12th World Para Athletics Championships in 2025?

A) Bengaluru	B) Hyderabad
C) New Delhi	D) Chennai

Answer : C

- ✓ India to host 12th World Para Athletics Championships in 2025.
- ✓ India will, for the first time, host the prestigious World Para Athletics Championships in 2025.
- ✓ Jawahar Lal Nehru Stadium, in the Indian capital city of New Delhi, will be the venue of the 12th World Para Athletics Championships, to be held in September /October 2025.
- ✓ This is the second major tournament to be hosted by New Delhi in 2025, as it will also host the 2025 Boxing Cup Final & 3rd World Boxing Congress for the first time.
- ✓ The World Para Athletics announced the schedule of the 2025 World Para Athletics Championships and the World Para Athletics Grand Prix calendar 2025 on 19 December 2024.

- ✓ Additionally, two plants with a capacity of 2 MTPA each are under construction in Krishnapatnam and Jodhpur, expected to be completed within the next 8-12 months. Penna Cement also owns five bulk cement terminals in Kolkata, Gopalpur, Karaikal, Kochi, and Colombo (Sri Lanka)
- ✓ Ambuja Cements holds 58.08% in Sanghi Industries and 67.53% in Penna Cement Industries

Q. Pawan Hans has secured a 10-year contract worth over Rs 2,000 crore to supply four Dhruv NG helicopters, manufactured by which company?

- A) Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) B) TATA advanced systems limited (TASL)
C) AgniKul Cosmos D) Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL)

Answer : D

- ✓ Pawan Hans secures Rs 2,000 cr contract for ONGC offshore helicopter ops.
- ✓ Government-owned helicopter service provider Pawan Hans Ltd has secured a 10-year contract worth over Rs 2,000 crore to supply four Dhruv NG helicopters, manufactured by Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd (HAL), to the Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC).
- ✓ This contract, awarded through a global bidding process, will see Pawan Hans deploy Dhruv NG helicopters, the civilian version of HAL's Advanced Light Helicopter (ALH) Mk III.
- ✓ The Dhruv NG features advanced technology, including Shakti engines and a civil-certified glass cockpit

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Kisan Kavach:

1. It is an anti-pesticide bodysuit designed to protect farmers from the harmful effects of pesticide exposure.
2. It is developed by the Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) for Science and Technology unveiled Kisan Kavach.
- ✓ It is first-of-its-kind anti-pesticide bodysuit designed to protect farmers from the harmful effects of pesticide exposure.
- ✓ The suit is intended to protect farm labourers from imbibing the pesticides they spray. Several of the common pesticides are potential neurotoxins and detrimental to health.
- ✓ It is developed by the Biotechnology Research and Innovation Council (BRIC-inStem), Bangalore, in collaboration with Sepio Health Pvt. Ltd.
- ✓ The kit consists of a trouser, pullover, and a face-cover made of 'oxime fabric' that can chemically breakdown any of the common pesticides that get sprayed onto cloth or body during spraying operations.
- ✓ This prevents chemicals from leaching into the skin. The price per kit is ₹4,000.
- ✓ Working: This Kisan Kavach fabric can deactivate pesticides upon contact through nucleophilic mediated hydrolysis, thereby preventing pesticide-induced toxicity and lethality.

Q. The world's first tagged Gangetic River Dolphin was released in which river of India?

- A) Ganga River in Bihar B) Gomti River in Uttar Pradesh
C) Kulsi River in Assam D) Mahanadi River in Odisha

Answer : C

- ✓ First Ever Tagging of Gangetic Dolphin in Assam Under Project Dolphin.
- ✓ In a landmark effort in wildlife conservation, a male Gangetic Dolphin has been satellite tagged at Kulsi, a tributary of the Brahmaputra river in Assam.
- ✓ It was for the first time in India and the world that the Gangetic River Dolphin was tagged.
- ✓ The tagging of India's national aquatic animal, the Gangetic River Dolphin, is part of Project Dolphin of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change to track the movement pattern of the highly endangered species.
- ✓ The data collected from the tagged dolphin will help conservationists better understand the species' movement range and habitat, which will help them devise a more robust conservation plan.
- ✓ Tagging of the Dolphin
- ✓ The tagging of the dolphin was an initiative of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change. It was implemented by the Wildlife Institute of India, Dehradun, in collaboration with the Assam Forest Department and Aaranyak, a prominent biodiversity conservation group in Assam.
- ✓ The funding for the initiative came from the National CAMPA (Compensatory Afforestation Fund Management and Planning Authority).
- ✓ About Gangetic Dolphins
- ✓ The Gangetic River Dolphin (scientific name *Platanista gangetica*) is also known as the blind dolphin, Ganges susu or Hihu's.
- ✓ According to the Wildlife Institute of India, there are around 4000 River Dolphins in India, of which around 2000 are found in Uttar Pradesh.
- ✓ The River Dolphin is not a fish but a mammal.
- ✓ They are found in certain stretches of India's Ganga-Brahmaputra-Barak river system, Nepal's Karnali, Sapti Koshi, and Narayani rivers, and Bangladesh's Meghna, Karnaphuli, and Sangu rivers.
- ✓ The Gangetic River Dolphins are mainly found in the mainstream of the Ganga River and its tributaries, Ghaghra, Kosi, Gandak, Chambal, Rupnarayan, and Yamuna.
- ✓ India's first centre for research on conserving the endangered Gangetic river dolphin, National Dolphin Research Centre (NDRC), has finally become a reality. The institute, located close to Ganga river in Patna, was inaugurated on March 4, 2024 by Bihar Chief Minister Nitish Kumar.
- ✓ Ganga River Dolphin Day is celebrated on 5 October every year in India.
- ✓ It was on this day in 2009 when the Ganga River Dolphin was formally adopted as the National Aquatic Animal.
- ✓ the animal is popularly referred to as the 'Susu'.
- ✓ Conservation status:
- ✓ IUCN: Endangered
- ✓ CITES: Appendix I
- ✓ Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972: Schedule-I

Q. Ravichandran Ashwin, who announced his retirement from International Cricket, played for which state in the Ranji Trophy?

A) Karnataka	B) Tamil Nadu
C) Uttar Pradesh	D) Gujarat

Answer : B

- ✓ Ravichandran Ashwin retire from International Cricket
- ✓ One of the all-time greats of India, Ravichandran Ashwin, announced his retirement from all forms of international cricket on 18 December 2024.
- ✓ The unexpected retirement announcement came after the third test of the 2024-25 Border Gavaskar Trophy in Brisbane ended in a draw.
- ✓ However, Ashwin said that he would play club cricket.
- ✓ He will be available to play in the 2025 Indian Premier League (IPL) for Chennai Super King and for the Dindigul Dragons team in the Tamil Nadu Premier League.
- ✓ About Ravichandran Ashwin's Cricket Debut

- ✓ Ashwin started his first-class career for Tamil Nadu in a Ranji Trophy Match against Haryana in Chennai in December 2006.
- ✓ His first match for India was a One Day International (ODI) against Sri Lanka at Harare (Zimbabwe) in June 2010.
- ✓ His first Test match for India was against Sri Lanka in Delhi in June 2011.
- ✓ Ashwin's Record in International Cricket
- ✓ Ravichandran Ashwin finished his career with 537 wickets in 106 Test matches.
- ✓ He is India's second-highest wicket-taker in Test matches after Anil Kumble's 619 wickets.
- ✓ He is the third-highest wicket-taking spin bowler in the world after Sri Lanka's Muthiah Muralidaran's 800 wickets and Anil Kumble.
- ✓ He claimed five or more wickets in a Test inning on 37 occasions. The world record is held by Muthiah Muralidaran, who did it 67 times.
- ✓ He shares the record with Muralidharan for 11 Man of the Series awards in the Test series.
- ✓ Ashwin took 765 wickets across all three formats (Test, ODIs, T20s) for India after Anil Kumble's 953.
- ✓ In 2015, Ashwin was awarded the Arjuna award by the Government of India
- ✓ R Ashwin's autobiography will be titled "I Have the Streets: A Kutti Cricket Story".
- ✓ The autobiography is written by cricket author Sidarth Monga

Q. Which country recently joined the International Solar Alliance by signing the ISA Framework Agreement?

A) Armenia	B) Georgia
C) Nigeria	D) Moldova

Answer : D

- ✓ Moldova has joined the International Solar Alliance (ISA) by signing the ISA Framework Agreement in New Delhi, reinforcing its commitment to renewable energy.
- ✓ Co-founded by India and France during COP21 in 2015, the ISA aims to address challenges in solar energy financing and technology.
- ✓ With Moldova's inclusion, the ISA continues its global expansion, uniting countries to mobilize USD 1,000 billion in solar energy investments by 2030, fostering sustainability and energy security worldwide

Q. Who won the 2024 FIFA Male Player Award?

A) Vinícius Junior	B) Lionel Messi
C) Diego Maradona	D) Zinedine Zidane

Answer : A

- ✓ Brazilian and Real Madrid football player Vinicius Junior won the 2024 FIFA Best Male Footballer of the Year award.
- ✓ Spain and Barcelona midfielder Aitana Bonmatí won the FIFA Best Female Player award.
- ✓ The winners of the 2024 FIFA Awards were announced and felicitated at a function held in Doha, Qatar, on 17 December 2024.
- ✓ FIFA President Gianni Infantino gave the awards to the winners.
- ✓ FIFA awards honours male and female players and coaches for their performance in the current football season.
- ✓ FIFA is the world governing body of football.
- ✓ 2024 FIFA Award Winners
- ✓ Best FIFA Women's Player – Aitana Bonmatí of Spain and Barcelona football club of Spain.
- ✓ Best FIFA Men's Player – Vinícius Junior of Spain and Real Madrid football club of Spain.
- ✓ Best FIFA Women's Goalkeeper – Alyssa Naeher of the United States of America.
- ✓ Best FIFA Men's Goalkeeper – Emiliano Martínez of Argentina and English club Aston Villa.

Q. Who won the 2024 FIFA female player award?

- A) Aitana Bonmatí
B) Lauren James
C) Alexandra Popp
D) Caroline Graham Hansen

Answer : A

- ✓ The Spanish midfielder Aitana Bonmati won the Best FIFA Female Award for the second consecutive time.
- ✓ She was part of the Spanish team which won the 2023 FIFA Women's World Cup.
- ✓ She also was part of the Spanish national team that won the 2024 UEFA Women's Nations League.
- ✓ She also led her Barcelona football club to the 2024 UEFA Women's Champions League title.

Q. Which Indian state has recently been declared by UNESCO as the top destination for heritage tourism?

- A) Uttar Pradesh
B) Madhya Pradesh
C) Rajasthan
D) West Bengal

Answer : D

- ✓ UNESCO has declared West Bengal as a top destination for heritage tourism.
- ✓ West Bengal Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee, UNESCO has declared the state as a top destination for heritage tourism, asserting that the sector generated employment for lakhs of youths.
- ✓ We are also giving emphasis on religious tourism by developing some of the iconic places of worship like the Dakshineswar temple and the Kalighat temple,”
- ✓ The Gangasagar Mela, an important religious gathering, has gained attention as one of the largest pilgrimages in India, second only to the Kumbh Mela

Q. Who is the author of the book titled Freedom: Memoirs 1954-2021?

- A) Angela Merkel
B) Aenne Brauksiepe
C) Edelgard Bulmahn
D) Svenja Schulze

Answer : A

- ✓ Freedom: Book explores ex-German chancellor's journey, record, and vision.
- ✓ FREEDOM: Memoirs 1954-2021
- ✓ Author: Angela Merkel with Beate Baumann.
- ✓ "Never explain, never complain," is a maxim supposedly espoused by the British royal family.
- ✓ As Angela Merkel writes in her exhaustive yet surprisingly fast-paced autobiography, Freedom, it also became a phrase that she would repeat to herself during her 16 years as German chancellor, from 2005 until she stepped down in December 2021.

Q. Who is the author of the book titled The Delhi Model?

- A) Bhavik Sarkhedhi
B) Jasmine Shah
C) Amish Tripathi
D) Suhana Bhambhani

Answer : B

- ✓ AAP Leader Jasmine Shah's Book 'The Delhi Model' To Release On December 15
- ✓ Published by Penguin Random House India.
- ✓ "The Delhi Model: A Bold New Road Map to Building a Developed India', chronicles the stunning rise of a governance model that is redefining the future of India's democracy.
- ✓ 'The Delhi Model', for the first time in independent India, brought the issue of transforming public education and healthcare from the margins to the centre of Indian politics.

Q.

- ### A) Saudi Arabia

B) Azerbaijan

C) Brazil

D) South Africa

Answer : A

- ✓ 16th COP of the UNCCD Commences in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.
- ✓ The 16th session of the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) commenced in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia on 2 December 2024.
- ✓ The COP to the UNFCCC is held every two years, and the 15th COP was held in May 2022 in Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire.
- ✓ The UNCCD is one of three global agreements reached at the 1992 Rio Earth Summit: the United Nations Framework Convention on (https://unfccc.int/)Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD).
- ✓ The 16th Conference of Parties of the UNCCD is being organised by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification and is hosted by the Saudi Arabian Government.
- ✓ The theme of the 16th COP of the UNCCD is Our Land. Our Future.
- ✓ The Indian delegation at the 16th CoP of the UNCCD is being jointly led by the Union Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change, Bhupendra Yadav and the chief minister of Haryana, Nayab Singh Saini.
- ✓ Bhupendra Yadav planted a tree sapling at the Indian Embassy in Riyadh as per the government's India's "Ek Ped Maa Ke Naam" initiative.
- ✓ What is UNCCD?
- ✓ The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) is the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED), also known as the Earth Summit, organised by the United Nations Environment Programme in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil from 3-14 June 1992.
- ✓ The Convention entered into force on 26 December 1996 and currently has 197 parties.
- ✓ The UNCCD aims to stop desertification and land degradation worldwide. Land degradation and increasing desertification are among the major causes of biodiversity destruction and climate change.
- ✓ Over 120 countries have set a Land degradation neutrality target under the Changwon initiative.
- ✓ What is the Conference of Parties(COP)?
- ✓ The Conference of Parties (COP) refers to the countries/ organisations that have signed and ratified the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification.
- ✓ At present, 196 countries and the European Union are parties to the UNFCCC.

Q.

- ## A) Our Land. Our Future

B) Investing in a livable planet for all

C) Together for Implementation

D) Uniting the world to tackle climate change

Answer : A

- ✓ The theme of the 16th COP of the UNCCD is Our Land. Our Future.

Q.

- A) Belem, Brazil

B) Baku, Azerbaijan

C) Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

D) Abidjan, Cote d'Ivoire

Answer : B

- Q.** Which country will hold the 30th session of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC)?

D) Baku, Azerbaijan

Q. Where was the 16th session of the Conference of Parties (COP) of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) held?

D) Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Q. India conducts the Harimau Shakti military exercise with which country?

D) Vietnam

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Q. Devendra Fadnavis, who has become the Chief Minister of Maharashtra for the third time , belongs to which political party?

A) Shiv Sena

D) Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)

C) Congress Party

D) Samajwadi Party

Answer : B

- ✓ BJP's Devendra Fadnavis sworn in as Maharashtra CM for the third time.
- ✓ Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) Devendra Gangadharrao Fadnavis was sworn in as the Chief Minister of Maharashtra for the third time on 5th December 2024.
- ✓ In a ceremony held at the Azad Maidan of Mumbai, Governor C P Radhakrishnan administered the oath of office to Devendra Fadnavis.
- ✓ He succeeded his alliance partner Eknath Shinde of the Shiv Sena as the new Chief Minister of Maharashtra.
- ✓ He is the second Brahmin after Shiv Sena's Manohar Joshi to be the Chief Minister of Maharashtra.
- ✓ Along with Devendra Fadnavis, two deputy Chief Ministers, Eknath Shinde of Shiv Sena and Ajit Pawar of the Nationalist Congress Party, were also sworn in .
- ✓ At 44, Fadnavis became the second youngest Chief Minister of Maharashtra after Sharad Pawar, who became the Chief Minister at 38 in 1988.
- ✓ Devendra Fadnavis became the Maharashtra Chief Minister for the first time on 31 October 2014 and remained till 2019
- ✓ First Chief Minister of Maharashtra -Yashwantrao Chavan of the Congress Party.
- ✓ Longest serving Chief Minister - Vasantrao Naik of the Congress party for 11 years and 78 days.
- ✓ Shortest term as Chief Minister: P.K Sawant of Congress Party for 10 days.
- ✓ Devendra Fadnavis won his Nagpur South West assembly seat by over 39,000 votes, defeating Prafulla Gadadhe of the Congress party.
- ✓ BJP emerged as the largest party with 132 seats in the 288 Maharashtra Legislative Assembly.

Q. In which of the following cities was the International Gita Mahotsav held in December 2024?

A) Patna

B) Amritsar

C) Kurukshetra

D) Mumbai

Answer : C

- ✓ The Haryana Governor Bandaru Dattatreya inaugurated the International Gita Mahotsav at Kurukshetra, Haryana, on 5 December 2024.
- ✓ The Haryana Chief Minister Nayab Singh Saini, Lt. General (Retd.) Gurmit Singh, Governor of Uttarakhand, Arif Muhammad Khan, Governor of Kerala and Ms Tabia, Minister for Information, Youth and Culture, Zanzibar, were also present.
- ✓ The 2024 International Gita Mahotsav is being held in Kurukshetra, Haryana, from 28th November -15 December 2024.
- ✓ The annual International Gita Mahotsav is organised by the Kurukshetra Development Board of Haryana Tourism in collaboration with the Government of Haryana.
- ✓ This year, Tanzania, an African country, is the foreign partner country, and Odisha is the State partner.
- ✓ The Haryana government started the Gita Mahotsav in 1989 as a state-wide cultural and religious event. Gradually, it became popular, attracting thousands of people from all parts of India.
- ✓ About Srimad Bhagwat Gita
- ✓ Srimad Bhagwat Gita (Song of God) is considered one of the important religious texts of Hinduism, along with the Vedas and the Upanishads.
- ✓ The Gita contains the dialogue between Lord Krishna and Pandavas Arjuna on the first day of the Mahabharat battle fought in Kurukshetra. Lord Krishna, the Avatara of Lord Vishnu, was Arjuna's charioteer during the war.

Q. Which country was the partner country in the 2024 International Gita Mahotsav?

- A) Kenya
- B) Nigeria
- C) Tanzania
- D) Ethiopia

Answer : C

- ✓ This year, Tanzania, an African country, is the foreign partner country, and Odisha is the State partner.

Q. Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah has been elected as the first woman President of which country?

- A) Nigeria
- B) Namibia
- C) Ethiopia
- D) Egypt

Answer : B

- ✓ Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah elected 5th & first female President of Namibia.
- ✓ Namibia made history when it elected its first woman president, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah.
- ✓ The current Vice President will succeed the interim President, Nangolo Mbumba.
- ✓ Once sworn in, Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah will be the second woman to be the President of Africa.
- ✓ Samia Suluhu Hassan of Tanzania is currently Africa's only female President
- ✓ The main candidate was incumbent Vice-President Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah of the ruling SWAPO (South West Africa People's Organisation) political party.
- ✓ The President is directly elected by the people, and the term of the President is five years.
- ✓ About Namibia
- ✓ Capital: Windhoek
- ✓ Currency: Namibian Dollar

Q. India defeated which team in the final to win the 11th Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup 2024?

- A) Bangladesh
- B) Thailand
- C) China
- D) Pakistan

Answer : D

- ✓ India Wins 5th Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup After Defeating Pakistan.
- ✓ The Indian Men's Junior Hockey team crushed arch-rival Pakistan 5-3 in the final of the 11th Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup 2024 to win the Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup title for a record fifth time.
- ✓ The 11th Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup 2024 final was played at Muscat, Oman, on 4th December 2024.
- ✓ This has been a good year for the men's Indian hockey team.
- ✓ India's men's team won a bronze medal at the 2024 Paris Olympics and won the Asian Men's Hockey Champions Trophy in China for the record fifth time.
- ✓ This was the fifth title win for the India team in the Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup. Before their win in the 2024 edition, the Indian team had won the title in 2023, 2015, 2008 and 2004.
- ✓ The 11th Men's Hockey Junior Asia Cup 2024 was also a qualifying event for the upcoming World Men's Hockey Junior World Cup to be held in India in 2025.
- ✓ The title win in Muscat was also a promising start to the career of the legendary former Indian goalkeeper PR Sreejesh as the Men's Hockey team coach.

Q. Who has been selected to receive the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize 2024?

- A) Angela Merkel
- B) Veronica Michelle Bachelet
- C) Malala Yousafzai
- D) Antonio Guterres

Answer : B

- ✓ Veronica Michelle Bachelet, former President of Chile, has been honoured with the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development 2024.
- ✓ Her work in advancing human rights, promoting peace, and advocating for gender equality has earned her this prestigious recognition.
- ✓ The selection was made by a distinguished jury led by Shivshankar Menon, reflecting her global impact in fostering equitable and peaceful development.
- ✓ The Indira Gandhi Prize, or the Indira Gandhi Peace Prize, also known as Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament and Development, is the prestigious award accorded annually by Indira Gandhi Memorial Trust.
- ✓ The prize carries a cash award of 2.5 million Indian rupees and a citation.
- ✓ Awarded for Outstanding contributions in peace

Q. Which rocket was used by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) to launch the European Space Agency's Probe 3 spacecraft?

- A) PSLV C-59
B) PSLV C-61
C) PSLV C-58
D) PSLV C-69

Answer : A

- ✓ ISRO successfully launch ESA Probe 3 Spacecraft using PSLV C-59 Rocket.
- ✓ The Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) successfully launched the European Space Agency (ESA) Probe 3 Spacecraft from the First Launch Pad, Satish Dhawan Space Centre (SDSC-SHAR), Sriharikota Andhra Pradesh, on 5 December 2024.
- ✓ The ESA Probe 3 was launched onboard ISRO's Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV) C-59.
- ✓ The PSLV-C59/PROBA-3 Mission, the 61st flight of PSLV and the 26th using the PSLV-XL configuration will carry ESA's PROBA-3 satellites (~550kg) into a highly elliptical orbit.
- ✓ It was NewSpace India Limited's (NSIL) second successful mission in a fortnight after the launch of the GSAT-20/ GSAT-N2 satellite aboard SpaceX's Falcon 9 rocket.
- ✓ ISRO undertook the mission for NewSpace India Limited (NSIL), which entered into a contract with the ESA to launch the Europa Probe 3 spacecraft using the PSLV rocket.
- ✓ About the ESA Probe 3 Spacecraft
- ✓ The ESA Probe 3 spacecraft is a technology demonstrator of the ESA.
- ✓ The spacecraft has two satellites.
- ✓ It is the world's first precision formation-flying mission in which a pair of satellites will fly together, maintaining a fixed configuration as if they were a single large rigid structure in space.
- ✓ The satellites will study the Sun's corona, the Sun's outermost atmosphere.
- ✓ About the PSLV Rocket
- ✓ The PSLV is an ISRO's medium-lift launch vehicle that can launch satellites weighing up to 1,750 kg into sun-synchronous polar orbits at 600 km altitude.
- ✓ The PSLV C-59 is a third-generation launch vehicle of ISRO and is a four-stage rocket.
- ✓ It is 44.5 meters tall

Q. Which among the following best describes INS Tushil?

- A) It is a torpedo launch and recovery vessel.
B) It is a guided missile frigate.
C) It is a diesel-electric submarine.
D) It is a Kiev-class aircraft carrier.

Answer : B

- ✓ The Indian Navy is set to commission its latest multi-role stealth guided missile frigate, INS Tushil, at Kaliningrad, Russia.

- ✓ About INS Tushil:
- ✓ It is a multi-role stealth guided missile frigate.
- ✓ It is the latest in a series of upgraded Krivak III-class frigates, part of the Russian-designed Project 1135.6.
- ✓ The Indian Navy already operates six ships from this class, including three Talwar-class frigates and three Teg-class follow-ons, all built at Russian shipyards in St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad.
- ✓ INS Tushil, the seventh vessel in this series, is the first of two upgraded frigates under a contract signed in 2016 between the Indian Government, JSC Rosoboronexport, and the Russian defence industry

Q. With reference to the Anna Chakra, consider the following statements:

1. It is a Public Distribution System (PDS) Supply chain optimization tool.
2. It is developed in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) and Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT).
3. It leverages advanced algorithms to identify optimal routes and ensure seamless movement of food grains across India.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- A) Only one
B) Only two
C) All three
D) None

Answer : C

- ✓ Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution launched 'Anna Chakra' and SCAN (Subsidy Claim Application for NFSA) portal.
- ✓ It is a Public Distribution System (PDS) Supply chain optimization tool.
- ✓ It is spearheaded by the Department of Food Public Distribution, which enhances the efficiency of the PDS logistics network across the country.
- ✓ It is developed in collaboration with the World Food Programme (WFP) and Foundation for Innovation and Technology Transfer (FITT), IIT-Delhi.
- ✓ The project leverages advanced algorithms to identify optimal routes and ensure seamless movement of food grains across supply chain nodes.
- ✓ The interstate route optimization tool has been developed for optimization of the PDS movement between the states and it is integrated with the FOIS (Freight Operations Information System) portal of the Railways through Unified Logistics Interface Platform (ULIP).
- ✓ A significant milestone in this effort is the integration of the optimization tool with the PM Gati Shakti platform which now houses geo -locations of FPSs and warehouses across the states.
- ✓ The route optimization assessment has been done for 30 states and the results show tremendous promise with the estimated cost savings of about Rs. 250 Crores per annum.

Q. Which festival in India is also called the Festival of Festivals?

- A) Hornbill Festival
B) Sekrenyi Festival
C) Aoleng Festival
D) Bushu festival

Answer : A

Q. Which famous festival of India is celebrating its 25th year in 2024?

- A) Manipur
B) Nagaland
C) Sikkim
D) Odisha

Answer : B

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi greeted the people of Nagaland on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Hornbill festival.
- ✓ Nagaland's signature tourism and cultural festival, "Hornbill Festival", is celebrating its 25th anniversary in 2024.
- ✓ The Hornbill Festival, also famous as the "Festivals of Festivals", derives its name from the elusive Hornbill bird.
- ✓ The Opening ceremony of the 25th edition of Hornbill festival was held in the Kisama Heritage Village on 1 December 2024 and it was inaugurated by the Chief Minister of Nagaland Neiphiu Rio.
- ✓ This year the international partners of the Hornbill festival are the United Kingdom, United States, Japan, and Peru.
- ✓ The partner state of this year's Hornbill festival is Sikkim.
- ✓ The Hornbill Festival is jointly organised by the State government's Tourism and Art & Culture Department at the Kisama Heritage Village.
- ✓ The 10-day Hornbill festival starts on 1 December and ends on the 10th of December.
- ✓ The festival was named after the Hornbill bird given its association with the socio-cultural life of the Nagas.
- ✓ Theme of 2024 festival: The Hornbill Festival 2024, themed "Cultural Connect," is a grand celebration of Nagaland's rich heritage and cultural diversity.

Q. Which Indian Conservation Project has won the 'Award of Distinction' of the 2024 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation?

- A) Abathsahayeswarar Temple Conservation Project
- B) Vadakkunnathan Temple Conservation Project
- C) Ranganathaswamy Temple Conservation Project
- D) Bhojeshwar Mahadev Temple Conservation Project

Answer : A

- ✓ Abathsahayeswarar Temple & BJPCI Project bag UNESCO Heritage Award.
- ✓ Two Indian heritage conservation projects—the Abathsahayeswarar Temple Conservation Project in Thukkatchi, Tamil Nadu, and the BJPCI Conservation Project of Mumbai, Maharashtra—have won UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2024.
- ✓ These two heritage conservation projects were among eight from the Asia Pacific region that won the 2024 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation.
- ✓ UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation) announced the award winners at its regional office in Bangkok, Thailand, on 6 December 2024.
- ✓ Abathsahayeswarar Temple Conservation Project
- ✓ The Abathsahayeswarar Temple Conservation Project won the Award of Distinction in the UNESCO's Award category.
- ✓ Lord Dakshinamurthy (Lord Shiva) is the presiding deity of the Abathsahayeswarar (Apatsahayeswarar) Temple located in the Thukkatchi village in Thiruvavur District of Tamil Nadu.
- ✓ The Temple was awarded the UNESCO Award of Distinction for using modern engineering expertise and the knowhow of Hindu temple builders, sthapati, for structural conservation.
- ✓ UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation
- ✓ The UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation was established by UNESCO in 2000.
- ✓ The Award recognises the efforts of individuals and organisations in Asia and the Pacific region to restore, conserve, and transform structures and buildings of heritage value.
- ✓ The UNESCO Award has five categories, with the highest being the Award of Excellence. The other award categories are the Award of Distinction, the Award for New Design in Heritage Context, the Award of Merit, and Special Recognition for Sustainable Development.

Q. Which Indian Conservation Project has won the ' Merit Award' of the 2024 UNESCO Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation?

- A) OMNCI Conversation Project B) AIGKZ Conversation Project
C) DKMKI Conversation Project D) BJPCI Conversation Project

Answer : D

- ✓ Award of Merit for BJPCI Conversation Project
- ✓ The BJPCI (Sir Byramjee Jeejeebhoy Parsee Charitable Institution) Conservation project bagged the Merit Award of UNESCO's Asia-Pacific Awards for Cultural Heritage Conservation 2024.
- ✓ The BJPCI school building, built in 1908 in Gothic style, is located in Mumbai, Maharashtra. It was built to promote education amongst the economically weaker sections of society.
- ✓ The restoration work was done during the school's two-month summer break.

Q. Which country has been chosen to Chair the 68th Session of the United Nation Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)?

- A) Russia B) Japan
C) India D) United States

Answer : C

- ✓ Recently, India has been chosen to Chair the 68th Session of the United Nation Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND).
- ✓ It is the principal policy-making body of the United Nations on drug-related matters.
- ✓ Mandate: It is mandated to monitor global drug trends, support Member States in formulating balanced policies, and oversee the implementation of the major international drug conventions.
- ✓ It was established by the resolution of the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) in 1946.
- ✓ It is one of the functional commissions of the ECOSOC and a Governing Body of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC).
- ✓ Members: The CND has 53 member states that are elected by ECOSOC. It is chaired by a Bureau including one member per Regional Group.
- ✓ Headquarter: It is headquartered in Vienna.

Q. Khorlochhu Hydropower Project is located in:

- A) Nepal B) China
C) Bhutan D) Myanmar

Answer : C

- ✓ Tata Power has commenced construction on the Rs 6,900 crore Khorlochhu Hydropower Project in Bhutan, with commissioning expected by 2029.
- ✓ About Khorlochhu Hydropower Project:
- ✓ Situated on the Kholongchhu River in Eastern Bhutan's Trashiyangtse district, the project seeks to meet Bhutan's rising electricity demands and aid India's renewable energy transition.
- ✓ It is the first-ever energy project to be developed through a joint venture (JV) partnership between India and Bhutan.
- ✓ It will be constructed by Khorlochhu Hydro Power Limited (KHPL), a strategic partnership between Bhutan's Druk Green Power Corporation (DGPC) and India's Tata Power.
- ✓ The 600 MW project the project is expected to be commissioned in September 2029.
- ✓ The electricity generated from the Kholongchhu hydroelectric project will be transmitted to the NEWNE grids of Bhutan and India via 400 kV transmission lines.

- ✓ The project is estimated to cost ₹488.14 m (INR 46.32bn), which is being financed under a debt-equity ratio of 70:30. The Government of India is providing DGPC's share of equity.

Q. India's first Integrated Waste Management City-cum-Learning Centre is set to come up at which place?

- A) Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh B) Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh
C) Patna, Bihar D) Jaipur, Rajasthan

Answer : A

- ✓ India's first Integrated Waste Management City-cum-Learning Centre is set to come up in Uttar Pradesh's Gorakhpur by September 2025.
- ✓ The initiative aims to make the city garbage-free and foster sustainable waste management through a circular economy model.
- ✓ Spread across 40 acres in Suthni village, Sahjanwa, this project will process various types of waste while producing charcoal and Bio-CNG

Q. What is the name of India's first indigenous macrolide antibiotic?

- A) Nafithromycin B) Azithromycin
C) Erythromycin D) Clarithromycin

Answer : A

- ✓ Nafithromycin is India's first homegrown macrolide antibiotic, marking a significant milestone in combating antimicrobial resistance (AMR).
- ✓ AMR poses a severe global health threat, contributing to 6 lakh deaths annually in India alone. Developed after 30 years of research, Nafithromycin received ₹8 crore funding from BIRAC under the Biotech Industry Program for Phase 3 trials.
- ✓ This innovation highlights India's progress in antibiotic development and its commitment to addressing the AMR crisis.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Amrit Gyaan Kosh Portal:

1. It is developed by the National Informatics Centre (NIC).
2. It aims to promote self-reliance in governance training.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : B

- ✓ Union Minister of Personnel, Public Grievances & Pensions launched the "Amrit Gyaan Kosh" Portal.
- ✓ It is jointly developed by the Capacity Building Commission and Karmayogi Bharat.
- ✓ It is a platform to promote self-reliance in governance training and strengthen governance training.
- ✓ It is developed on the iGOT platform, and serves as a comprehensive repository of best practices in governance and policy implementation.
- ✓ It aligns with 15 of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), covering critical themes such as health, education, agriculture, and digital governance.

Q. Which Indian has won the 2024 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) Champions of the Earth's Lifetime Achievement Award?

- A) Madhav Gadgil B) Medha Patkar
C) Sunita Narain D) Sumaira Abdulali

Answer : A

- ✓ Ecologist Madhav Gadgil honoured with UNEP Champions of Earth Award.
- ✓ Veteran Indian ecologist Madhav Gadgil has been chosen as one of the six persons/institutions to be honoured with the prestigious 2024 United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) 'Champions of the Earth' award.
- ✓ Madhav Gadgil, along with Brazilian Sonia Guajajara, Lu Qi of China, Amy Bowers Cordalis of the USA, Gabriel Paun of România, and the Egyptian environmental organisation Sekem, has been chosen for this year 'Champions of the Earth' award in various categories.
- ✓ The 'Champions of the Earth' award is considered the United Nation's highest environmental honour.
- ✓ About Madhav Gadgil and his work
- ✓ Madhav Gadgil was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement category of the UNEP's 'Champion of the Earth' Award.
- ✓ Madhav Gadgil was the Chairman of the Western Ghats Ecology Expert Panel, set up by the Union Ministry of Environment and Forest in 2010.
- ✓ In its report submitted to the government in 2011, the committee recommended that 75% of the 129,037 sq km area of the Western Ghats be declared environmentally sensitive due to its dense evergreen forest and endemic species.
- ✓ Award Winners of the 2024 UNEP "Champions of Earth Award"

Serial Number	Winner and Nationalities	Category
1	Madhav Gadgil (India)	Lifetime Achievement
2	Sonia Guajajara (Brazil's Minister of Indigenous Peoples)	Policy Leadership
3	Lu Qi (China)	Science and Innovation
4	Sekem organisation of Egypt (It was founded by Ibrahim Abouleish)	Entrepreneurial Vision
5	Amy Bowers Cordalis (United States of America)	Inspiration and Action
6	Gabriel Paun (Romania)	Inspiration and Action

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Champions of the Earth award:

1. It is the highest environmental honour awarded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
2. It is only given to individuals who are working on innovative and sustainable solutions to address climate change.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ India's veteran ecologist, Madhav Gadgil has been named as one of the six 'Champions of the Earth award' for 2024.
- ✓ It was established in 2005 and awarded by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP).
- ✓ It is the UN's highest environmental honour, recognises trailblazers at the forefront of efforts to protect people and the planet.
- ✓ Every year, UNEP honours individuals and organizations working on innovative and sustainable solutions to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, nature and biodiversity loss, and pollution and waste

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Yuva Sahakar Scheme:

1. It aims to encourage newly formed cooperative societies with innovative ideas.
2. It is implemented by the National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Minister of Cooperation informed the Lok Sabha about the Yuva Sahakar Scheme.
- ✓ Yuva Sahakar – Cooperative Enterprise Support and Innovation Scheme” aims to encourage newly formed cooperative societies with innovative ideas.
- ✓ The scheme encourages young entrepreneur Cooperative Societies which are in operation for a minimum of 3 months.
- ✓ The loan provided under the scheme is a long-term loan (up to 5 years) and as an incentive, NCDC provides 2% interest subvention on its applicable rate of interest on term loan for the project activities.
- ✓ It is being implemented by National Cooperative Development Corporation (NCDC) across the country.
- ✓ NCDC has produced a dedicated fund with liberal traits entitling youth to avail the scheme.
- ✓ It is linked with Rs.1000 crores of the Cooperative Start-up and Innovation Fund that has been authorised by the NCDC.
- ✓ It provides more incentives to the cooperatives working in the North-Eastern region and the aspirational districts.
- ✓ Exclusive benefits are provided for women, Scheduled Caste and Scheduled Tribe candidates.
- ✓ Yuva Sahakar Scheme is a part of Sahakar 22, a Mission for Doubling Farmers' Income by 2022.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Dharini Brain Atlas:

1. It is the largest publicly accessible digital dataset of the human foetal brain.
2. It can help in the development of treatments for brain-related health conditions.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Indian Institute of Technology-Madras (IIT-M) released highly detailed 3D images of a foetal brain named, Dharini.
- ✓ It is now the largest publicly accessible digital dataset of the human foetal brain and is freely available to researchers worldwide.

- Q.** Dark Eagle, recently seen in the news, is a long-range hypersonic anti-missile system developed by which one of the following countries?

B) Russia

D) United States of America

- ✓ The United States of America has developed a new anti-missile system called Dark Eagle and is nearing operational readiness after a successful test flight recently.
- ✓ About Dark Eagle Anti-Missile System:
- ✓ It is a long-range hypersonic anti-missile system developed by the United States of America, which is capable of intercepting enemy missiles in mid-air.
- ✓ It is capable of stopping ballistic, cruise, hypersonic missiles and warheads.
- ✓ It is capable of stopping ballistic, cruise, hypersonic missiles and warheads.
- ✓ It has an operational range estimated at over 2,775 kilometers (1,724 miles), enabling it to strike targets deep within adversary territory.

B) Gukesh Dommaraju

D) Vladimir Kramnik

- ✓ 18-year-old Gukesh Dommaraju, or D.Gukesh of Chennai, defeated the Chinese Grandmaster (GM) Ding Liren to become the youngest FIDE World Chess Champion.
- ✓ D.Gukesh broke the record of the legendary Russian chess player Gary Kasparov, who became the world champion at the age of 22 years in 1985 after beating fellow Russian Anatoly Karpov.
- ✓ D. Gukesh won the FIDE World Chess Championship by 7.5 points, compared to Ding Liren's 6.5 points.
- ✓ Second Indian and 18th person to become World Chess Champion
- ✓ D.Gukesh is the 18th chess player to be crowned FIDE World Chess Champion. He is also the second Indian to become the world chess champion after Viswanathan Anand.
- ✓ Viswanathan Anand became the 15th chess player to become a world chess champion in 2007. He later won the title in 2008, 2010 and 2012.
- ✓ 18-year Gukesh Dommaraju became the third youngest chess Grandmaster in history at the age of 12 years and seven months.
- ✓ The 2024 FIDE World Chess Championship was organised by the world chess governing body, the International Chess Federation, known by its French acronym FIDE, and it was hosted by the Singapore Chess Federation.
- ✓ Prize Money for D.Gukesh
- ✓ The total prize money for the 2024 FIDE World Championship was \$2.5 million. Each victory in the championship games fetched the victor \$200,000.
- ✓ Gukesh's three wins got him \$600,000, while Ding Liren, with two wins, got \$400,000.
- ✓ The remaining \$1.5 million was split between Gukesh and Ding.
- ✓ Thus, Gukesh got a prize of \$1.35 million.
- ✓ Gukesh won a team bronze and an individual gold medal at the 44th Chess Olympiad in 2022. In the 45th Chess Olympiad in 2024, he won both the team and individual gold medals.

- ✓ Indian Grandmaster D Gukesh has been awarded the Player-of-the-Year by the Asian Chess Federation (ACF).
- ✓ Gukesh was born on 29 May 2006 in Chennai into a Telugu family.
- ✓ His family hails from Chenchuraju Kandriga near Satyavedu in the erstwhile Chittoor district of Andhra Pradesh.

Q. Before D. Gukesh, which Indian had won the FIDE World Chess Champion?

- A) Pentala Harikrishna B) Vidit Gujrathi
C) Parimarjan Negi D) Vishwanathan Anand

Answer : D

- ✓ D.Gukesh is the 18th chess player to be crowned FIDE World Chess Champion. He is also the second Indian to become the world chess champion after Viswanathan Anand.

Q. Where was the 2014 FIDE World Chess Championship held?

- A) Malaysia B) Singapore
C) Japan D) India

Answer : B

- ✓ The 2024 FIDE World Chess Championship was organised by the world chess governing body, the International Chess Federation, known by its French acronym FIDE, and it was hosted by the Singapore Chess Federation.
- ✓ It was held at the luxurious Resorts World Sentosa in Singapore.

Q. Who has become the youngest World Chess Champion?

- A) D Gukesh B) Vidit Gujrathi
C) Praggnanandhaa Rameshbabu D) Arjun Erigaisi

Answer : A

- ✓ D Gukesh created history at the age of 18 by defeating China's Ding Liren to win the World Chess Championship 2024 title. Gukesh, who became India's second world champion after Vishwanathan Anand, achieved this feat at the youngest age, breaking Garry Kasparov's record.

Q. Which country will host the 25th FIFA Men's World Cup in 2034?

- A) Qatar B) UAE
C) Saudi Arabia D) United States

Answer : C

- ✓ Saudi Arabia to host 2034 men's FIFA World Cup.
- ✓ The world football governing body FIFA has awarded the 25th FIFA Men's Football World Cup to Saudi Arabia.
- ✓ The decision to award the 2034 FIFA Men's Football World Cup was taken at the Extraordinary FIFA Congress held in Zurich, Switzerland, on 12 December 2024.
- ✓ All 211 members of FIFA attended the Extraordinary Congress virtually.
- ✓ Saudi Arabia was the sole country in the race to host the 2034 FIFA Men's World Cup.
- ✓ The 23rd FIFA Men's World Cup will be co-hosted by Mexico, Canada and the United States in 2026, and 48 teams will participate in the tournament.
- ✓ This is the first time that Saudi Arabia will host the FIFA Men's World Cup.

- ✓ The Extraordinary FIFA Congress also confirmed the hosting of the 2030 FIFA Men's World Cup, to be hosted by six countries across three continents.
- ✓ The 2030 World Cup marks the centenary of the FIFA Men's World Cup, as the first World Cup was held in 1930 in Uruguay.
- ✓ The hosts of the event are European countries -Spain & Portugal and the African country of Morocco.
- ✓ Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay will host one match each of the 2030 World Cup as part of the centenary celebration.
- ✓ About the FIFA Men's World Cup
- ✓ The world football governing body, FIFA, organises the senior men's football World Cup, popularly known as FIFA Men's World Cup.
- ✓ The inaugural edition was held in Uruguay in 1930 and was won by Argentina.
- ✓ It is held every four years and was not held in 1942 or 1946 due to the Second World War.
- ✓ Brazil has been the most successful team with 5 title wins in 1958, 1962, 1970, 1994 and 2002.
- ✓ The second most successful teams are Germany and Italy, who have won it four times each.
- ✓ Argentina is the defending champion, having won the 2022 edition
- ✓ About Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)
- ✓ Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) was founded in 1904 in Paris, France.
- ✓ It is the world governing body of football, futsal and beach soccer.
- ✓ Members: 211 countries national football association
- ✓ Headquarters: Zurich, Switzerland.
- ✓ President :Gianni Infantino

Q. Which country/countries will host the 23rd FIFA Men's World Cup in 2026?

- A) Mexico, Canada and the United States
- B) Russia, Canada and the United States
- C) Mexico, Canada and the United Kingdom
- D) Mexico, Spain and the United States

Answer : A

- ✓ The 23rd FIFA Men's World Cup will be co-hosted by Mexico, Canada and the United States in 2026, and 48 teams will participate in the tournament.

Q. In which country/countries will FIFA organise one match as part of the centenary celebration of the Men's World Cup in 2030?

- A) Argentina, Uruguay and Paraguay
- B) Argentina, Uruguay and United States
- C) Argentina, Uruguay and Mexico
- D) Argentina, Uruguay and Canada

Answer : A

- ✓ Six Countries to host 24th FIFA Men's World Cup 2030
- ✓ The Extraordinary FIFA Congress also confirmed the hosting of the 2030 FIFA Men's World Cup, to be hosted by six countries across three continents.
- ✓ The 2030 World Cup marks the centenary of the FIFA Men's World Cup, as the first World Cup was held in 1930 in Uruguay.
- ✓ The hosts of the event are European countries -Spain & Portugal and the African country of Morocco.
- ✓ Uruguay, Argentina and Paraguay will host one match each of the 2030 World Cup as part of the centenary celebration.

Q. Which state will host the 2025 Khelo India Youth & Para Games?

- A) Haryana
B) Odisha
C) Bihar
D) Karnataka

Answer : C

- ✓ Bihar will host the Khelo India Youth & Para Games in April 2025.
- ✓ About Khelo India Games
- ✓ The Khelo India Games was proposed by the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports in 2017 to provide a platform for young sportspersons in India and build a dedicated sports infrastructure in the country.
- ✓ The ministry, in association with the Indian Olympic Association, organises the Khelo India Youth Games (KIYG), the Khelo India University Games (KIUG) and the Khelo India Winter Games under the Khelo India initiatives.
- ✓ The athletes represent their states/Union territories or the Universities in the Khelo India University Games.
- ✓ Under the Khelo India initiatives, the first Games to be organised was the Khelo India School Games in 2018 in New Delhi.
- ✓ In 2019, it was renamed Khelo India Youth Games and held in Pune, Maharashtra.
- ✓ The first Khelo India University Games was hosted by the Kalinga Institute of Industrial Technology (KIIT), Odisha in 2020.
- ✓ The first edition of the Khelo India Winter Games was held in 2020 in Gulmarg, Jammu and Kashmir.

Q. Where was the first India Maritime Heritage Conclave 2024 held?

- A) Chennai
B) New Delhi
C) Bengaluru
D) Lothal

Answer : B

- ✓ The two-day first India Maritime Heritage Conclave 2024 concluded in New Delhi on 12 December 2024.
- ✓ The Conclave highlighted India's rich maritime legacy since the Harappan period.
- ✓ The Conclave brought together the key ministers of the Union government, maritime experts, industry leaders and others from India and abroad.
- ✓ Four State Governments - Gujarat, Goa, Bihar and Arunachal Pradesh participated in the Conclave.
- ✓ The Union Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways organised the India Maritime Heritage Conclave 2024.
- ✓ The Union Ministry for Labour and Employment, the Union Ministry for Youth Affairs and Sports, the Union Ministry for Education, and the Union Ministry for Tourism and Culture collaborated with the Union Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways.
- ✓ The India Maritime Heritage Conclave 2024 was inaugurated by the Union Minister for Ports, Shipping and Waterways, Sarbananda Sonowal, on 11 December 2024.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Exercise Desert Knight:

1. It is a trilateral air combat exercise between India, France and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
2. It was conducted recently over the Arabian Sea.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Recently, exercise Desert Knight was launched over the Arabian Sea to boost military interoperability and enhance defence ties.
- ✓ It is a trilateral air combat exercise between India, France, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
- ✓ This exercise builds on the trilateral framework established in 2022 by the foreign ministers of India, France, and the UAE.
- ✓ The exercise is described as a “large force engagement,” featuring intensive combat manoeuvres approximately 350-400 km southwest of Karachi over the Arabian Sea.

Q. From 1 January 2025, Switzerland will impose how much withholding dividend taxes on the Indian companies operating in Switzerland?

- [illegible]

Answer : B

- ✓ Switzerland has announced that it will revoke the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status in taxation to India from 1 January 2025.
- ✓ In a statement, Switzerland cited the Supreme Court's judgement in the Nestle case in 2023 as the main reason for revoking the MFN status to India under the Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA).
- ✓ The decision of Switzerland will raise the withholding dividend taxes on the Indian companies operating in Switzerland to 10 % and impact the Indian investment in Switzerland and Switzerland's investment in India.
- ✓ About DTAA and MFN Status
- ✓ India and Switzerland signed the DTAA treaty on 2nd November 1994, which was amended in 2000 and 2010.
- ✓ Under DTAA, if a company of India is operating in Switzerland and has earned income on its investment in Switzerland, then the income will be taxed either in India or Switzerland as per the DTAA agreement. Similarly is the case of the investment of Switzerland's company in India
- ✓ Reason for Switzerland's Actions
- ✓ In 2010, India and Switzerland signed a protocol to the DTAA. The protocol provided that if India signed a DTAA with a member of the Organisation for the Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and provided for a tax rate which was lower than that provided then in the India-Switzerland DTAA, then the lower tax rates will prevail.
- ✓ Switzerland is a member of the OECD.
- ✓ In 2011, India signed DTAA with Lithuania and Colombia, which provided a withholding dividend tax of 5 per cent to both countries.
- ✓ Lithuania joined the OECD in July 2018 and Colombia in April 2020.
- ✓ After joining Lithuania and Colombia in the OECD, Switzerland reduced the withholding tax on Indian companies to 5 %, effective in 2018, as per the provision of the India-Switzerland DTAA agreement.
- ✓ Nestle is a Swiss-based company with a subsidiary in India

Q. What is the main goal of the upgraded 'Rajmarg Saathi' initiative by National Highways Authority of India (NHAI)?

- A) Reduce Traffic Congestion B) Enhance Highway Safety
C) Improve Fuel Efficiency D) Support Tourism

Answer : B

- ✓ The primary goal of the upgraded 'Rajmarg Saathi' initiative by the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) is to enhance highway safety.

- ✓ The initiative focuses on improving road safety and emergency response through upgraded Route Patrolling Vehicles (RPVs).
- ✓ These vehicles are equipped with closed cabinets for organized storage and AI-enabled dashboard cameras to identify cracks, potholes, and infrastructure issues.
- ✓ The collected data on road conditions will be integrated into the NHAI One application, which will further improve road safety measures.

Q. Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP) is a multi-purpose irrigation project on which one of the following rivers?

A) Kaveri	B) Godavari
C) Krishna	D) Mahanadi

Answer : B

- ✓ The National Dam Safety Authority (NDSA) is likely to submit its final report on the Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Scheme (KLIS) soon, excluding the aspect of conducting geo-technical tests.
- ✓ About Kaleshwaram Lift Irrigation Project (KLIP):
- ✓ It is a multi-purpose irrigation project on the Godavari River in Kaleshwaram, Bhupalpally, Telangana, India.
- ✓ It is designed to provide water for irrigation and drinking purposes to about 45 lakh acres in 20 of the 31 districts in Telangana, apart from Hyderabad and Secunderabad.
- ✓ Currently the world's largest multi-stage lift irrigation project, its farthest upstream influence is at the confluence of the Pranhita and Godavari rivers.

Q. In which year India and Portugal will celebrate 50 years of the establishment of bilateral diplomaticities?

A) 2025	B) 2026
C) 2024	D) 2030

Answer : A

- ✓ Portugal's Minister of State and Foreign Affairs, Paulo Rangel, was on a four-day visit to India from 12-15 December 2024. This was Paulo Rangel's first visit to India.
- ✓ During his visit to India, he visited New Delhi and Goa.
- ✓ During his visit to New Delhi, he held an official discussion with the Union Minister of Commerce and Industry, Piyush Goyal and the External Affairs Minister, Dr S. Jaishankar.
- ✓ During his visit to Goa, he met the Goa Governor P.S.Sreedharan Pillai and Chief Minister Pramod Sawant.
- ✓ Goa was a colony of Portugal, which was liberated after the Indian Army launched Operation Vijay in 1961.
- ✓ Both the ministers also agreed to celebrate the 50th anniversary of diplomatic relations between the two countries in 2025.
- ✓ The diplomatic relations between the two countries were established in 1949 but were broken in 1961 after the liberation of Goa. It was again re-established in 1974.
- ✓ Portuguese explorer Vasco da Gama was the first European to discover a direct sea route to India when his ship landed in Calicut (present-day Kozhikode), Kerala, in May 1498.
- ✓ At the time of Indian independence, Goa, Daman & Diu, Dadra & Nagar Haveli were a colony of Portugal.
- ✓ The Portuguese government, led by dictator Antonio Salazar, refused to hand over Goa to India.
- ✓ Indian Army launched Operation Vijay in 1961 to liberate Goa.
- ✓ About Portugal
- ✓ Portugal is located in the Iberian Peninsula of Southwestern Europe
- ✓ Capital: Lisbon
- ✓ Currency: euro

- ✓ President: Luís Montenegro

Q. India defeated which team to win the final of the 10th Women Junior Asia Cup 2024?

- A) Malaysia
- B) Thailand
- C) China
- D) Argentina

Answer : C

- ✓ Indian women's junior hockey team successfully defended their Women's Junior Asia Cup title in Muscat, Oman, by defeating China 3-2 in the final.
- ✓ India, the previous 2023 edition winner, won the 10th Women's Junior Asia Cup, 3-2 in the penalty shoot-out in the final played at Muscat on 15 December 2024.
- ✓ The top five finishers at the 2024 Women's Junior Asia Cup - India, China, Japan, South Korea and Malaysia qualified for the 2025 FIH Women's Junior World Cup in Chile.
- ✓ The 10th Women's Junior Asia Cup was held in Muscat, Oman, from 7 to 15 December 2024.
- ✓ The 10th Women's Junior Asia Cup 2024 was also a qualifying tournament for the forthcoming 2025 FIH Women's Junior Hockey World Cup in Chile.
- ✓ A total of 24 teams will play in the 2025 World Cup, and five places were reserved for Asia.
- ✓ The Women Junior Asia Cup for women players below 21 years of age is organised by the Asian Hockey Federation. The first Women Junior Asia Cup was held in 1992 in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and South Korea won it.
- ✓ South Korea is the most successful team in the tournament, having won it four times. China won it three times, and India won twice in the 2023 and 2024 editions,

Q. Exercise SLINEX, is conducted between, India and:

- A) Singapore
- B) Japan
- C) France
- D) Sri Lanka

Answer : D

- ✓ Exercise SLINEX 2024 (Sri Lanka-India Exercise) will be conducted from 17 to 20 Dec 24 at Visakhapatnam under the aegis of the Eastern Naval Command.
- ✓ It is a bilateral naval exercise conducted between India and Sri Lanka.
- ✓ It was initiated in 2005, SLINEX is a significant series of bilateral naval exercises that have strengthened maritime cooperation between India and Sri Lanka over the years.
- ✓ The 2024 edition aims to further reinforce the strong maritime ties between India and Sri Lanka while promoting a safe, secure, and rules-based maritime environment.
- ✓ Participating Units:
- ✓ From India: Indian Naval Ship INS Sumitra, a Naval Offshore Patrol Vessel of the Eastern Fleet, along with a Special Forces team.
- ✓ From Sri Lanka: SLNS Sayura, an Offshore Patrol Vessel, with an embarked Special Forces team.

Q. The Sandhayak-class survey vessels are a series of four survey vessels for the Indian Navy. Recently commissioned, INS Nirdeshak is the second ship under the Project. The Project is being implemented by which one of the following shipyards?

- A) Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers
- B) Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Limited
- C) Cochin Shipyard Limited
- D) Hindustan Shipyard Limited

Answer : A

- ✓ INS Nirdeshak is the second ship under the Survey Vessel (Large) Project of the Indian Navy. It is designed to conduct hydrographic surveys, assist in navigation and support maritime operations.
- ✓ It is built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata.
- ✓ It is a part of the Sandhayak-class survey vessels project. which is a series of four survey vessels being built by Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (GRSE), Kolkata for the Indian Navy.
- ✓ The 4 vessels are Sandhayak, Nirdeshak, Ikshak and Sanshodhak. First two have been commissioned already.

Q. India has established its first diabetes biobank at the:

- A) Indian Institute of Science, Bengaluru
- B) All India Institute Of Medical Sciences, Delhi
- C) Institute for Stem Cell Science and Regenerative Medicine (inStem), Bengaluru
- D) Madras Diabetes Research Foundation, Chennai

Answer : D

- ✓ India has established its first diabetes biobank at the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation (MDRF) in Chennai, in collaboration with the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR).
- ✓ The diabetes biobank is a repository of biological samples collected from different populations to aid scientific research.

Q. Zakir Hussain, who died recently, belonged to which field?

- A) Violin
- B) Guitar
- C) Tabla
- D) Shehnai

Answer : C

- ✓ Tabla Maestro Ustad Zakir Hussain passes away.
- ✓ One of the best-known Tabla maestros of his generation, Ustad Zakir Hussain, died in San Francisco, the United States of America, on December 14, 2024.
- ✓ He was 73 years of age.
- ✓ Zakir Hussain Music Career
- ✓ Zakir Hussain was the son of the renowned Tabla maestro Ustad Allah Rakha Khan and was born in Mumbai on 9 March 1951.
- ✓ From the age of seven years, Zakir Hussain started performing on stage as a Tabla player.
- ✓ Zakir Hussain was one of the foremost Indian musicians who took Indian classical music to the world stage. He performed with music legends like sitarist Ravi Shankar, Sarod player Ali Akbar Khan, and Santoor player Pandit Shiv Kumar Sharma.
- ✓ He also collaborated with Western artists like George Harrison, Edger Meyer, Ricky Hart, and John McLaughlin.
- ✓ His 'Project Shakti' with English Guitarist John McLaughlin and violinist L.Shankar was a path-breaking project in which Indian classical music was fused with Jazz. This created a new audience for Indian classical music on the world stage.

Q. When was Ustad Zakir Hussain honoured with Padma Vibhusan?

- A) 1999
- B) 2003
- C) 2018
- D) 2023

Answer : D

- ✓ Award and Honour to Ustad Zakir Hussain
- ✓ Ustad Zakir Hussain was honoured with numerous awards during his illustrious music career.

- ✓ He was honoured with India's fourth highest civilian award, Padma Shri, in 1988, the third highest civilian award, Padma Bhushan, in 2002, and the second highest civilian award, Padma Vibhushan, in 2023.
- ✓ He won four Grammy awards, which are considered to be the highest music award in the world.
- ✓ He is the first Indian to receive three Grammy awards at the 66th Grammy Awards in 2024.
- ✓ At the 66th Grammy Awards, he won awards in the Best Contemporary Instrumental Album (As We Speak); Best Global Music (This Moment) and Best Global Music Performance (Pashto).
- ✓ He received the Kalidas Samman of the Madhya Pradesh government in 2006.

Q. Who won the men's singles title of the BWF Super 100 Odisha Masters 2024 Badminton Open?

- A) Rithvik Sanjeevi Satish Kumar B) Tharun Mannepal
C) Kakeru Kumagai D) Hiroki Nishi

Answer : A

- ✓ Rithvik Sanjeevi Satish Kumar won the men's single title of the 2024 BWF Super100 Odisha Masters badminton tournament on 15 December 2024.
- ✓ Rithvik was the sole Indian winner in the Odisha Masters, which was dominated by the Chinese players, who won three titles, and the Japanese claimed the women's doubles title.
- ✓ The \$100,000 lakh prize money BWF Super 100 Odisha Masters 2024 was held in Cuttack, Odisha, from 10-15 December 2024. It was the third edition of the BWF Super 100 Odisha Masters after the inaugural edition in 2021 and 2023
- ✓ 21-year-old Rithvik Sanjeevi Satish Kumar, ranked 78th in the world, defeated fellow Indian Tharun Mannepal in the finals to win the men's singles title of the Odisha Masters.

Q. Who won the women's singles title of the BWF Super 100 Odisha Masters 2024 Badminton Open?

- A) Tanvi Sharma B) Cai Yan Yan
C) Nanoka Hara D) Riko Kiyose

Answer : B

- ✓ Chinese Cai Yan Yan won her second consecutive BWF Super 100 title in Cuttack by defeating 15-year-old Tanvi Sharma in the final.
- ✓ Last week, Cai Yan Yan won the 2024 BWF Super 100 Guwahati tournament's singles title, defeating Anmol Kharb of India.

Q. In which city has India's first diabetes biobank been established?

- A) Chennai
B) Mumbai
C) Hyderabad
D) Bengaluru

Answer : A

- ✓ India's first diabetes biobank has been set up in Chennai through a collaboration between the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation (MDRF).
- ✓ The facility is designed to collect, process, and store biological samples, aiding advanced research on diabetes causes, variations, and related disorders.
- ✓ The biobank will support critical studies like the ICMR-INDIAB study and the Registry of Young-Onset Diabetes.

Q. What is the name of the cyclone that caused devastation in Mayotte and made landfall in Mozambique?

- A) Idai
B) Kenneth
C) Freddy
D) Chido

Answer : D

- ✓ Cyclone Chido, a Category 4 storm, caused severe destruction in Mayotte with winds exceeding 220 km/h before making landfall in Mozambique's Cabo Delgado province on December 15, 2024.
- ✓ The cyclone flattened entire neighbourhoods in Mayotte, marking it as the strongest cyclone to hit the region in over 90 years.
- ✓ After crossing the Mozambique Channel, Chido intensified and brought winds over 200 km/h along with heavy rainfall, severely affecting northern Mozambique.

Q. What is the primary objective of the recently launched 'Jalvahak' scheme?

- A) Improve port infrastructure
B) Boost Inland Waterways Cargo
C) Promote coastal tourism
D) Enhance the fishing industry

Answer : B

- ✓ Union Government unveils 'Jalvahak' Scheme to boost Inland Waterways.
- ✓ Scheme aims to incentivise cargo movement via inland waterways, promoting sustainable and cost-effective transportation across National Waterways (NW)-1, NW-2, and NW-16.
- ✓ About the Jalvahak scheme
- ✓ Ministry: Union Ministry of Ports, Shipping & Waterways.
- ✓ To be jointly implemented by the Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) and Inland & Coastal Shipping Ltd (ICSL), a subsidiary of the Shipping Corporation of India.
- ✓ Aim: Schemes aim at Incentivising Modal Shift of 800 Million Tonnes KMs with an investment of ₹95.4 crores.
- ✓ Time frame: Valid for an initial period of 3 years.
- ✓ Route: Fixed Day Scheduled Sailing Service will ply vessels between Kolkata - Patna - Varanasi - Patna - Kolkata stretch of National Waterways (NW)-1, between Kolkata and Pandu in Guwahati on NW 2, and NW 16 via Indo Bangladesh Protocol Route (IBPR).
- ✓ Incentive: Offers reimbursement upto 35% of total operating expenditure incurred while transporting cargo.
- ✓ Criteria: Provides direct incentive to transport their goods via inland waterways for a distance of more than 300 kms.
- ✓ Significance: Reduced logistics costs, decongestion of road and railways, and adapting to a sustainable mode of transportation.

Q. Which country became the first European nation to join the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) trade bloc?

- A) United Kingdom
B) Germany
C) France
D) Italy

Answer : A

- ✓ UK has recently become the first European country to join the Indo-Pacific trade bloc Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).
- ✓ Previously, in 2023, CPTPP parties and the UK signed the accession protocol to enable the UK to join the CPTPP.
- ✓ About CPTPP

- ✓ **Genesis:** It is a Free Trade Agreement across the Pacific signed originally by the 11 countries in March 2018 in Santiago, Chile and entered into force on December 30, 2018, after the US withdrew from the original Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) in 2017.
- ✓ **Membership:** Comprises 12 member nations, including the UK, with other members being Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, Brunei, Chile, Malaysia, Mexico, Peru, Singapore, and Vietnam.
- ✓ **Significance:** The bloc accounts for about 15% of global GDP and provides trade access to a market of more than 500 million people

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the International Solar Alliance (ISA):

1. It was conceptualised on the sidelines of COP21 in Paris in 2015.
2. It aims to unite global efforts in combating climate change through the implementation of solar energy solutions.
3. Its headquarters is located in Gurugram, India.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- A) Only one
B) Only two
C) All three
D) None

Answer : C

- ✓ Moldova has officially signed the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Framework Agreement, furthering its commitment to promoting renewable energy.
- ✓ About the International Solar Alliance (ISA):
- ✓ The ISA was conceptualised on the sidelines of COP21 in Paris in 2015 as a collaborative initiative between India and France.
- ✓ The headquarters of the ISA is located in Gurugram, India.
- ✓ The ISA aims to unite global efforts in combating climate change through the implementation of solar energy solutions.
- ✓ The mission of the ISA is guided by the 'Towards 1000' strategy, which focuses on three key goals:
- ✓ Mobilizing USD 1,000 billion of investments in solar energy by 2030.
- ✓ Providing energy access to 1,000 million people worldwide.
- ✓ Achieving the installation of 1,000 GW of solar energy capacity.
- ✓ The ISA Assembly is the apex decision-making body of the organization. It plays a crucial role in shaping policies and overseeing the implementation of the ISA's Framework Agreement.
- ✓ Currently, the ISA has 104 member countries and 16 signatory countries.
- ✓ The ISA Framework Agreement came into force in 2017. Following its amendment in 2020, all United Nations member states became eligible to join the ISA.

ISA IN NEWS 2024.

- Moldova has officially signed the International Solar Alliance (ISA) Framework Agreement, furthering its commitment to promoting renewable energy.
- Armenia has become the 104th full member of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- Ashish Khanna of India was elected as the third Director General of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- He met Dr. He has replaced Ajay Mathur
- India has been re-elected as the President of the International Solar Alliance for another two-year term from 2024 to 2026.
- The Seventh annual session of the International Solar Alliance Assembly, held in New Delhi from 3-6 November 2024.
- Nepal has become the 101st country to join the International Solar Alliance(ISA).
- Prime Minister Narendra Modi virtually addressed the first International Solar Festival, which was being held in New Delhi

Answer : D

- ✓ The 55th IFFI was inaugurated by the Goa chief minister, Pramod Sawant, on 20 November 2024.
- ✓ He was also the chief guest at the closing ceremony of the IFFI.
- ✓ Theme of the 55th IFFI
- ✓ The theme of the 55th IFFI was 'Young Filmmakers: The Future is Now.
- ✓ Opening and closing film of the IFFI
- ✓ Opening Film of the 55th IFFI - 'Better Man' by Michael Gracey of Australia..
- ✓ Closing film- "Dry Season"- Directed by Bohdan Sláma of the Czech Republic.



BEST MCQ WITH FACTS

NOVEMBER 2024

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Booker Prize:

1. It is the world's leading literary award given for a single work of fiction.
2. It is awarded to novel originally written in English and published in the UK and Ireland in the year of the prize.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ British writer Samantha Harvey won the Booker Prize 2024 for fiction with *Orbital*, a short, wonder-filled novel set aboard the International Space Station.
- ✓ It is the world's leading literary award for a single work of fiction.
- ✓ Founded in the UK in 1969, the Booker Prize initially rewarded Commonwealth writers and now spans the globe: it is open to anyone regardless of origin.
- ✓ It aims to promote the finest in fiction by rewarding the best novel of the year written in English.
- ✓ Eligibility:
- ✓ The Booker Prize awards any novel originally written in English and published in the UK and Ireland in the year of the prize, regardless of the nationality of their author.
- ✓ The novel must be an original work in English (not a translation)
- ✓ It must be published by a registered UK or Irish imprint; self-published novels are not eligible.
- ✓ The winner receives £50,000 and each of the shortlisted authors will be given £2,500.
- ✓ The Booker Prize Foundation: It is a registered charity established in 2002. Since then it has been responsible for the award of the Man Booker Prize for Fiction, and for the Man Booker International Prize since its inauguration in 2005.

Q. Samantha Harvey was awarded the Booker Prize 2024 for Fiction for his book_____.

- A) *The Promise* B) *Great Circle*
C) *A Passage North* D) *Orbital*

Answer : D

- ✓ Samantha Harvey Space based book '*Orbital*' wins Booker Prize 2024
- ✓ *Orbital*, a story set in space, won the prestigious literary prize, Booker prize 2024, for the British author Samantha Harvey. It is the first Booker prize for Samantha Harvey and first since 2019 to be won by a female author.
- ✓ The winner of the Booker Prize 2024 was announced at a ceremony in London, England, on 12 November 2024. At the function, Samantha Harvey was awarded the Booker Prize trophy and £ 50,000 in prize money.
- ✓ *The Prophet Song* of Paul Lynch won the 2023 Booker Prize
- ✓ About the Booker Prize
- ✓ The Booker Prize, established in 1968, is considered to be one of the most prestigious literary prizes in English literature.
- ✓ Since 1969, a novel published in the United Kingdom and the Republic of Ireland has been considered for the prize every year.

- ✓ P H Newby's "Something to Answer For" won the first Booker Prize in 1969."
- ✓ Indian winner of the Booker Prize
- ✓ So far, three Indian authors have won the Booker Prize.
- ✓ Arundhati Roy in 1997 for The God of Small Things.
- ✓ Kiran Desai in 2006 for "The Inheritance of Loss".
- ✓ Aravind Adiga in 2008 for "The White Tiger."
- ✓ International Booker Prize
- ✓ Since 2004, the Booker Prize Foundation has also awarded the International Booker Prize.
- ✓ Books written in non-English languages, translated into English, and published in the United Kingdom or Ireland are considered for the award.
- ✓ It was awarded biennially, and since 2016, it has been awarded annually
- ✓ The only Indian to win the award is Geetanjali Shree.
- ✓ She won the 2022 award for her Hindi novel 'Tomb of Sand' (रेत समाधि).

Q. Coastal villages of which state have been recognised as 'Tsunami Ready' by UNESCO?

A) Kerala	B) Tamil Nadu
C) Odisha	D) Andhra Pradesh

Answer : C

- ✓ Recently, twenty-four coastal villages of Odisha have been recognized as 'Tsunami Ready' by UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission.
- ✓ It is an international community-based recognition program initiated by UNESCO's Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC).
- ✓ It aims to help people through awareness and strategies.

Q. Which country has been elected as the President of the International Solar Alliance Assembly for the 2024-26 period?

A) France	B) Russia
C) Germany	D) India

Answer : D

- ✓ India re-elected President of International Solar Alliance for 2024-26
- ✓ India has been re-elected as the President of the International Solar Alliance for another two-year term from 2024 to 2026.
- ✓ The Office bearers for 2024-26 were elected at the Seventh annual session of the International Solar Alliance Assembly, held in New Delhi from 3-6 November 2024
- ✓ At the seventh annual session of the International Solar Alliance, Ashish Khanna of India was chosen as the third Director General for a four-year term. He will succeed another Indian, Dr Ajay Mathur.

Q. Which country has been elected as the Co-President of the International Solar Alliance for 2024-26?

A) Italy	B) France
C) Ghana	D) Seychelles

Answer : B

- ✓ India was re-elected unopposed as the President of the International Solar Alliance for a fresh two-year term. France was elected as the Co-President, defeating Grenada.
- ✓ The International Solar Alliance has been divided into four geographical regions: Africa, Asia-Pacific, Europe & Others, and Latin America and the Caribbean.
- ✓ Two Vice Presidents represent these regional groups, and the newly elected Vice-Presidents for 2024-26 are as follows;

- ✓ Vice Presidents of Africa- Ghana and Seychelles,
- ✓ Vice Presidents of Asia-Pacific- Australia and Sri Lanka,
- ✓ Vice -Presidents of Europe and Others- Germany and Italy
- ✓ Latin America and Caribbean- Grenada and Suriname.

Q. Who was recently elected as the third Director General of ISA?

- A) Ajay Mathur B) Ashish Khanna
C) Sandeep Sharma D) Manoj Gupta

Answer : B

- ✓ Ashish Khanna of India was elected as the third Director General of the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- ✓ He met Dr. He has replaced Ajay Mathur.
- ✓ This announcement was made at the 7th ISA Assembly in New Delhi.
- ✓ ISA aims to mobilize \$1 trillion in investment in solar energy by 2030.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding LignoSat Satellite:

1. It is constructed from magnolia wood tasked to demonstrate the cosmic potential of the renewable material.
2. It is developed by the Indian Space Research Organisation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ The world's first wooden satellite LignoSat built by Japanese researchers was launched into space in an early test of using timber in lunar and Mars exploration.
- ✓ LignoSat", a fusion of "ligno" (the Latin word for wood) and "satellite".
- ✓ It is developed through collaborative research and development by a team comprising members from Kyoto University and Sumitomo Forestry Co.
- ✓ Objective: Their objective is to leverage the eco-friendliness and cost-effectiveness of wood in space exploration.
- ✓ It is tasked to demonstrate the cosmic potential of the renewable material as humans explore living in space.
- ✓ It is constructed from magnolia wood, chosen for its durability and adaptability.
- ✓ It will first be sent to the International Space Station (ISS) aboard a SpaceX rocket from the Kennedy Space Center.
- ✓ Why is wood used? : Wooden satellites are viewed as more environmentally friendly upon reentering the Earth's atmosphere at the conclusion of their mission. Unlike metal satellites, which pose air pollution risks due to the generation of metal particles during reentry, wooden satellites mitigate these concerns.

Q. Which country has launched a defence satellite aimed at speedier communication and military operations on a new flagship H3 rocket successfully placed it into orbit?

- A) China
B) Russia
C) Japan
D) Israel

Answer : C

- ✓ Japan launches defence satellite aimed at speedier military operations.
- ✓ Japan launched a defence satellite aimed at speedier communication and military operations on a new flagship H3 rocket successfully placed it into orbit, as the country seeks to build up its military capability amid growing tension in the region.
- ✓ The H3 No. 4 rocket lifted off from the Tanegashima Space Centre on a southwestern Japanese island.

Q. Who has been elected as the 47th President of the United States of America?

- A) Donald Trump
B) Kamala Harris
C) James David Vance
D) Joe Biden

Answer : A

- ✓ Donald Trump's returns to White House as the 47th President of the US.
- ✓ Donald Trump of the Republican Party has secured the necessary 270 electoral votes to emerge victorious in the United States Presidential poll.
- ✓ Former president Donald Trump defeated the Vice-President Kamala Harris of the Democratic party to secure a new four year term.
- ✓ No woman has ever been the President of the United States of America.
- ✓ Donald Trump is the second American president after Grover Cleveland to serve two non-continuous four-year terms.
- ✓ Donald Trump was the 45th President of America from 20 January 2017-19 January 2021.
- ✓ Donald Trump will succeed Joe Biden as the 47th President of the United States on 20 January 2025.
- ✓ James David Vance of the Republican party will be the new Vice-President of the United States.
- ✓ 2024 United States Election
- ✓ The United States of America went to the polls on 5 November 2024 to elect a new President, Vice President, Governors of the 50 states, and new members of the United States Congress.
- ✓ The United States parliament is called Congress, and it is bicameral. It consists of a 100-member Senate, the Upper House, and the 278-member Lower House, the House of Representatives.
- ✓ 2024 Presidential Election and Candidates
- ✓ The main candidate in the presidential election was the current Vice President of the United States, Kamala Harris, of the Democratic Party. Minnesota Governor Tim Walz was the Vice Presidential candidate of the Democratic Party. The Democratic Party symbol is a Donkey, and its colour is blue.
- ✓ The Republican Party, also known as the Grand Old Party in the United States presidential candidate, was former President Donald Trump, and the vice-presidential candidate was Senator JD Vance of Ohio.
- ✓ The symbol of the Republican party is an elephant, and the party's colour is red.
- ✓ Term of the President of the United States
- ✓ A person can be elected President of the United States for two four-year terms. Franklin Roosevelt was the only American president to be elected four times from 1933 to 1945.
- ✓ The American constitution was amended, and the 22nd Constitutional Amendment of 1951 limited the American President's term to two terms of four years each.

O. Who has been elected as the Vice-President of the United States?

- A) Kamala Harris
B) James David Vance
C) Mike Pence
D) Dick Cheney

Answer : B

- ✓ James David Vance of the Republican party will be the new Vice-President of the United States

Q. What is the name of the indigenously designed and manufactured machine pistol that was recently inducted into the Indian Army?

- A) Dragunov
B) Heckler
C) Sako
D) Asmi

Answer : D

- ✓ The Northern Command of the Indian Army has successfully inducted 550 indigenously designed, developed, and manufactured Asmi machine pistols.
- ✓ The Asmi machine pistols are manufactured by Hyderabad-based Lokesh Machine Limited.
- ✓ Earlier, the company successfully delivered 550 indigenously designed, developed, and manufactured Asmi submachine guns to the Northern Command of the Indian Army.
- ✓ The Asmi is short for Asmita, which means pride in Hindi. Colonel Prasad Bansod of the Indian Army designed the Asmi pistol in partnership with the central government's Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).
- ✓ The technology was transferred to Lokesh Machine Limited for manufacturing purposes.
- ✓ The weapon was manufactured by Lokesh Machine Limited at its Toorpan factory in the Medak district of Telangana.

Q. Who is famous as Bihar Kokila?

- A) Vishaka Hari
B) Anima Choudhury
C) Ila Arun
D) Sharda Sinha

Answer : D

- ✓ Bihar Kokila Sharda Sinha passes away
- ✓ Popular folk singer and 'Bihar Kokila', Smt.Sharda Sinha passed away on 5 November 2024.
- ✓ Bihar Kokila Sharda Sinha
- ✓ Bihar Kokila Sharda Sinha was born on 1 October 1952 in the Hulas village of Raghapur subdivision of the present-day Supaul district of Bihar. She started her singing career in 1971 with Akashvani (All India Radio).
- ✓ Her songs, sung in Bhojpuri, Maithili, and Magadhi dialects, based on the great festival of Chhath, Vivah Geet, and other rituals specific to Bihar, caught the public imagination, earning her the sobriquet of Bihar Kokila.
- ✓ Awards for Sharda Sinha
- ✓ Sharda Sinha was awarded India's third highest civilian award Padma Bhushan in 2018, fourth highest civilian award Padma Shri in 1991.
- ✓ In 2000, she received the Sangeet Natak Akademi Award for her contribution to the field of music.

Q. Who among the following was honoured with the 2018 Padma Bhushan award in the field of art-music?

- A) Sharda Sinha
B) Kaifi Azmi
C) Gulzar
D) Javed Akhtar

Answer : A

- ✓ Sharda Sinha:
- ✓ She is a Maithili-language folk-singer.
- ✓ She sings in Bhojpuri and Magahi languages too.
- ✓ She was honoured with the Padma Bhushan award in the year 2018 in the field of art-music.
- ✓ She was honoured with the Padma Shri in the year 1991.
- ✓ Sinha was born in the village of Hulas of Raghapur block of Supaul district, Bihar, the only daughter among nine children Sukhdev Thakur.

- ✓ Her in-laws' home is in Sihama village in Begusarai district

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Kumbh Mela:

1. It received patronage from various royal dynasties like Chola and Vijayanagara empires.
2. It is celebrated four times over a course of 12 years.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Mahakumbh Mela is scheduled to take place in the holy city of Prayagraj from January 13 to February 26.
- ✓ It is a sacred pilgrimage that is celebrated four times over a course of 12 years.
- ✓ Kumbh Mela is the world's largest peaceful gathering, draws millions of pilgrims who bathe in sacred rivers seeking to purify themselves from sins and attain spiritual liberation.
- ✓ This sacred event rotates between four locations in India-Haridwar, Ujjain, Nashik, and Prayagraj- each situated by a holy river, from the Ganges to the Shipra, the Godavari, and the confluence of the Ganges, Yamuna, and the mythical Sarasvati in Prayagraj.
- ✓ The roots of the Kumbh Mela stretch back thousands of years, finding early references during the Maurya and Gupta periods (4th century BCE to 6th century CE).
- ✓ Post-independence, the Maha Kumbh Mela gained even greater significance, symbolizing national unity and India's rich cultural heritage. Recognized by UNESCO in 2017 as an intangible cultural heritage of humanity, the Kumbh Mela stands as a testament to the survival and evolution of ancient traditions in an era of modernization.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the MAHASAGAR Initiative:

1. It is Indian Navy's flagship initiative which is conducted bi-annually.
2. It highlights the necessary imperatives for training and Cooperation towards mitigation of common maritime challenges in the Indian Ocean Region.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The third edition of the high-level virtual interaction MAHASAGAR was conducted by the Indian Navy.
- ✓ Maritime Heads for Active Security And Growth for All in the Region (MAHASAGAR- which means vast ocean in Hindi) --, is the Indian Navy's flagship outreach for high-level virtual interaction among the leaders.
- ✓ The initiative, started by the Indian Navy, is conducted bi-annually and has garnered wide acceptance among the participating nations ever since its inception in 2023.
- ✓ Participating countries: Indian Ocean Region littorals viz., Bangladesh, Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Tanzania.
- ✓ The interaction's theme of this edition was 'Training Cooperation to Mitigate Common Maritime Security Challenges in IOR', which highlights the present and necessary imperatives for Training Corporation towards mitigation of common maritime challenges in the Indian Ocean Region.

Q.

1. It is the primary payload of the Aditya-L1 Mission.
2. It is built by the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bengaluru.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Scientists at the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) Bengaluru recently reported the “first significant” results from the Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC) payload onboard the ADITYA-L1 Mission.
- ✓ About Visible Emission Line Coronagraph (VELC):
- ✓ It is the primary payload of the Aditya-L1 Mission-India’s first mission to observe the Sun from a vantage point 1.5 million kilometres from the earth.
- ✓ It is an internally occulted solar coronagraph capable of simultaneous imaging, spectroscopy, and spectro-polarimetry close to the solar limb.
- ✓ It is built by the Indian Institute of Astrophysics (IIA) at its CREST (Centre for Research and Education in Science and Technology) campus at Hosakote, Karnataka.
- ✓ The VELC consists of a coronagraph, spectrograph, polarimetry module, and detectors, aside from auxiliary optics.
- ✓ Purpose:
- ✓ It will observe the solar corona, which is the tenuous, outermost layer of the solar atmosphere.
- ✓ VELC can image the solar corona down to 1.05 times the solar radius, which is the closest any such payload has imaged.
- ✓ It will analyze the coronal temperature, plasma velocity, density, etc.
- ✓ It will also study Coronal Mass Ejections (CMEs) and the solar wind.

Q.

1. It is an autonomous intergovernmental organisation within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) framework.
2. It was created in response to the 1973-1974 oil crisis.
3. India is a founding member of IEA.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- A) Only one
B) Only two
C) All three
D) None

Answer : B

- ✓ The global market for clean energy technologies is set to rise from \$700 billion in 2023 to more than \$2 trillion by 2035 – close to the value of the world's crude oil market in recent years, says a first of its kind study by the International Energy Agency (IEA).
- ✓ About International Energy Agency (IEA):
- ✓ It is an autonomous intergovernmental organisation within the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) framework.
- ✓ Mission: It works with governments and industry to shape a secure and sustainable energy future for all.
- ✓ Background:

- ✓ It was created in response to the 1973-1974 oil crisis when an oil embargo by major producers pushed prices to historic levels and exposed the vulnerability of industrialised countries to dependency on oil imports.
- ✓ It was founded in 1974 to ensure the security of oil supplies.
- ✓ IEA's mandate has expanded over time to include tracking and analyzing global key energy trends, promoting sound energy policy, and fostering multinational energy technology cooperation.
- ✓ Membership: It is made up of 31 member countries, 13 association countries, and 5 accession countries.
- ✓ India joined this organization in 2017 as an Associate member.
- ✓ Reports published by IEA: World Energy Outlook, World Energy Balances, Energy Technology Perspectives, World Energy Statistics and Net Zero by 2050.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Proba-3 mission:

1. It is the European Space Agency's (ESA) first mission dedicated to precision formation flying.
2. It aims to create an artificial eclipse by precisely coordinating two independent satellites.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Union minister of Science and Technology said that India will launch the European Space Agency's Proba-3 mission early next month from the spaceport at Sriharikota.
- ✓ It is the European Space Agency's (ESA) first mission dedicated to precision formation flying.
- ✓ It is the innovative mission which will demonstrate precision formation flying between two satellites to create an artificial eclipse, revealing new views of the Sun's faint corona.
- ✓ The core objective of the mission is to create an artificial eclipse by precisely coordinating two independent satellites. This capability will enable scientists to observe the Sun's corona, a region typically obscured by the intense brightness of the Sun.
- ✓ It consists of two small satellites — a Coronagraph spacecraft and a solar-disc-shaped Occulter spacecraft.
- ✓ Working
- ✓ By flying in tight formation about 150 metres apart, the Occulter will precisely cast its shadow onto the Coronagraph's telescope, blocking the Sun's direct light.

Q. Which organization released the Global Education Monitoring Report 2024?

- A) UNICEF B) IMF
C) UNESCO D) ASEAN

Answer : C

- ✓ UNESCO released the Global Education Monitoring Report 2024 at the Global Education Meeting hosted by Brazil.
- ✓ The report emphasizes leadership in education as crucial for achieving common goals, focusing on social influence and balancing learning outcomes with equity and inclusivity.
- ✓ It highlights a funding issue, with 4 in 10 countries spending less than 4% of GDP on education.
- ✓ 251 million children and youth remain out of school, with a small 1% reduction since 2015.
- ✓ Central and Southern Asia show progress in education access, but Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, and Pakistan have the largest out-of-school populations

Q. Which ministry of the government of India has launched TULIP e-marketplaces for the artisans of the marginalised communities?

- A) Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment
- B) Ministry of Steel
- C) Ministry of Defence
- D) Ministry of Commerce and Industry

Answer : A

- ✓ TULIP brand launched to promote Products of Disadvantaged Artisans.
- ✓ The government of India has launched the TULIP (Traditional Artisans' Upliftment Livelihood Programme) brand to provide a platform for the marginalised artisan communities to sell their products.
- ✓ The TULIP brand was launched by the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment at the opening of the 'Shilp Samagam Mela 2024',
- ✓ Who organised the Shilp Samagam Mela 2024
- ✓ The Shilp Samagam Mela is organised by three institutions under the Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment: the National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation, the National Scheduled Castes Finance and Development Corporation, and the National Safai Karmachari Finance and Development Corporation.
- ✓ The Shilp Smagam Mela 2024 is being held in New Delhi from 5 -15 November 2024.
- ✓ Aim of the Shilp Samagam
- ✓ The ministry organises the Shilp Samagam to provide a marketing opportunity for marginalised artisans to display and sell their products. Traditional handicrafts made by these artisans from all over India are displayed to highlight India's cultural diversity.
- ✓ This year, products from 16 states are being displayed. A wide variety of products made from cane and bamboo, metals, pottery, wooden artefacts, handloom items, jewellery, leather goods, and various attractive textiles.
- ✓ Dr Virendra Kumar, Union Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment, inaugurated the Shilp Samagam Mela 2024.
- ✓ During the Shilp Samagam Mela 2024, the Minister launched the e-market platform TULIP(Traditional Artisans' Upliftment Livelihood Programme).
- ✓ What is TULIP?
- ✓ The TULIP(Traditional Artisans' Upliftment Livelihood Programme) is an e-marketplace where artisans from Scheduled Castes, Other Backward Classes, sanitation workers, and persons with disabilities can sell their products in India and abroad.
- ✓ It is expected to improve the socio-economic conditions of these marginalised communities and empower them.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Tuna Fish

1. It is a warm blooded pelagic marine fish.
2. It is found in tropical and temperate regions of all oceans.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Department of Fisheries, under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying has notified the Development of Tuna Cluster in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY).
- ✓ They are pelagic marine fish, spending their entire lives relatively near the surface of tropical, subtropical and temperate oceans and seas.
- ✓ There are seven main species of tuna consumed by humans including albacore, skipjack, yellowfin and three species of bluefin tuna.
- ✓ Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana
- ✓ It was launched in September 2020 with an aim to double the income of fish farmers and fishers in the country.
- ✓ It focuses on activities with potential to generate employment such as seaweed and ornamental fish cultivation. It also emphasises on the breeding technique for quality brood, seed & feed and species diversification.
- ✓ It is an umbrella scheme with two separate Components namely (a) Central Sector Scheme (CS) and (b) Centrally Sponsored Scheme (CSS).
- ✓ The CSS Component is further segregated into Non-beneficiary oriented and beneficiary orientated subcomponents/activities under the following three broad heads:
 - ✓ Enhancement of Production and Productivity
 - ✓ Infrastructure and Post-harvest Management
 - ✓ Fisheries Management and Regulatory Framework
- ✓ PMMSY will be implemented in all the States and Union Territories for a period of 5 (five) years from FY 2020-21 to FY 2024-25.

Q. Which state hosted the 3rd AUSTRAHIND joint military exercise?

A) West Bengal	B) Maharashtra
C) Uttarakhand	D) Mizoram

Answer : B

- ✓ 3rd AUSTRAHIND military exercise commences in Maharashtra.
- ✓ The 3rd India-Australia joint military exercise, code-named AUSTRAHIND, commenced at the Foreign Training Node, Pune, Maharashtra, on 8 November 2024.
- ✓ The 3rd AUSTRAHIND, hosted by the Indian Army, will be held from 8-21 November 2024.
- ✓ The 2nd edition of the AUSTRAHIND exercise was held in Australia in December 2023.
- ✓ The first edition of the annual AUSTRAHIND exercise was held in 2022, and India and Australia alternatively host it.

Q. Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), the premier Telecom R&D centre of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Government of India has signed an agreement with which IIT for the development of “Millimeter Wave Transceiver for 5G Rural Connectivity”?

A) IIT Madras	B) IIT Roorkee
C) IIT Bombay	D) IIT Guwahati

Answer : B

- ✓ Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT), the telecom research and development (R&D) centre of the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), have signed an agreement with the Indian Institute of Technology-Roorkee (IIT-Roorkee) for the development of a “millimeter wave transceiver for 5G rural connectivity”.
- ✓ The agreement is signed under the Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF) scheme of the Department of Telecommunications, Government of India.
- ✓ This scheme, designed to fund Indian startups, academia, and R&D institutions, is a crucial enabler for designing, developing, and commercializing telecommunication products and solutions.

Q. Which country has launched its second satellite, ZIMSAT –2, marking another significant stride in the country's space programme?

- A) Nigeria
B) Zimbabwe
C) West Indies
D) South Africa

Answer : B

- ✓ Zimbabwe has launched its second satellite, ZIMSAT –2, marking another significant stride in the country's space programme.
- ✓ In November 2022, the country deployed its inaugural satellite, ZimSat-1.
- ✓ A low earth observation satellite- ZIMSAT-2, was launched from the Vostochny Cosmodrome in eastern Russia in a collaborative effort between the Zimbabwe National Geo-Spatial and Space Agency (ZINGSA) and Southwest State University in Russia.
- ✓ ZIMSAT-2 is equipped with a high-resolution multispectral camera designed to support various applications, including agriculture, resource exploration, and environmental monitoring.

Q. Which Indian institution has been ranked the best by the recently released QS World University Rankings: Asia (2025)?

- A) IIT Madras
B) IIT Bombay
C) IIT Delhi
D) IIT Kanpur

Answer : C

- ✓ IIT-D No. 1 Indian Institute in QS World University Rankings: Asia 2025.
- ✓ The Indian Institute of Technology -Delhi has been ranked as the top Indian educational institution in the latest QS World University Rankings: Asia (2025).
- ✓ IIT-Delhi has been ranked 44th best educational institution, while China's Peking University retained the top spot amongst the list of educational institutions in Asia as per the QS World University Rankings: Asia (2025).
- ✓ The QS World University Rankings: Asia (2025) ranks 984 educational institutions among 25 South Asian, Central Asian, Eastern Asian and South-East Asian countries.
- ✓ These educational institutions are ranked based on the comparison and preference of the institutions and students.

Q. How many Indian educational institutions have been included in the top 50 by the recently released QS World University Rankings: Asia (2025)?

- A) 2
B) 4
C) 3
D) 5

Answer : A

- ✓ Indian Educational Institutions Performance
- ✓ Out of the 984 educational institutions included in the ranking, the highest, 162 were from India. Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi was the highest-ranked Indian institution, with a rank of 44, up from 46 last year.
- ✓ IIT-Delhi was also the highest-ranked educational institution in the South Asian Region.
- ✓ In the South Asian region, among the top 10 institutions, seven are Indian institutions.
- ✓ After IIT-D, IIT-Bombay was second highest, with a rank of 48, and IIT-Madras was third, with a rank of 56.
- ✓ IIT Kharagpur was in fourth place with a rank of 60, followed by the Indian Institute of Science (62), IIT Kanpur (67), and the University of Delhi (81).
- ✓ India has two institutions in the top 50 and seven in the top 100 educational institutions.

- ✓ The University of Petroleum and Energy Studies was the improved Indian institution, with its rank improving from 148 last year to 70 this year.

Q. Which University has been ranked the best by the recently released QS World University Rankings: Asia (2025)?

- A) The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong
- B) National University of Singapore
- C) Peking University of China
- D) Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Answer : C

- ✓ Top-ranked Asian Educational Institutions
- 1. Peking University, Mainland China
- 2. The University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong
- 3. National University of Singapore,
- 4. Nanyang Technological University, Singapore
- 5. Fudan University, Mainland China
- 6. The Chinese University of Hong Kong
- 7. Tsinghua University, Mainland China
- 8. Zhejiang University, Mainland China
- 9. Yonsei University, South Korea
- 10. City University of Hong Kong

Q. What was the rank of India in the filing of patents in the world in 2023, according to the World Intellectual Property Indicators Report 2024?

- A) 5
- B) 6
- C) 8
- D) 9

Answer : B

- ✓ India ranked 6th in the world in WIPO Global Patent Filings in 2023
- ✓ India has, for the first time, has been ranked 6th in the world for global patent filings in 2023. According to the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) annual World Intellectual Property Indicators Report 2024, released on 7 November 2024, global patent filing increased by 15.7 % in 2023, primarily due to a strong increase in patent filing in India.
- ✓ More than 35 lakh patents were filed in 2023 across the world.
- ✓ Strong Growth in Patent Filing in India
- ✓ According to the WIPO report, the number of patents filed in India in 2023 was 64,480.
- ✓ The country's growth rate in patent filing was 15.7 % compared to 2022.
- ✓ The patent filing in India has shown the 5th consecutive year of a double-digit growth rate.
- ✓ For the first time, India was included in the top 10 countries of the world for three main intellectual property (IP) rights: patents, Industrial design applications, and trademark applications.
- ✓ Patent and industrial design applications more than doubled between 2018 and 2023, and trademark applications increased by 60%.
- ✓ Among the top 20 origins, India recorded the fastest growth in patent applications in 2023,
- ✓ Status of Global Patent Filing
- ✓ According to the World Intellectual Property Indicators Report 2024, more than 35 lakh patents were filed worldwide in 2023.
- ✓ It was the fourth successive year that global patent filing has shown positive growth.
- ✓ In 2023, the maximum patent filing was in China (1.64 million), followed by the United States of America (518,364), Japan (414,413), South Korea (287,954), Germany (133,053) and India (64,480).

- ✓ Asia remains the top spot for patents, accounting for 68.7 per cent, 66.7 per cent, and 69 percent of global patent, trademark, and industrial design filing activity, respectively, in 2023.
- ✓ China, Japan, and South Korea accounted for around 91 per cent of the total patent filings in 2023 among Asian countries.
- ✓ China, the Republic of Korea(South Korea), the US, Japan, and India were the main drivers of global growth in 2023.

Q. Who releases the World Intellectual Property Indicators Report 2024?

A) WEF	B) UNEP
C) UNDP	D) WIPO

Answer : D

- ✓ About WIPO
- ✓ The World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) was established in 1967 as a United Nations agency. Its main function is to promote the protection of Intellectual Property rights worldwide.
- ✓ Headquarters: Geneva, Switzerland
- ✓ Members: 197 countries
- ✓ Director General: Daren Tang

Q. Who has won the FIH Male Player of the Year Award 2024?

A) Artemi Panarin	B) Cale Makar
C) Matthew Tkachuk	D) Harmanpreet Singh

Answer : D

- ✓ Harmanpreet Singh & PR Sreejesh wins FIH Hockey Star Award 2024.
- ✓ Indian men's hockey team captain Harmapreet Singh and former Indian goalkeeper PR Sreejesh won the FIH Hockey Star Awards 2024. The world governing body of Hockey, FIH, announced the winner of its annual Hockey Star award for the year 2024 in a glittering ceremony held in the Omani capital city of Muscat on 8 November 2024.
- ✓ Male and Female hockey players were selected for the FIH Hockey Star Award 2024 for their performance in 2024.
- ✓ The winners were selected through votes cast by a panel of experts, national associations represented by their team captains and coaches, fans, and media.
- ✓ Harmanpreet bags Player of the Year Award
- ✓ Harmanpreet Singh won his third FIH Player of the Year award in 2024, having won it in 2021 and 2022. Incidentally, another Indian, Hardik Singh, won the 2023 Award.
- ✓ Harmanpreet Singh received 63.84% of the votes, far ahead of second-place Joop de Mol of the Netherlands, who received 16.10%.
- ✓ Indian captain Harmpreet Singh, who is regarded as one of the top drag flickers in the world, captained India to a bronze medal in the 2024 Paris Summer Olympics. He was also the top scorer of the tournament with 10 goals.
- ✓ Harmnapreet also led the Indian hockey team to its fifth Asian Men's Champions Trophy title in China in September 2024, where he was also named the player of the tournament.

Q. Who has won the FIH Male Goalkeeper of the Year Award 2024?

A) Auston Matthews	B) Connor McDavid
C) PR Sreejesh	D) Nathan MacKinnon

Answer : C

- ✓ Sreejesh bags his 3rd FIH Goalkeeper of the Year Award

- ✓ Long-time Indian men's hockey team goalkeeper PR Sreejesh won his third FIH Goalkeeper of the Year award. PR Sreejesh, who, due to his formidable goalkeeping, was also called as the 'the Great Wall of India', had won the award in 2021 and 2022 also.
- ✓ Sreejesh, who retired after the 2024 Paris Olympics, got 62.22 per cent of the votes.
- ✓ Winners of the 2024 FIH Hockey Star Awards
- ✓ Player of the Year
- ✓ Male- Harpreet Singh of India
- ✓ Women- Yibbi Jansen of Netherlands
- ✓ Goalkeeper of the Year
- ✓ Male- PR Sreejesh of India
- ✓ Women- Ye Jiao of China
- ✓ Rising Star of the Year Award
- ✓ Male-Sufyan Khan of Pakistan
- ✓ Women-Zoe Diaz of Argentina
- ✓ Coach of the Year Award
- ✓ Men- Jeroen Delmee of Netherlands
- ✓ Women-Alyson Annan of China
- ✓ Umpire of the Year
- ✓ Male - Steve Rogers of Australia
- ✓ Women-Sarah Wilson of Scotland

Q. Where was the third Summit of the European Political Community held?

A) Paris, France	B) Budapest, Hungary
C) Brussels, Belgium	D) Copenhagen, Denmark

Answer : B

- ✓ The 3rd Summit of the European Political Community was held in Budapest, Hungary, on 7 November 2024. It was hosted by the Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orban.
- ✓ Around 40 European leaders attended the Summit of the European Political Community.
- ✓ On the suggestion of French President Emmanuel Macron and in the background of the Russian Invasion of Ukraine in 2022, the European Union set up the European Political Community.
- ✓ The 27-member European Union is the main driving force behind the European Political Community.
- ✓ The first summit meeting of the European Political Community took place in Prague on 6 October 2022, and Chişinău, Moldova, hosted the second summit meeting in June 2023.

Q. Where was the International Conference in Support of Lebanon's People and Sovereignty held?

A) London, UK	B) Berlin, Germany
C) Rome, Italy	D) Paris, France

Answer : D

- ✓ The International Conference in Support of Lebanon's People and Sovereignty was held in Paris, France, on 24 October 2024. It was organised by French President Emmanuel Macron with the support of the United Nations.
- ✓ The conference's main aim was to raise aid for the country, which has become a battleground between Israel and Hezbollah.
- ✓ The donor countries pledged \$1 billion for Lebanon, of which \$800 million will be for humanitarian purposes and \$200 million will be used to support Lebanon's security forces

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the 'One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) Initiative:

1. It is an initiative to introduce a transnational electricity grid that supplies renewable energy power worldwide.
2. The project is being spearheaded by the governments of India and the United States in partnership with the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the World Bank Group.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ India is in advanced discussions with Oman, UAE, Saudi Arabia, Maldives, and Singapore to establish cross-border electricity transmission lines as part of the ambitious 'One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) initiative.
- ✓ About One Sun One World One Grid' (OSOWOG) Initiative:
- ✓ The idea for the OSOWOG initiative was put forth by the Prime Minister of India, at the First Assembly of the International Solar Alliance (ISA) in October 2018.
- ✓ It is an initiative to introduce a transnational electricity grid that supplies power worldwide.
- ✓ The project is being spearheaded by the governments of India and the UK in partnership with the International Solar Alliance (ISA) and the World Bank Group.
- ✓ Vision: It aims to connect different regional grids through a common grid that will be used to transfer renewable energy power and, thus, realize the potential of renewable energy sources, especially solar energy.
- ✓ OSOWOG aims to provide power to about 140 countries through a common grid that will ensure the transfer of clean and efficient solar power.
- ✓ The OSOWOG initiative is to be carried out in 3 phases:
- ✓ In the first phase, the Indian grid would be connected to the grids of the Middle East, South Asia, and South-East Asia to develop a common grid. This grid would then be used to share solar energy as needed, in addition to other renewable energy sources.
- ✓ The second phase would connect the functional first phase to the pool of renewable resources in Africa.
- ✓ The third phase would look at achieving true global interconnection with the aim of 2,600 GW of interconnection by 2050.

Q. Who has been sworn in as the 51st Chief Justice of India?

- A) Justice B.R. Gavai B) Justice Surya Kant
C) Justice Sanjiv Khanna D) Justice Vikram Nath

Answer : C

- ✓ Justice Sanjiv Khanna was sworn in as 51st CJI by President Murmu.
- ✓ The senior most Supreme Court Judge, Justice Sanjiv Khanna, was sworn in as the 51st Chief Justice of India by President Droupadi Murmu in a ceremony held at the Rashtrapati Bhawan in New Delhi on 11 November 2024.
- ✓ Justice Sanjiv Khanna succeeded Justice Dhananjaya Yeshwant Chandrachud, who demitted office on 10 November 2024.
- ✓ Vice President Jagdeep Dhankar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union Minister of State (Independent Charge) Arjun Ram Meghwal, former Chief Justice of India Dhananjaya Yeshwant Chandrachud and other dignitaries were present on the occasion.
- ✓ About CJI Justice Sanjiv Khanna

- ✓ Justice Sanjiv Khanna started his career as a lawyer in 1983 at the Tis Hazari Court in New Delhi. He was appointed as an additional judge of the Delhi High Court in 2005 and a permanent judge in 2006.
- ✓ On 18th January 2019, Justice Khanna was appointed as a judge of the Supreme Court.
- ✓ Supreme Court and its Chief Justice
- ✓ On 28 January 1950, the Supreme Court of India formally came into existence, succeeding the Federal Court, which was set up under the Government of India Act 1935.
- ✓ 1st Chief Justice of India- H.J.Kania
- ✓ The 16th Chief Justice of India, Yeshwant Vishnu Chandrachud, is the longest-serving Chief Justice of India. He was Chief Justice of India for over 7 years (February 1978 – July 1985).
- ✓ The 22nd Chief Justice of India, Kamal Narain Singh, is the shortest-serving Chief Justice.
- ✓ He was the Chief Justice of India for 17 days (25 November 1991 – 12 December 1991).

Q. What is the retirement age of the Chief Justice of India?

- A) 63 years
- B) 62 years
- C) 65 years
- D) 68 years

Answer : C

- ✓ Term of the Chief Justice of India
- ✓ The Constitution of India doesn't mention the term of the Chief Justice of India or the other judges of the Supreme Court. Article 124(2) of the constitution says that they will hold office until they attain the age of 65.
- ✓ The Chief Justice or the judges of the Supreme Court can resign by addressing their resignation letter to the President of India. The president can also remove them from their office after Parliament passes a resolution for their removal with a special majority.
- ✓ Thus, Justice Sanjiv Khanna will retire on 13 May 2025, when he will be 65 years old

Q. Who appoints the Chief Justice of India?

- A) President of India
- B) Prime Minister of India
- C) Election Commission of India
- D) Supreme Court of India

Answer : A

- ✓ Appointment of the Chief Justice of India
- ✓ Article 124(2) mentions the procedure for appointing Supreme Court judges. The Constitution empowers the President to appoint Supreme Court judges (Chief Justice and other judges).
- ✓ While choosing the Chief Justice of India, the President can consult;
- ✓ Judges of the Supreme Court and
- ✓ Judges of the High Court.
- ✓ The Supreme Court's senior judge is appointed as India's Chief Justice by convention.

Q. Who has been confirmed as the women's No.1 tennis player for 2024?

- A) Iga Świątek
- B) Aryna Sabalenka
- C) Elena Rybakina
- D) Coco Gauff

Answer : B

- ✓ Aryna Sabalenka ends 2024 as World number one in Women's Tennis
- ✓ 26-year-old Aryna Sabalenka of Belarus was confirmed as the World No. 1 women's tennis player for 2024 by the Women's Tennis Association (WTA).
- ✓ Her spot as world no.1 was confirmed when Iga Swiatek of Poland lost her match against Coco Gauff in the WTA Finals at Riyadh.
- ✓ The WTA Finals was eventually won by Coco Gauff of the United States.

- ✓ This is the first time Aryna Sabalenka has been confirmed as the year-end world number one in women's tennis.
- ✓ Aryna Sabalenka had a very good 2024 season, where she won two grand slam singles titles and two WTA 1000 tournament titles.
- ✓ She won the 2024 Australian Open singles title and the 2024 US Open singles title. She also won the WTA 1000 - Cincinnati Open and the Wuhan Open
- ✓ Year end - top 5
- ✓ 1st- Aryna Sabalenka(Belarus)
- ✓ 2nd- Iga Swiatek (Poland)
- ✓ 3rd- Coco Gauff (American)
- ✓ 4th- Jasmine Paolini (Italy)
- ✓ 5th- Qinwen Zheng (China)

Q. Where was the 8th International Ancient Arts Festival and Symposium held?

- A) New Delhi B) Goa
C) Mumbai D) Chennai

Answer : A

- ✓ The 8th International Ancient Arts Festival and Symposium was held in New Delhi at the Indira Gandhi National Centers for Arts (IGNCA) from November 8 to 10, 2024.
- ✓ The International Ancient Arts Festival and Symposium is country's only multi-arts event of its kind, which tries to educate the people in the ancient Indian art form along with entertaining them with performances.
- ✓ The event consists of lectures by esteemed scholars on the latest research on the healing potential of ancient art forms, along with artistic performances.
- ✓ At the inaugural session of the 8th International Ancient Arts Festival and Symposium Dr. Reela Hota and her troupe presented 'Antar Yatra'.
- ✓ This dance drama incorporates Odissi, Chhau, and contemporary ballet to symbolise the ascension of consciousness from the base (Mooladhara) to the crown (Sahasrara) chakra.
- ✓ On the festival's final day, a Kuchipudi dance performance was given by renowned Kuchipudi exponent Yamini Reddy and her group.
- ✓ The 8th International Ancient Arts Festival and Symposium was organised by the Indira Gandhi National Centers for Arts (IGNCA) in collaboration with the Rays of Wisdom Society. It is also being supported by the Union Ministry of Culture.
- ✓ The Indira Gandhi National Centers for Arts (IGNCA) was established by the government of India in 1985 under the Ministry of Culture. It is located in New Delhi.

Q. Which of the following musical instruments were played by the musicians such as Pandit Ram Narayan?

- A) veena
B) sarangi
C) ghatam
D) sarod

Answer : B

- ✓ Legendary sarangi player Pandit Ram Narayan dies at 96.
- ✓ Legendary sarangi maestro Pandit Ram Narayan died at 96, leaving behind a rich musical legacy. Tributes poured in to celebrate his contributions to Indian classical music.
- ✓ He was awarded India's second highest civilian honour, the Padma Vibhushan, in 2005.
- ✓ Pandit Ram Narayan, an Indian musician, was credited with popularising the musical instrument sarangi as a solo concert instrument.
- ✓ He is a Hindustani classical musician who plays the bowed instrument, the sarangi.
- ✓ He is credited with popularizing the sarangi as a solo classical instrument.

- ✓ He was born in 1927 in Amber village in Rajasthan.
- ✓ A sarangi is a bowed stringed instrument with a skin-covered resonator.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Arrow-3 Missile Defence System:

1. It was jointly developed by Israel and the United States of America.
2. It is primarily designed to intercept ballistic missiles outside the Earth's atmosphere.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Israel's Defence Ministry has begun coordinating joint preparations with the German Federal Ministry of Defence for the initial deployment of Israel's Arrow-3 missile interception system on German soil in 2025.
- ✓ About Arrow-3 Missile Defence System:
- ✓ It is an exo-atmospheric anti-ballistic missile defence system for long-range threat engagement.
- ✓ The Arrow 3 interceptor is part of a series of the Arrow Weapon System (AWS), the world's first national, operational, and stand-alone Anti Tactical Ballistic Missiles (ATBM) defense system.
- ✓ It was jointly developed by Israel Aerospace Industries and the Missile Defence Agency in the US.
- ✓ Initially deployed in 2017, Arrow-3 is the top layer of Israel's sophisticated air-defense network, which also includes the Arrow 2, David's Sling, and the Iron Dome active defence systems.

Q. Which country's tourism department has appointed actor Sonu Sood as the brand ambassador for tourism?

- A) Sri Lanka
B) Nepal
C) Thailand
D) UAE

Answer : C

- ✓ Famous actor Sonu Sood has been appointed as the brand ambassador and advisor for Thailand Tourism.
- ✓ The Ministry of Tourism and Sports of Thailand has officially awarded him the title of "Honorary Tourism Advisor".

Q. The Toto Tribe, one of the most endangered tribes in the world, primarily resides in which one of the following states?

- A) Nagaland
B) Odisha
C) West Bengal
D) Uttarakhand

Answer : C

- ✓ Totos, one of the smallest tribes in the world, are fighting for identity and suffering from infrastructure woes.
- ✓ About Toto Tribe:
- ✓ Toto is an aboriginal Indo-Bhutanese tribe concentrated in the village of Totopara in Alipurduar district of West Bengal.
- ✓ The Totopara village falls under the periphery of Jaldapara Wildlife Sanctuary.
- ✓ It nestles just to the south of the border between Bhutan and West Bengal, on the bank of the Torsa River.

- ✓ Anthropologically, the Toto tribe is a branch of the Tibetan-Mongoloid ethnic group.
- ✓ They are categorised as a Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Group (PVTG).

Q. When is National Education Day celebrated every year?

- A) 09 November
- B) 10 November
- C) 11 November
- D) 12 November

Answer : C

- ✓ National Education Day is celebrated every year on 11 November to honour the birth anniversary of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, the first Education Minister of independent India.
- ✓ 'India Wins freedom' is a book written by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
- ✓ The Al-Hilal was an Urdu language newspaper founded by Maulana Abul Kalam Azad.
- ✓ The day commemorates his significant contributions in promoting primary and secondary education in the country as well as in advancing scientific knowledge.
- ✓ He became the youngest President of the Indian National Congress in the year 1923 at the age of 35.
- ✓ Maulana Azad was the first Education Minister after India's independence.
- ✓ He founded the University Grants Commission (UGC) and the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT).

Q. Who has been elected the President of the International Hockey Federation?

- A) Sandeep Singh
- B) Mandeep Singh
- C) Tayyab Ikram
- D) Dilip Tirkey

Answer : C

- ✓ Tayyib Ikram has been elected as the President of the International Hockey Federation (FIH) for the second consecutive term.
- ✓ Ikram secured 79 out of 126 votes at the 49th FIH Congress in Muscat, Oman, while his rival Marc Caudron of Belgium got 47 votes.
- ✓ International Hockey Federation (FIH)
- ✓ Formation : 1924
- ✓ Founded at Paris, France
- ✓ Headquarters : Lausanne, Switzerland
- ✓ President : Tayyab Ikram (Pakistan)
- ✓ CEO : Thierry Weil (France)

Q. Which shipyard built India's first indigenous aircraft carrier named Vikrant?

- A) Mazagon Dock Limited
- B) Cochin Shipyard Limited
- C) Hooghly Dock & Port Engineers Limited
- D) Hindustan Shipyard Limited

Answer : B

- ✓ The President of India recently witnessed a demonstration on INS Vikrant, India's first indigenously designed and built aircraft carrier.
- ✓ Designed by the Indian Navy's Warship Design Bureau and constructed by Cochin Shipyard Limited.
- ✓ It strengthens India's position as a 'Blue Water Navy' with global reach, joining the US, Russia, France, UK, and China in the elite group capable of building aircraft carriers.

- ✓ The Parliament of Japan has once again elected Shigeru Ishiba as the Prime Minister of the country.
- ✓ A special session of Parliament was called on Monday for the necessary voting to select a new leader within 30 days of the general election.
- ✓ In the country's first runoff in 30 years, Ishiba defeated opposition leader Yoshihiko Noda by 221 votes to 160.
- ✓ Ishiba received 221 votes, outperforming Noda to become the country's 103rd Prime Minister.
- ✓ The Japanese Parliament is known as the Diet. The Diet is bicameral, with the upper house called the House of Councillors and the lower house called the House of Representatives.
- ✓ The Upper House has 250 members, while the House of Representatives consists of 467 members.
- ✓ About Japan
- ✓ Japan is an archipelago situated on the east coast of Asia. It mainly consists of four islands -Hokkaido, Honshu, Shikoku and Kyushu.
- ✓ Mount Fuji is the highest mountain in Japan (3778 meters above sea level), and it is an active volcano.
- ✓ Japanese people call their country Nihon or Nippon.
- ✓ Japan is a developed country that is a member of the G-7 and the OECD(Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development).
- ✓ It is the second-largest economy in Asia after China and the world's fourth-largest economy after the United States, China, and Germany.
- ✓ Capital: Tokyo
- ✓ Currency: Yen
- ✓ Prime Minister: Shigeru Ishiba

Q. Who has become the new Prime Minister of Mauritius?

A) Pravind Jagannath	B) Ashok Sinha
C) Dr. Naveen Ramgoolam	D) Roshi Bhadain

Answer : C

- ✓ In the parliamentary elections held in Mauritius, the leader of the Labour Party, Dr. Naveen Ramgoolam has won and become the new Prime Minister of the country.
- ✓ Naveen Ramgoolam has defeated the current Prime Minister of the country Pravind Jagannath.
- ✓ About Mauritius
- ✓ Capital - Port Louis
- ✓ Currency - Mauritian Rupee
- ✓ Prime Minister - Dr. Naveen Ramgoolam

Q. Who is the Foreign Secretary to whom the government has given extension?

A) Rajeev Kumar	B) Vikram Misri
C) Alok Kumar Singh	D) Naman Arora

Answer : B

- ✓ Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri Term Extended till 14 July 2026.
- ✓ The government of India has extended the term of the current Foreign Secretary of India, Vikram Misri, till 14 July 2026. The Department of Personnel and Training issued a notification to this effect on 11 November 2024.
- ✓ The notification was issued after the Appointment Committee of the Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved Vikram Misri's extension.
- ✓ Vikram Misri, a member of the 1989 Indian Foreign Service batch, took over as the 35th Foreign Secretary of India on 15 July 2024. He was due to retire on 30 November 2024.
- ✓ The government of India has the power to extend the term of the foreign secretary beyond the due date of retirement in the public interest.

- ✓ President Droupadi Murmu has appointed senior Supreme Court Judge Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai as the Executive Chairman of the National Legal Service Authority (NLSA). Justice B R Gavai succeeds Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who was appointed the 51st Chief Justice of India
- ✓ The Chief Justice of India is ex-officio the Patron-in-Chief of the National Legal Service Authority.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile:

1. It can be launched from both mobile ground-based systems and frontline ships by using a universal vertical launch module.
2. It is developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted the maiden flight-test of Long Range Land Attack Cruise Missile (LRLACM) from the Integrated Test Range (ITR), Chandipur off the coast of Odisha on November 12, 2024
- ✓ It is designed to be launched from both mobile ground-based systems and frontline ships, using a universal vertical launch module, further enhancing its operational flexibility.
- ✓ It is also able to execute complex manoeuvres while flying at different speeds and altitudes, showcasing the missile's versatility and precision.
- ✓ The LRLACM is equipped with state-of-the-art avionics and software that enhances its performance and reliability.
- ✓ These missiles are typically subsonic and can follow terrain-hugging flight paths, making them harder to detect and intercept, thus allowing for a strategic advantage in penetrating enemy defenses.
- ✓ Developed by: It is developed by DRDO's Aeronautical Development establishment in Bengaluru, the LRLACM is the result of collaboration between various DRDO laboratories and Indian industries.
- ✓ Bharat Dynamics Limited (BDL) in Hyderabad and Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) in Bengaluru served as the Development-Cum-Production Partners.
- ✓ The Defence Acquisition Council (DAC) had previously approved LRLACM as a Mission Mode Project, sanctioned under the Acceptance of Necessity (AoN) procedure

Q. With reference to NISAR Satellite, consider the following statements:

1. It is jointly developed by ISRO and NASA.
2. It consists of both L-band and S-band synthetic aperture radar (SAR) instruments.
3. It will be launched in Medium Earth orbit.

How many of the above statements are correct?

- A) Only one
B) Only two
C) All three
D) None

Answer : B

- ✓ ISRO and NASA are planning to launch a new satellite called NISAR in early 2025 that will help keep track of Earth's surface on land and ice covered areas.
- ✓ It is a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) observatory jointly developed by NASA and ISRO.
- ✓ It will be launched by using ISRO's Geosynchronous Satellite Launch Vehicle Mark II rocket.
- ✓ It consists of both L-band and S-band synthetic aperture radar (SAR) instruments, which makes it a dual-frequency imaging radar satellite.

- ✓ NISAR will be the first satellite mission to use two different radar frequencies (L-band and S-band) to measure changes in our planet's surface.
- ✓ NASA has provided the L-band radar, GPS, a high-capacity solid-state recorder to store data, and a payload data subsystem. ISRO has provided the S-band radar, the GSLV launch system, and spacecraft.
- ✓ Objectives:
- ✓ It will measure Earth's changing ecosystems, dynamic surfaces, and ice masses, providing information about biomass, natural hazards, sea level rise, and groundwater.
- ✓ NISAR will observe Earth's land and ice-covered surfaces globally with 12-day regularity on ascending and descending passes.
- ✓ The NISAR mission will also benefit researchers focused on volcanic activity by helping track surface bulging or sinking caused by magma movement.
- ✓ Hence only statements 1 and 2 are correct.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Pinaka Multi-Barrel Rocket Launcher:

1. It consists of a multi-tube launcher vehicle and has a range of 60 to 75 kilometers.
2. It is developed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ France is considering India's Pinaka Multi-Barrel Rocket Launch (MBRL) system for its requirements and is soon going to carry out a detailed evaluation of the system.
- ✓ About Pinaka Multi-Barrel Rocket Launch (MBRL) system:
- ✓ It is designed by the Armament Research and Development Establishment (ARDE), a laboratory of the DRDO.
- ✓ It was first used during the Kargil War, where it successfully neutralised Pakistan Army positions on the mountain tops.
- ✓ The rocket launcher has two pods containing six rockets each and can neutralise an area of 700 × 500 square metres within 48 seconds.
- ✓ The launcher system is supported on four hydraulically actuated outriggers at the time of firing.
- ✓ Range: It has a range of 60 to 75 kilometers.
- ✓ It consists of a multi-tube launcher vehicle, a replenishment-cum-loader vehicle, a replenishment vehicle, and a command post vehicle.

Q. Which country has bought the surface to air the Akash missile system from India?

- A) Comoros B) Seychelles
C) Algeria D) Armenia

Answer : D

- ✓ India ships first batch of Akash Weapon system to Armenia.
- ✓ In a significant milestone for the indigenous Indian defence sector, the first batch of the indigenously developed surface-to-air missile system Akash, was shipped to Armenia.
- ✓ The indigenously developed and manufactured Akash system is part of a deal under which India is to supply 15 Akash systems to Armenia.
- ✓ This is the second missile system to be exported from India after India sold the supersonic Brahmos cruise missile to the Philippines.

- ✓ With a record defence export of Rs 21,083 crore in 2023-24, the government has set a defence export target of Rs 35,000 crore for 2024-25.
- ✓ The United States of America has emerged as the largest buyer of the Indian weapon system, followed by France.
- ✓ Defence production reaches a record Rs 1.26 lakh crore in 23-24.
- ✓ About the Akash Missile System
- ✓ The Akash is a surface-to-air missile system developed by the premier Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and manufactured by Hyderabad-based Bharat Dynamics Limited.
- ✓ The missile has a range of 25 km and can engage hostile aircraft, drones, missiles and other aerial assets.
- ✓ Pinaka Multi Barrel Rocket Launcher
- ✓ The multi-barrel rocket launcher system Pinaka has been developed by the DRDO for the Indian Army.
- ✓ Pinaka is a long-range artillery system in which multiple rockets are fired simultaneously from a single platform. Pinaka has a range of 75 km. Each Pinaka can fire 12 rockets in 44 seconds.
- ✓ About Armenia
- ✓ Capital: Yerevan
- ✓ Currency: Dram
- ✓ Prime Minister: Nikol Pashinyan

Q. Who leads the coastal defence Sea Vigil exercise in India?

A) Indian Navy	B) Indian army
C) Indian Air force	D) Indian coast Guard

Answer : A

- ✓ Indian Navy all set to host 4th Sea Vigil Exercise 2024.
- ✓ The Indian Navy is all set to host the 4th Sea Vigil exercises on 20 and 21 November 2024.
- ✓ The biennial Sea Vigil is a national-level coastal defence exercise that involves various other stakeholders responsible for India's coastal and maritime security.
- ✓ The third edition of the Sea Vigil was held in November 2022 and conducted under the overall leadership of the Indian Navy.
- ✓ About the Sea Vigil Exercise
- ✓ The Sea Vigil exercise led by the Indian Navy was started in 2018, and it is held every two years.
- ✓ The Sea Vigil exercise is a precursor to the Indian Navy's own 'Theatre Level Readiness Operational Exercise (TROPEX)', conducted every two years.
- ✓ The Sea Vigil exercise was conceptualised in India after the Mumbai terror attack of 2008 when Pakistani terrorists used the sea routes to attack Mumbai.
- ✓ Regular exercises are conducted in the coastal states by the Indian Coast Guard under the code name Sagar Kavach to assess the coastal security in a particular coastal region of the country.
- ✓ The Indian Navy will lead the 4th Sea Vigil exercise, which will include 6 central government ministries and 21 Organisations /Agencies related to coastal security, such as Customs, State marine police, Indian Coast Guard, etc.

Q. Who has won the 2024 IBSF Men's World Billiards Championship?

A) Jaden Ong	B) Pankaj Advani
C) Geet Sethi	D) Sourav Kothari

Answer : B

- ✓ Ace Cueist Pankaj Advani bags 28th World title at Doha, Qatar.

- ✓ Legendary Indian cueist Pankaj Advani won his 28th world title at the IBSF World Billiards Championship in Doha, Qatar. In the final, played on 9 November 2024, he defeated Robert Hall of England 4-2.
- ✓ This was Pankaj Advani's seventh consecutive title win at the IBSF World Billiards Championships. The IBSF World Billiards and Snooker Championship is for non-professional snooker and billiards players.
- ✓ Cue sports are played with a cue stick to hit a ball on a table covered with cloth or a baize with pockets in the table's four corners. Cue sports include billiards, snooker, and pool

Q. Who has won the 2024 IBSF Men's World Snooker Championship?

- A) Stephen Hendry
B) John Higgins
C) Judd Trump
D) Muhammad Asif

Answer : D

- ✓ M.Asif from Pakistan wins the IBSF Men's World Snooker Championship.
- ✓ Pakistani cueist Muhammad Asif made history by winning the IBSF Men's World Snooker Championship 2024 for the third time.
- ✓ He is the only player in the world after Pankaj Advani to have won the IBSF World Men's Snooker Championship three times.
- ✓ In the final, Muhammad Asif defeated Ali Gharaghouzlo of Iran in 5-3 frames.
- ✓ The 2024 IBSF World Billiards and Snooker Championship were organised by the International Billiards and Snooker Federations in Doha, Qatar, and hosted by the Qatar Billiards and Snooker Federation.
- ✓ The World Snooker Championship was held from 28 October to 9 November 2024, while the World Snooker Championship was held from 2 to 9 November 2024 at Doha.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT):

1. It is an intergovernmental organization established with the aim of promoting ICT development in the Asia-Pacific region.
2. It was founded on the joint initiatives of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India has hosted the South Asian Telecommunication Regulators' Council (SATRC), organised by the Asia Pacific Telecommunity (APT), in Delhi recently.
- ✓ About Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT):
- ✓ APT is an intergovernmental organization established in February 1979 with the aim of promoting ICT development in the Asia-Pacific region.
- ✓ APT was founded on the joint initiatives of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU).
- ✓ Currently, the APT has a strength of 38 Members, 4 Associate Members and more than 140 Affiliate Members (private companies and academia whose works are relevant to the ICT field).
- ✓ APT conducts various preparatory activities for international conferences, including the ITU Plenipotentiary Conference (PP), World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRCs), World Telecommunication Standardization Assemblies (WTSAs), World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS), and World Telecommunication Development Conferences (WTDCs).

- Q.** The Subansiri Lower Hydro Electric Project is located on the border of which of the following states?
- A) Assam and Manipur
 - B) Arunachal Pradesh and Assam
 - C) West Bengal and Sikkim
 - D) Meghalaya and Nagaland

Answer : B

- ✓ Power generation is set to commence at the highly controversial Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project from next year.
- ✓ About Subansiri Lower Hydro Electric Project (SLHEP):
- ✓ It is an under-construction gravity dam on the Subansiri River in North Eastern India on the borders of Arunachal Pradesh and Assam.
- ✓ It is a run-of-river project.
- ✓ It will be the single largest hydroelectric plant in India when completed.
- ✓ The dam will be 116 m high from the river bed level and 130 m from the foundation. The length of the dam will be 284 m.
- ✓ The project is being developed by the state-run National Hydro Power Corporation (NHPC).
- ✓ It is expected to supply 2,000 MW of power (eight 250 MW units) when completed.

- Q.** Consider the following statements regarding the 'EV as a Service' programme:

1. It aims to boost e-mobility in government offices and deploy E-Cars in government departments.
2. It is an initiative of the Convergence Energy Services Limited.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
- B) 2 only
- C) Both 1 and 2
- D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ Union Minister of Power and Housing & Urban Affairs launched 'EV as a Service' programme of Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL) at Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium.
- ✓ It aims to boost e-mobility in government offices; to deploy 5,000 E-Cars in government departments over the next two years.
- ✓ It is an initiative of Convergence Energy Services Limited (CESL), a subsidiary of Energy Efficiency Services Limited (EESL)
- ✓ By leveraging a flexible procurement model, the programme allows for the deployment of a variety of E-Car makes/models, enabling Govt. offices to choose E-Cars that best align with their operational requirements.
- ✓ It may be noted that CESL has already deployed nearly 2000 nos. of E-Cars across India and is also facilitating the deployment of approx. 17,000 E-Buses.
- ✓ It not only supports the government's environmental sustainability vision, but also aligns with India's ambitious goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2070.

- Q.** 'Garuda Shakti' exercise was conducted between India and which country?

- A) Sri Lanka
- B) Japan
- C) France
- D) Indonesia

Answer : D

- ✓ The 9th edition of the Joint Special Forces Exercise Garuda Shakti between the Indian Army and Indonesian Army concluded on 12 November at Mokopassus, Cijantung, Indonesia.

Q. Who has been appointed the new Chairman of Indian Oil Corporation?

- A) Ramesh Ojha
- B) Arvindar Singh Sahney
- C) Rajendra Kumar Sinha
- D) Alok Puri

Answer : B

- ✓ Arvindar Singh Sahney has been appointed the new chairman of the country's largest oil company Indian Oil Corporation (IOC).
- ✓ Indian Oil Corporation Limited (IOCL)
- ✓ Founded : 1959
- ✓ Headquarters : New Delhi
- ✓ Chairman : Arvindar Singh Sahney

Q. With whom has Noida International Airport signed an agreement for green energy?

- A) Adani Green
- B) Tata Power
- C) Reliance Green
- D) NTPC Green

Answer : B

- ✓ The recent partnership between Tata Power and Noida International Airport is a significant step towards the integrated use of renewable energy in the Indian power sector.
- ✓ This partnership has been initiated with an investment of Rs 550 crore and aims to meet the energy requirements of the airport completely from renewable sources.
- ✓ The scheme includes provision of supply of 10.8 MW wind power and 13 MW solar power by Tata Power.

Q. How many marks has Hindalco got in the 2024 S&P Global Corporate Sustainability Assessment?

- A) 87 marks
- B) 90 marks
- C) 75 marks
- D) 95 marks

Answer : A

- ✓ Hindalco has been recognised as the world's most sustainable aluminium company for the fifth consecutive year in the S&P Global Corporate Sustainability Assessment Ranking 2024, achieving a score of 87 out of 100, 9 points higher than last year's score and its highest ever.

Q. World Intellectual Property Indicators report is published by:

- A) World Bank
- B) World Trade Organisation
- C) International Monetary Fund
- D) World Intellectual Property Organization

Answer : D

- ✓ The World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) has published the World Intellectual Property Indicators (WIPI) 2024, underscoring global trends in intellectual property (IP) filings.
- ✓ The report reveals significant growth in patent, trademark, and industrial design applications across top economies.
- ✓ Highlights of the report
- ✓ India has secured a spot in the global top 10 for all three major intellectual property (IP) rights—patents, trademarks, and industrial designs.

- ✓ India recorded the fastest growth in patent (+15.7%) applications in 2023 among the top 20 origins, marking the fifth consecutive year of double-digit growth.
- ✓ India ranks sixth globally for patents with 64,480 applications, with resident filings accounting for over half of all submissions (55.2%)—a first for the country.
- ✓ The top three sectors—Textiles and Accessories, Tools and Machines, and Health and Cosmetics—made up almost half of all design filings,
- ✓ India ranked fourth globally in trademark filings, with a 6.1% increase in 2023. Nearly 90% of these filings were by residents, with key sectors including Health (21.9%), Agriculture (15.3%), and Clothing (12.8%) leading the way.
- ✓ India's trademark office holds the second-largest number of active registrations worldwide, with over 3.2 million trademarks in force, reflecting the country's strong position in global brand protection.
- ✓ World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
- ✓ Formation : 1967
- ✓ Headquarters : Geneva, Switzerland
- ✓ Director General : Daren Tang (Singapore)

Q. Where will the world's first high-altitude para sports centre be established?

- A) Srinagar
- B) Leh
- C) Itanagar
- D) Gangtok

Answer : B

- ✓ The world's first high-altitude para sports centre dedicated to training and nurturing para athletes in the country will be established in Leh, Ladakh and will focus to train for international competitions including the larger goal of preparing para-athletes for the 2028
- ✓ For this, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) has been signed between the Ladakh Autonomous Hill Development Council (LAHDC), Leh, and the Aditya Mehta Foundation (AMF).

Q. The State of the Climate 2024 report is released by which one of the following organizations?

- A) United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
- B) Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)
- C) World Meteorological Organisation (WMO)
- D) International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN)

Answer : C

- ✓ State of the Climate 2024 Report once again issues a Red Alert at the sheer pace of climate change in a single generation, turbo-charged by ever-increasing greenhouse gas levels in the atmosphere.
- ✓ About State of the Climate 2024 Report:
- ✓ It was released by the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) during the United National Climate Conference (COP29) in Baku.
- ✓ Highlights:
- ✓ The year 2024 is on track to be the warmest year on record after an extended streak of exceptionally high monthly global mean temperatures.
- ✓ From January to September of this year, the global average temperature was 1.54 degrees above the pre-industrial level, with climate warming boosted by the El Niño weather pattern.
- ✓ 2023 already showed the highest observed levels of greenhouse gas emissions on record, and real-time data indicates they continued to rise in 2024.
- ✓ The volume of heat-trapping carbon dioxide increased by 51% between 1750 and 2023.

- Q.** The central government approved the creation of an exclusive women's battalion in which Central Armed Police Force?
- A) Central Industrial Security Force (CISF)
B) Border Security Force (BSF)
C) Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
D) Indo Tibetan Border Police (ITBP)

Answer : A

- ✓ Government Approves 1st Women Reserve Battalion of CISF.
- ✓ The government of India has given its green signal to set up a reserve women battalion in the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF).
- ✓ This information was provided by the Union Minister for Home Affairs and Minister for Cooperation, Amit Shah on social media on 12 November 2024. This will be the first reserve women battalion in the CISF.
- ✓ The CISF currently operates 12 reserve battalions which are deployed as a reinforcement for forces permanent duty like safeguarding vital national installations, VIP security etc. and temporary duties like election related deployments.
- ✓ Reserve Women Battalion in CISF
- ✓ Amit Shah, during the 53rd CISF Day function held in March 2022, directed the top brass of the CISF to prepare a proposal to create a reserve battalion exclusively of women personals.
- ✓ Amit Shah approved the proposal, which was subsequently prepared by the top brass of the CISF.
- ✓ The reserve women battalion which will consist of 1025 personnel, will be raised from the existing women personnel of the CISF. It will be led by a senior woman commandant
- ✓ Presently, around 7 percent of the CISF force comprises of women personnel
- ✓ The CISF has started the recruitment and specialised training for its first women reserve battalion at its New Delhi headquarters.
- ✓ About CISF
- ✓ The CISF was established in 1969 by the Indian government under the Central Industrial Security Force Act, 1968
- ✓ It provides security to VIPs classified by the Union Ministry of Home Affairs as Zplus, Z, X, and Y.
- ✓ It is the only CAPF that has a dedicated fire wing.
- ✓ Current Director General: R S Bhatti
- ✓ CISF Day- 10 March
- ✓ The motto of CISF: Protection and Security

- Q.** Who has been appointed as the new Executive Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority?
- A) Justice Bhushan Ramakrishna Gavai B) Justice DY Chandrachud
C) Justice Sanjiv Khanna D) Justice Rajiv Sinha

Answer : A

- ✓ President of India Draupadi Murmu has nominated Supreme Court Judge Bhushan Ramakrishna Gavai as the new Acting Chairman of the National Legal Services Authority (NALSA).
- ✓ Justice Gavai will replace Chief Justice of India Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who previously held the post.
- ✓ As per the convention of NALSA, the post of Executive Chairperson is held by the second senior-most Judge of the Supreme Court of India

- Q.** Who inaugurated the India International Trade Fair in New Delhi?
- A) Amit Shah B) Rajnath Singh
C) S. Jaishankar D) Piyush Goyal

Answer : D

- ✓ Union Minister for Commerce and Industry Shri Piyush Goyal inaugurated the 43rd edition of India International Trade Fair (IITF) at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi.
- ✓ Bihar and Uttar Pradesh are partner states at IITF 2024, Jharkhand is the focus state.
- ✓ The fair, organized by the India Trade Promotion Organization (ITPO), runs from November 14-27, 2024, and focuses on India's vision of becoming a self-reliant nation by 2047, themed "Viksit Bharat @2047."

Q. When is World Diabetes Day observed every year?

- A) 12 November
- B) 13 November
- C) 14 November
- D) 15 November

Answer : C

- ✓ Every year on November 14, World Diabetes Day is celebrated across the world.
- ✓ The theme for 2024, "Access to Diabetes Care: Prevention and Management for All,"
- ✓ This day is organized to raise global awareness about diabetes, which is a public health challenge

Q. Which country will confer its highest civilian award, the 'Award of Honour', to Narendra Modi?

- A) Dominican Republic
- B) Namibia
- C) Botswana
- D) Madagascar

Answer : A

- ✓ PM Modi Chosen for Dominican Republic's Highest Award
- ✓ The government of the Caribbean country of the Dominican Republic has announced that it will confer its highest national award, the Dominica Award of Honour, on Prime Minister Narendra Modi for his role in providing the COVID-19 vaccine to the country and in strengthening the two countries' bilateral relationships.
- ✓ The Modi government launched the Vaccine Maitri initiative in February 2021 as a humanitarian gesture to provide Indian-manufactured COVID-19 vaccines to the developing countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi was recently conferred the 'Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, the highest Russian award, by the Russian President Vladimir Putin in July 2024.
- ✓ According to the Dominican Prime Minister's Office, Narendra Modi has been chosen for his contribution to supplying COVID-19 vaccines to the country during the pandemic
- ✓ Sylvanie Burton, President of the Dominican Republic's President,, will confer the award to Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The award will be conferred at the second CARICOM-India Summit meeting to be held in November 2024 in Georgetown, Guyana.
- ✓ The Prime Minister will be on an official visit to Nigeria, Brazil, and Guyana from November 16 to 21, 2024.
- ✓ This will be the first visit of Prime Minister Modi to the African country of Nigeria.
- ✓ He will visit Brazil to participate in the 19th G20 Summit meeting. India, along with Brazil and South Africa, is part of the G20 Troika and has been actively contributing to the ongoing G20 Summit discussions.
- ✓ During his Guyana visit, he will participate in the second CARICOM-India Summit meeting.

Q. Which day has been declared by the Government to be observed as the Janjatiya Gaurav Divas (Tribal Pride Day)?

- A) 15 November
- B) 16 November
- C) 11 November
- D) 19 November

Answer : A

- ✓ PM Modi commemorates 4th Janjatiya Gaurav Divas in Jamui, Bihar.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi attended the function to commemorate the 4th Janjatiya Gaurav Divas and 150th birth anniversary celebration of Birsa Munda in the Jamui district of Bihar on 15 November 2024.
- ✓ The Prime Minister laid the foundation stone and inaugurated various projects worth Rs 6600 crore, meant for tribal welfare.
- ✓ Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar, Governor of Bihar, Nitish Kumar, Chief Minister of Bihar, Union Minister for Tribal Affairs Jai Oram, Union Minister Chirag Paswan and other dignitaries were also present during the function.
- ✓ Projects launched at the 150th Anniversary of Birsa Munda
- ✓ Tribal leader and freedom fighter Birsa Munda was born in the Ulihatu village in Jharkhand on 15 November 1875. He is considered a Bhagwan (God) by the local tribal population.
- ✓ This year is Birsa Munda's 150th birth anniversary, and the government of India, through the Union Ministry of Tribal Affairs, is conducting various programmes across the country.
- ✓ On the occasion of the 150th birth anniversary of Bhagwan Birsa Munda and the 4th Janjatiya Gaurav Divas, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched/laid the foundation of various tribal welfare projects.
- ✓ Prime Minister Modi released a postal stamp and a commemorative coin in honour of Birsa Munda.
- ✓ He launched the 150th Birth Anniversary Year celebrations of Dharti Aaba Bhagwan Birsa Munda.
- ✓ Virtually inaugurated two 'Tribal Freedom Fighters' Museums in Madhya Pradesh - Chhindwara and Jabalpur.
- ✓ Virtually inaugurated two Tribal Research Institutes in Srinagar, Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir and Gangtok, Sikkim.
- ✓ 25 Eklavya Model Residential Schools for the tribal students, foundation was also laid.
- ✓ Virtually attended the handing over ceremony of 11,000 newly constructed houses for the tribals built under Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan (PM-JANMAN)

Q. The commemoration of the Janjatiya Gaurav Divas (Tribal Pride Day) marks the birth anniversary of which Indian freedom fighter?

- A) Tilka Majhi
B) Tatya Tope
C) Birsa Munda
D) Chandra Shekhar Azad

Answer : C

- ✓ 15 November has been chosen as this date marks the birth anniversary of Sri Birsa Munda who is revered as Bhagwan (God) by tribal communities across the country
- ✓ About the Janjatiya Gaurav Divas
- ✓ The first Janjatiya Gaurav Divas was observed on 15 November 2021, and it has been observed every year since then.
- ✓ 15 November was chosen as it is the birth anniversary of Birsa Munda, who led the tribals in the Chota Nagpur area against British rule.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding the Know Your Medicine (KYM)' app:

1. It is part of National Anti-Doping Agency India's mission to raise anti-doping awareness and education.
2. It allows users to easily verify whether a specific medicine is listed as prohibited by the World Anti-Doping Agency.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : C

- ✓ The Union Minister for Youth Affairs & Sports has launched a nationwide appeal to strengthen the fight against doping in sports, urging athletes, coaches, and the entire sporting community to embrace the National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) India's 'Know Your Medicine (KYM)' app.
- ✓ It is part of NADA India's broader mission to raise anti-doping awareness and education, equipping athletes with essential information to stay clean.
- ✓ The app allows users to easily verify whether a specific medicine or its ingredients contain any substances listed as prohibited by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA).
- ✓ By offering this quick and seamless verification, the KYM app helps athletes to stay informed and uphold integrity of sport, fostering a culture of fair and ethical sportsmanship.
- ✓ Its unique features of image and audio search, enables users to select their sport category and search specific sport related information making it convenient for the user to effortlessly access the desired information

Q. The Solomon Islands are located in which one of the following oceans?

- A) Atlantic Ocean
- B) Indian Ocean
- C) Pacific Ocean
- D) Arctic Ocean

Answer : C

- ✓ A team of researchers recently discovered the world's largest coral colony in the Solomon Islands.
- ✓ About Solomon Islands:
- ✓ The Solomon Islands are two parallel chains of volcanic islands and small coral atolls in the south-western Pacific Ocean.
- ✓ It consists of nearly 1,000 islands (6 large main islands and over 900 smaller islands), of which 147 are inhabited.
- ✓ The nearest neighbours are Vanuatu to the southeast and Papua New Guinea to the west.
- ✓ The archipelago covers an area of 461,000 sq.km., of which 28,446 sq.km. is landmass.

Q. India has set an ambitious target of achieving 500 GW of renewable energy from non-fossil sources by which year?

- A) 2030
- B) 2040
- C) 2047
- D) 2070

Answer : A

- ✓ Union Minister of New and Renewable Energy Shri Pralhad Joshi shared the artwork of renowned sand artist Shri Sudarsan Pattnaik at Puri beach, Odisha.
- ✓ India achieved a 200 GW milestone in renewable energy in October in line with the 'Panchamrit' goal of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi.
- ✓ This remarkable growth aligns with the country's ambitious renewable energy target of achieving 500 GW from non-fossil sources by 2030.

Q. Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) Summit, 2024 was held in which country?

- A) Vietnam
- B) Guinea
- C) Indonesia
- D) Peru

Answer : D

- ✓ US President and the Chinese counterpart recently warned of turbulent times ahead, in remarks at an Asia-Pacific economic summit in Lima, Peru.
- ✓ About Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC):

- ✓ US space agency NASA has partnered with Microsoft to develop an easier-to-access and user-friendly Artificial Intelligence-based chatbot that can help people decode scientific data about Earth.
- ✓ The new Earth Copilot can answer people “through plain language queries” ranging from monitoring wildfires to tracking climate change -- transforming how people interact with Earth's data.
- ✓ NASA IMPACT worked with Microsoft to Earth Copilot to simplify access to data and encourage a wider range of users to interact with its Earth Science data.
- ✓ The AI model leverages Microsoft's Azure cloud platform and comes with advanced AI capabilities that will transform how people can search, discover and analyse NASA's complex geospatial data, which so far has been accessible only to a limited number of researchers and scientists.

Q. Which of the following has introduced a Message Drafts feature to help users manage unfinished messages?

A) Microsoft	B) WhatsApp
C) Apple	D) IBM

Answer : B

- ✓ WhatsApp brings 'Draft' indicator for managing unfinished messages.
- ✓ Meta-owned instant messaging platform WhatsApp has introduced a Message Drafts feature to help users manage unfinished messages.
- ✓ In a press release, WhatsApp stated that the feature is designed to provide an easy and efficient way to locate and complete messages left incomplete.
- ✓ With this update, WhatsApp will display a "Draft" indicator on any unsent message and move the relevant conversation to the top of the inbox

Q. Which country has exported electricity to Bangladesh for the first time using Indian electricity transmission lines?

A) Nepal	B) Bhutan
C) Malaysia	D) Thailand

Answer : A

- ✓ Historic export of Nepalese electricity to Bangladesh through India.
- ✓ As a positive sign of sub-regional energy cooperation in South Asia, Nepal exported 40 MW of electricity to Bangladesh through the Indian transmission line on 15 November 2024.
- ✓ Nepal, which is blessed with immense hydropower potential, regularly exports its (https://utkarsh.com/current-affairs/india-agree-to-buy-additional-251-mw-of-power-from-nepa)hydroelectricity to India. For the first time, Nepal is exporting it to Bangladesh.
- ✓ This is also the first time that a country is exporting electricity to another country through the Indian electricity grid.
- ✓ Indian Transmission Line to be used
- ✓ The 400KV Dhalkebar-Muzaffarpur transmission line will be used to evacuate power from Nepal to India, and by using the Indian grid, it will be transmitted to Bangladesh. The Dhalkebar substation is in Nepal, and Muzaffarpur is in India.
- ✓ The Muzaffarpur Substation in Bihar will be the injection point for electricity, while the Behrampur Substation in Odisha will be the withdrawal point

Q. Where was the first Bodoland Mahotsav held?

A) Guwahati	B) New Delhi
C) Bhubaneswar	D) Varanasi

Answer : B

- ✓ First Bodoland Mahotsav inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi in New Delhi

Q. Who has been inaugurated the first Bodoland Mahotsav?

- A) Draupadi Murmu
- B) Narendra Modi
- C) Hardeep Singh Puri
- D) Piyush Goyal

Answer : B

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated the first Bodoland Mahotsav in New Delhi on 15 November 2024.
- ✓ The two-day festival on 15&16 November 2024 celebrates and showcases the cultural and linguistic heritage of the Bodos and other communities of the Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam .
- ✓ Bodos are considered the earliest settlers in the Brahmaputra valley region of Assam. They are descendants of the Mongolian race and migrated from Tibet and China to Assam.
- ✓ Theme of the First Bodo Mahotsav
- ✓ "Peace and Harmony for Prosperous Bharat" is the theme of the first Bodo Mahotsav.
- ✓ The theme highlights the rich culture and linguistic heritage of the Bodos and other communities living in the Bodoland Territorial Region.

Q. Which state government has launched the 'Come and Install Solar Power Projects' initiative?

- A) Uttarakhand
- B) Himachal Pradesh
- C) Jammu and Kashmir
- D) Rajasthan

Answer : B

- ✓ Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu has launched the 'Come and Install Solar Power Projects' initiative to encourage investment in the state's solar and solar energy projects.
- ✓ This is part of the state government initiative to turn Himachal Pradesh into a clean and green energy state by 31st March 2026.
- ✓ The state government has launched a scheme to encourage people to rent lands to the government. Under this scheme, the government will pay a rent of Rs 20,000 per month to the farmers if they donate three bighas of land for the construction of a solar power plant.
- ✓ Come and Install the Solar Power Projects initiative
- ✓ Under the State government's Come and Install Solar Power Projects initiative, the private sector will be encouraged to invest in the solar power sector
- ✓ in the state.
- ✓ The government will fast-track the solar energy investment proposals and expedite the process regarding paper formalities and other procedures.
- ✓ According to the government, 300 MW of ground-mounted solar power projects have been awarded to the private sector, of which 62 MW are operational.
- ✓ The public sector is setting up 32 MW solar projects.
- ✓ The Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister, Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, inaugurated the five-day international Shri Renuka Ji Fair in the Sirmaur district of the state. The fair, which was held from 11 to 15 November 2024, is held along the banks of Lake Renuka.
- ✓ The four-day International Lavi fair came to an end on 14 November 2024. Shiv Pratap Shukla, Governor of Himachal Pradesh, inaugurated the four-day festival on 11 November.
- ✓ The Lavi fair, held annually in Rampur town of Shimla district of Himachal Pradesh, is rooted in the trade treaty signed between Bushehar (Himachal Pradesh) and Tibet.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding AI-enabled e-Tarang System:

1. It is developed by the Defence Research and Development organization.
2. It will improve planning for interference-free operation of defence equipment during both wartime and peacetime.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2 D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : B

- ✓ Recently, the Ministry of Defence launched the AI-enabled e-Tarang System.
- ✓ It is unique software, developed in collaboration with Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics (BISAG-N).
- ✓ It will improve planning for interference-free operation of defence equipment during both wartime and peacetime.
- ✓ It will enable automated, efficient planning and management of Defence Spectrum, as well as support development of newer technologies in higher frequency bands.
- ✓ It is set to support rapid decision-making, thereby allowing seamless integration of newer technologies critical for modern defence applications.
- ✓ Key facts about the BISAG-N:
- ✓ It is an Autonomous Scientific Society of the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India.
- ✓ It undertakes technology development & management, research & development, facilitate National & International cooperation, capacity building and support technology transfer & entrepreneurship development in the area of geo-spatial technology.
- ✓ The Organisation has three main domain areas: Satellite Communication, Geo-informatics and Geo-spatial technology.

Q. Who was crowned as Miss Universe at the 73rd Miss Universe 2024 pageant held in Mexico City Arena, Mexico?

- A) Sheynnis Palacios B) Kjær Theilvig
C) R'Bonney Gabriel D) Chidimma Adetshina

Answer : B

- ✓ Denmark's Victoria Kjaer Theilvig named 73rd Miss Universe.
- ✓ Victoria Kjaer Theilvig of Denmark has been crowned Miss Universe for 2024, marking her country's first win at the international beauty pageant.
- ✓ The 73rd edition of the pageant, which saw participation by more than 120 contestants, was held at the Mexico City Arena.
- ✓ Miss Nigeria Chidimma Adetshina placed second, whereas Miss Mexico Maria Fernanda Beltran came in third.
- ✓ Rhea Singha, who represented India at the 73rd edition of the competition, was called into the list of top 30 contestants

Q. Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) conducted a successful flight-trial of India's first long-range hypersonic missile from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island off the coast of Odisha, which can carry a variety of payloads over distances greater than ____.

- A) 2,000 kilometres (km) B) 2,500 kilometres (km)
C) 1,500 kilometres (km) D) 3,000 kilometres (km)

Answer : C

- ✓ India has successfully tested its first long-range hypersonic missile, capable of carrying various payloads over 1,500 km, launched from Dr APJ Abdul Kalam Island.
- ✓ India has taken a significant step towards developing its own hypersonic missile that could rival China's 'carrier killer' DF-21D, a weapon designed to target and destroy warships with precision.
- ✓ The successful test of India's first long-range hypersonic missile on Saturday signals its intent to strengthen its naval and strategic capabilities, placing it among a select group of nations — including China, Russia, and the US — that have achieved such technological advancements.
- ✓ Designed by the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), the missile, which can carry a variety of payloads over distances greater than 1,500 kilometres (km), was tested off the coast of Odisha,

Q. Which country has adopted the global standard for CubeSat-a class of small satellites?

- A) India
- B) Japan
- C) Russia
- D) China

Answer : A

- ✓ India adopts CubeSat standard for global satellite play.
- ✓ India has adopted the global standard for CubeSat-a class of small satellites-as part of the Union government's efforts to expand the country's share in the global space economy.
- ✓ The plan is to support educational institutions and research organizations to build and experiment with CubeSats that are developed with off-the-shelf components and provide an affordable alternative by reducing costs and development times considerably as compared to traditional satellites
- ✓ Small-sized and low-weight satellites exponentially bring down launch costs

Q. Which country has recently launched the 'Global Energy Efficiency Alliance'?

- A) India
- B) France
- C) Italy
- D) UAE

Answer : D

- ✓ The UAE has launched an ambitious initiative to establish the "Global Energy Efficiency Alliance" during COP29 held in Azerbaijan.
- ✓ The initiative aims to double global energy efficiency rates by 2030 and contribute to significant emissions reductions

Q. Which state government has announced 100% exemption on road and registration taxes for electric vehicles?

- A) Uttar Pradesh
- B) Telangana
- C) Tamil Nadu
- D) Kerala

Answer : B

- ✓ Telangana govt introduces new EV policy with tax, registration exemption.
- ✓ Taking a major decision regarding the road tax policy, the Telangana government has announced a 100% exemption on road and registration taxes for electric vehicles in the state.
- ✓ Under this decision, any EV purchased and registered in Telangana will be eligible to avail the tax exemption till December 31, 2026.

Q. India recently signed a Memorandum of Implementation (MoI) for the “co-development” of the UNICORN (Unified Complex Radio Antenna) mast with which one of the following countries?

- A) United States B) Russia
C) Germany D) Japan

Answer : D

- ✓ India and Japan have signed a memorandum of Implementation (MoI) for the co-production of the Japanese-developed Unified Complex Radio Antenna (UNICORN) system to be installed on Indian naval ships.
- ✓ The agreement was signed in Tokyo, Japan, on 15 November 2024.
- ✓ This is the first India-Japan joint production venture in defence equipment since the bilateral agreement on the transfer of defence equipment and technology in 2016.
- ✓ What is the UNICORN?
- ✓ The Unified Complex Radio Antenna (UNICORN), also known as NORA-50, is an integrated antenna system developed by Japan's NEC Corporation. It is currently installed on the mast of the Mogami-class frigates of the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (Japanese Navy).
- ✓ The UNICORN system is an antenna mast with sensors and transponders for communications, electronic warfare, and navigation. It increases naval ships' stealth capability.
- ✓ The UNICORN to be used in Indian naval ships will be produced by the Bengaluru-based Defence Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) with the assistance of Japan's NEC Corporation.

Q. Who is the second foreign dignitary to be honoured with the second highest award -Grand Commander of the Order of Niger?

- A) Draupadi Murmu B) Narendra Modi
C) Piyush Goyal D) Amit Shah

Answer : B

- ✓ In the first leg of his three-nation tour of Nigeria, Brazil, and Guyana, Prime Minister Narendra Modi was on a two-day official visit to the African country of Nigeria on 16 & 17 November 2024.
- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi was visiting for the first time after becoming the Prime Minister of India.
- ✓ Nigerian President Bola Ahmed Tinubu welcomed him to the Nigerian Capital, Abuja, where both leaders held talks on bilateral, regional, and national issues.
- ✓ After the end of his Nigerian visit, Prime Minister Narendra Modi flew to Brazil on the second leg of his tour.
- ✓ He will participate in the 19th G 20 Summit Meeting hosted by Brazilian President Lula De Silva in Brazil.
- ✓ Narendra Modi was honoured with Nigeria's second-highest award Grand Commander of the Order of Niger.
- ✓ After Queen Elizabeth of the United Kingdom, Narendra Modi is the second foreign dignitary to receive the award. Queen Elizabeth of the United Kingdom was conferred the award in 1969

Q. Which former Indian sportsperson has been appointed as the sports ambassador of the Dubai Sports Council?

- A) Harbhajan Singh & Sania Mirza B) Virat Kohli & Riya Bhatia
C) Rohit Sharma & Ankit Raina D) Suresh Raina & Rushmi Chakravarthi

Answer : A

- ✓ Harbhajan & Sania Mirza appointed Dubai Sports Council brand ambassador.

- ✓ The Dubai Sports Council has appointed ex-Indian cricket player Harbhajan Singh and women's Tennis player Sania Mirza as the Sports Ambassador.
- ✓ They join Russian Khabib Nurmagomedov and French football player Patrice Evra as the four sporting icons appointed by the Dubai Sports Council.
- ✓ Harbhajan Singh is a former Indian cricket player who took 711 wickets in international matches while playing for India. An off-spinner, Harbhajan bagged 417 wickets in 104 test matches and 269 wickets in the 231 One-Day Internationals(ODIs). He was part of the Indian team that won the first T20 World Cup in South Africa and last played for India in 2016.
- ✓ Sania Mirza is the greatest Indian women's Tennis player.
- ✓ In her career, she won six grand slam doubles titles and is the only Indian female tennis player to be ranked No.1 in the WTA doubles rankings.
- ✓ She won the mixed doubles title at the 2009 Australian Open, 2012 French Open and 2015 US Open. Sania Mirza has won three Grand Slam titles in the women's doubles at the 2015 Wimbledon, 2015 US Open, and 2016 Australian Open.

Q. Who is the author of the book titled A wonderland of words: Around the word in 101 Essays?

A) Shashi Tharoor	B) Salman Rushdie
C) Arundhati Roy	D) Ruskin Bond

Answer : A

- ✓ A Wonderland of Words: Around the Word in 101 Essays by Shashi Tharoor

Q. Who is the author of the book titled FEARLESS - A Memoir?

A) Mohinder Amarnath	B) Rohit Brijnath
C) Novy Kapadia	D) Rahul Bhattacharya

Answer : A

- ✓ HarperCollins India announces the publication of 'FEARLESS - A Memoir' by Mohinder Amarnath with Rajender Amarnath.
- ✓ An iconic figure in the world of cricket in the 1970s and 1980s, Mohinder Amarnath started his career as a batsman who was found suspect against short-pitched fast bowling and finished it as one of the finest and bravest players of pace.

Q. Who has been appointed as the chairperson of the International Jury for the 2024 International Film Festival of India (IFFI)?

A) Rajkumar Hirani	B) Anurag Kashyap
C) Mani Ratnam	D) Ashutosh Gowariker

Answer : D

- ✓ Filmmaker Ashutosh Gowariker appointed as chairperson of International Jury for IFFI 2024.
- ✓ Filmmaker Ashutosh Gowariker has been appointed as the chairperson of the International Jury for the 2024 International Film Festival of India (IFFI).
- ✓ Gowariker, known for films such as 'Jodhaa Akbar', 'Lagaan', and 'Swades', said he is honoured to be associated with the prestigious film festival, which will be held in Goa from November 20 to 28.

Q. Aashish Khan, the legendary sarod player, was from which of the following gharanas of music?

A) Kasur-Patiala	B) Benaras
C) Maihar	D) Rangeela

Answer : C

Q. Exercise GARUD SHAKTI, is conducted between India and:

- A) Nepal
- B) Japan
- C) Russia
- D) Indonesia

Answer D

- ✓ The Indian Army contingent comprising 25 personnel departed for Cijantung, Jakarta, Indonesia to take part in the Exercise GARUD SHAKTI 24 which will be conducted from 1st to 12th of November 2024.
- ✓ It is the 9th edition of India-Indonesia Joint Special Forces exercise.
- ✓ The Indian contingent is being represented by troops from The Parachute Regiment (Special Forces).
- ✓ The aim of Exercise is to acquaint both the sides with each other's operating procedures, enhance mutual understanding, cooperation and interoperability between the Special Forces of both armies.

Q. India's updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan aims to protect 30 percent of its land, inland water, and coastal and marine areas by which year?

- A) 2025
- B) 2030
- C) 2028
- D) 2029

Answer : B

- ✓ India commits to 30 per cent protected areas in updated biodiversity plan.
- ✓ India has launched its updated biodiversity action plan with a goal to protect at least 30 percent of its terrestrial, inland water, and coastal and marine areas by 2030, in line with global biodiversity targets.
- ✓ The updated National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), unveiled at the 16th UN Biodiversity Conference in Cali, Colombia, outlines 23 national targets aligned with the 23 global goals set under the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (KM-GBF), which was adopted at the 15th UN Biodiversity Conference in Canada in 2022.
- ✓ A key goal of the KM-GBF is to protect at least 30 percent of the world's land and ocean areas by 2030. It also aims to restore degraded ecosystems, such as forests, wetlands, and rivers, to ensure they continue providing essential resources like clean water and air.
- ✓ India, recognised as one of the 17 megadiverse countries, became a party to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in 1994. It harbours 7-8 percent of the world's recorded species within just 2.4 percent of the global land area.
- ✓ According to the updated NBSAP, India spent around Rs 32,200 crore on biodiversity protection, conservation, and restoration from 2017-2018 to 2021-2022. The projected annual average expenditure for biodiversity conservation through 2029-2030 is estimated to be Rs 81,664.88 crore.

Q. 'Vajra Prahar 2024' is a joint exercise between which countries?

- A) India and USA
- B) India and UK
- C) India and France
- D) India and Australia

Answer : A

- ✓ The Indian Army contingent departed today for the 15th edition of India- US joint Special Forces Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR.
- ✓ The exercise is scheduled to be conducted from 2nd to 22nd November 2024 at Orchard Combat Training Centre in Idaho, USA.
- ✓ Last edition of the same exercise was conducted at Umroi, Meghalaya in December 2023.
- ✓ This will be second exercise of the year between Indian and the US Army, the previous being Exercise YUDH ABHYAS 2024, conducted at Rajasthan in September 2024.

Q. Bibek Debroy passed away recently, he was a famous person of which field?

- A) Journalism
- B) economics
- C) Acting
- D) Singing

Answer : A

- ✓ Leading economist and chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) Bibek Debroy has passed away.
- ✓ Bibek Debroy was an Indian economist, who served as the chairman of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister of India.
- ✓ He was also the Chairman of the Finance Ministry's 'Expert Committee for Infrastructure Classification and Financing Framework for Amrit Kaal'
- ✓ Debroy has made significant contributions to game theory, economic theory, income and social inequalities, poverty, law reforms, railway reforms and Indology among others.
- ✓ From its inception in January 2015 until June 2019, Mr. Debroy was a member of the NITI Aayog, the think tank of the Indian Government.
- ✓ He was awarded the Padma Shri (the fourth-highest civilian honour in India) in 2015.

Q. What is the theme of Vigilance Awareness Week 2024?

- A) Self Reliance with Integrity
- B) Culture of Integrity for Nation's Prosperity
- C) Say no to corruption; commit to the Nation
- D) Corruption Free India for a developed National

Answer : B

- ✓ As per the decision of the Central Vigilance Commission, this year the Vigilance Awareness Week is being observed from 28th October 2024 to 3rd November, 2024 with the following theme: "Culture of Integrity for Nation's Prosperity".
- ✓ TRAI, accordingly, is observing the Vigilance Awareness Week from 28th October 2024 to 3rd November 2024.

Q. Which spiritual leader was recently honored with Fiji's highest civilian award "Honourary Officer of the Order of Fiji"?

- A) Swami Mukundananda
- B) Mata Amritanandamayi
- C) Sri Sri Ravi Shankar
- D) Baba Ramdev

Answer : C

- ✓ Fiji awarded Gurudev Sri Sri Ravi Shankar the "Honourary Officer of the Order of Fiji," its highest civilian honor, for his global peace and community work. Fiji's President, Ratu Wiliame M. Katonivere, presented the award, and Sri Sri expressed gratitude on social media.
- ✓ As founder of The Art of Living, Sri Sri has received top civilian awards from five other nations, highlighting his humanitarian influence in over 180 countries

Q. Who is the founder of BPL Group?

- A) Narayan Murthy
- B) Vinay Prakash
- C) Qimat Rai Gupta
- D) TP Gopalan Nambiar

Answer : D

- ✓ Indian electronic company BPL Group founder TP Gopalan Nambiar has passed away recently.

- ✓ Popularly known as TPG, he was the father-in-law of BJP leader and former Union Minister Rajeev Chandrasekhar.
- ✓ British Physical Laboratories, doing business as BPL Ltd., is an Indian electronics company.
- ✓ It makes consumer electronics and health care equipment.
- ✓ It was founded in 1963 in Palakkad, Kerala, and is headquartered at Bangalore, Karnataka.
- ✓ The BPL Group and Japanese electronics major Sanyo Electric Company Ltd formally started their 50:50 joint venture.
- ✓ British Physical Laboratories India Pvt. Ltd. was founded in 1963, during the Licence Raj, by T. P. G. Nambiar in Palakkad, Kerala

Q. What is the main goal of the "First in the World Challenge" initiative, recently seen in the news?

- A) To support incremental improvements in scientific research
- B) To promote the development of groundbreaking health technologies
- C) To enhance training programs for young researchers
- D) To promote traditional knowledge systems

Answer : B

- ✓ The “First in the World” Challenge, inspired by the success of Chandrayaan-3, is a major initiative of the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) designed to promote the development of groundbreaking health technologies.
- ✓ About First in the World Challenge Initiative:
- ✓ Objective: The initiative aims to encourage bold, unique research that brings “first of its kind” innovations to the global health sector.
- ✓ Scope: Focuses on out-of-the-box ideas leading to breakthrough health technologies, such as novel vaccines, drugs, diagnostics, and interventions.
- ✓ Funding criteria: Proposals must be groundbreaking, excluding incremental advancements or process improvements. High-risk, high-reward proposals with global impact potential are prioritized.
- ✓ Application: Open to individual researchers or teams from single or multiple institutions.
- ✓ Selection process: A committee of top experts, innovators, and policymakers will evaluate and select proposals based on originality and potential for impact.
- ✓ About Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR):
- ✓ Origin: Founded in 1911 as the Indian Research Fund Association (IRFA), it was renamed ICMR in 1949.
- ✓ Ministry: Operates under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India.

Q. Who is the youngest-rated FIDE Chess player in the world?

- A) Anish Sarkar
- B) D Gukesh
- C) Abhimanyu Mishra
- D) Saketh Myneni

Answer : A

- ✓ Anish Sarkar Becomes Youngest-Rated FIDE Chess Player Globally
- ✓ Anish Sarkar of Kolkata, West Bengal, has become the youngest-rated FIDE chess player in the world.
- ✓ At the age of three years, eight months, and 19 days, Anish secured a FIDE rating of 1555.
- ✓ The International Chess Federation, known by its French acronym FIDE, is the world’s governing body for chess. It assigns ratings or points based on players' performance in FIDE-approved chess tournaments.
- ✓ Anish Sarkar, born on January 26, 2021, played his first tournament, the West Bengal State Under-9 Open, in October 2024. He next played in the West Bengal State Under 13 Open chess tournament, where several FIDE-rated players participated.

- ✓ According to the FIDE rule, a player is given rating points if the player plays against at least five FIDE-rated players. Thus, after participating in the West Bengal State Under 13 Open chess tournament, Anish Sarkar was given an initial FIDE rating of 1555.
- ✓ The headquarters of the International Chess Federation (FIDE) is in Lausanne, Switzerland.

Q. With reference to the Global Tuberculosis (TB) Report 2024, consider the following statements:

1. There is a significant decrease in the new TB cases reported in 2023 when compared to 2022.
2. The majority of people who developed TB were men.
3. India accounts for more than a quarter of the global TB burden.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- A) Only one B) Only two
C) All three D) None

Answer : B

- ✓ The Global TB Report 2024 has acknowledged the tremendous progress India has made in closing the gap of missed TB cases since 2015.
- ✓ About Global TB Report:
 - ✓ It is an annual report published by the World Health Organization (WHO).
 - ✓ It provides a comprehensive and up-to-date assessment of the TB epidemic and of progress in prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of the disease at global, regional, and country levels.
- ✓ Highlights of the 2024 Report:
 - ✓ It shows 8.2 million people were newly diagnosed with TB in 2023, a figure that represents the highest number of TB cases recorded by the WHO since it began global TB monitoring in 1995.
 - ✓ It also marks a significant increase from the 7.5 million new TB cases reported in 2022.
 - ✓ Although the estimated number of 1.25 million TB deaths in 2023 is down from the 1.32 million recorded in 2022 and continues a declining trend from the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, that number still far surpasses the 320,000 COVID deaths officially reported to the WHO last year.
 - ✓ The data show that 30 mostly low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) bear 87% of the global TB burden, with five countries—India (26%), Indonesia (10%), China (6.8%), the Philippines (6.8%), and Pakistan (6.3%)—combining for 56% of the burden.
 - ✓ 55 percent of people who developed TB were men, 33 percent were women, and 12 percent were children and young adolescents.
 - ✓ According to the report, a significant number of new TB cases are driven by five major risk factors: undernutrition, HIV infection, alcohol use disorders, smoking, and diabetes.
 - ✓ In 2023, India was estimated to have had 27 lakh TB cases, of which 25.1 lakh persons were diagnosed and put on treatment.
 - ✓ This has buoyed India's treatment coverage to 89 percent in 2023 from 72 percent in 2015, thereby bridging the gap of missing cases.
 - ✓ It acknowledged a drop in India's TB incidence - from 237 per lakh population in 2015, to 195 per lakh population in 2023, accounting for a 17.7 percent decline.

Q. Consider the following statements regarding Iron Beam, recently seen in the news:

1. It is a laser-based missile defense system developed by Israel.
2. Its operational range extends up to hundreds of kilometers.

Which of the statements given above is/are correct?

- A) 1 only
B) 2 only
C) Both 1 and 2
D) Neither 1 nor 2

Answer : A

- ✓ Israel's 'Iron Beam', designed to use high-power laser to down projectiles, will be operational within a year, according to reports.
- ✓ About Iron Beam:
- ✓ The Iron Beam, also known as Magen or Light Shield, is a new laser-based missile defence system developed by Israel.
- ✓ It is a 100kW class High Energy Laser Weapon System (HELWS) that is expected to become the first operational system in its class.
- ✓ Built by Rafael Advanced Defense Systems, Iron Beam was first unveiled in 2014.
- ✓ Its operational range extends up to 7 km (4.3 miles).

Q. Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park become India's first zoo to receive certification from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for its sustainable and eco-friendly initiatives. It is located in which state?

- A) Uttar Pradesh B) Uttarakhand
C) Himachal Pradesh D) Maharashtra

Answer : C

- ✓ Himachal Pradesh's Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park set to become India's first Zoo with IGBC certification
- ✓ The upcoming 'Durgesh Aranya Zoological Park' at Bankhandi in Kangra district would become India's first zoo to receive certification from the Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) for its sustainable and eco-friendly initiatives.
- ✓ The project has officially been registered with the IGBC, focusing on both building and landscape certifications, which will validate the park's adherence to high environmental standards.

Q. What is the rank of India in the AI Preparedness Index (AIPI)?

- A) 54th B) 65th
C) 68th D) 72nd

Answer : D

- ✓ The AI Preparedness Index (AIPI) evaluates nations on digital infrastructure, human capital, technological innovation, and legal frameworks.
- ✓ As of 2023, Singapore leads with a score of 0.80, indicating its strong commitment to AI integration.
- ✓ In contrast, India ranks 72nd with a score of 0.49, despite having a significant number of AI startups and user engagement.
- ✓ This index highlights the disparities in AI readiness between advanced and emerging economies

Q. Where was the first Asian Buddhist Summit held?

- A) Rajgir B) Bodhgaya
C) New Delhi D) Pawapuri

Answer : C

- ✓ First Asian Buddhist Summit held in New Delhi.
- ✓ The first Asian Buddhist Summit will be held in New Delhi on November 5 and 6, 2024. President Droupadi Murmu was the chief guest.
- ✓ The first Asian Buddhist Summit aims to unite Sangha leaders, scholars, experts, and practitioners of various Buddhist traditions across Asia to foster dialogue, promote understanding, and address contemporary challenges facing the Buddhist community.
- ✓ Sangha in Buddhism refers to the people who follow the teachings of Lord Buddha.

- ✓ The first Asian Buddhist Summit is being organised by the Union Ministry of Culture, Government of India, in collaboration with the International Buddhist Confederation.
- ✓ 'Role of Buddha Dhamma in Strengthening Asia' is the theme of the First Asian Buddhist Summit

Q. Who was the chief guest of the first Asian Buddhist Summit?

- A) Narendra Modi
- B) Draupadi Murmu
- C) Dalai Lama
- D) Jagdeep Dhankhar

Answer : B

- ✓ The first Asian Buddhist Summit will be held in New Delhi on November 5 and 6, 2024. President Droupadi Murmu was the chief guest.
- ✓ The first Global Buddhist Summit was held in April 2023 in New Delhi and it was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. The Summit was organised by the Union Ministry of Culture in association with the International Buddhist Confederation.
- ✓ The first International Conference on Share Buddhist Heritage was organised by the Union Ministry of Culture in association with the International Buddhist Confederation in March 2023. It was held as part of the Indian presidency of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation.
- ✓ International Abhidhamma Divas was held on 17 October 2024 in New Delhi.

Q. India has a signed and Memorandum of Understanding(MoU) with which country for bilateral defence cooperation?

- A) Ethiopia
- B) Zimbabwe
- C) Nigeria
- D) Algeria

Answer : D

- ✓ India, Algeria sign MoU on bilateral defence cooperation.
- ✓ India and Algeria signed the Memorandum of Understanding(MoU) on bilateral defence cooperation.
- ✓ The MoU will elevate the defence partnership between both nations, fostering mutual understanding and enhancing strategic interests.
- ✓ It was signed by Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan and Chief of Staff of the People's National Army Saïd Chanegriha in the presence of military and officials

Q. Which Indian companies has creation of a new Singapore-based AI/Cloud Native Lab?

- A) Tata Consultancy Services
- B) Infosys
- C) HCL Technologies
- D) Wipro

Answer : C

- ✓ HCL Technologies opens new Singapore-based AI/Cloud Native Lab.
- ✓ HCL Technologies (HCL Tech) announced the creation of a new Singapore-based AI/Cloud Native Lab.
- ✓ HCLTech's Lab in Singapore will be the company's fifth in its global network, expected to open in 2025.
- ✓ The Lab, joining others in the US, UK, Germany and India, will be supported by EDB and assist enterprises in the region in accelerating their AI initiatives through HCLTech's comprehensive suite of integrated AI and GenAI offerings, including AI Force and AI Foundry.
- ✓ The Lab in Singapore will also partner with Nanyang Polytechnic and Singapore Polytechnic to collaborate on transferring knowledge and nurturing young talent and mid-career individuals In AI.

Q.

1. It is a premier technical organization of India in the field of water resources.
2. It functions as an attached office of the Union Ministry of Jal Shakti.
3. It can carry out investigations, construction, and execution of schemes for control, conservation, and utilization of water resources throughout the country.

How many of the statements given above are correct?

- A) Only one
B) Only two
C) All three
D) None

Answer : C

- ✓ Glacial lakes and other water bodies across the Himalayan region saw a 10.81% increase in area from 2011 to 2024 due to climate change, signalling a heightened risk of glacial lake outburst floods (GLOFs), according to a Central Water Commission's (CWC) report.
- ✓ About Central Water Commission (CWC):
- ✓ It is a premier technical organization of India in the field of water resources.
- ✓ It is presently functioning as an attached office of the Ministry of Jal Shakti, Department of Water Resources, River Development, and Ganga Rejuvenation, Government of India.
- ✓ Headquarters: New Delhi
- ✓ Functions:
- ✓ The Commission is entrusted with the general responsibilities of initiating, coordinating, and furthering, in consultation with the State Governments concerned, schemes for control, conservation, and utilization of water resources throughout the country for purposes of Flood Control, Irrigation, Navigation, Drinking Water Supply, and Water Power Development.
- ✓ It also undertakes the investigations, construction, and execution of any such schemes as required.

Q.

- A) Manipur
B) Punjab
C) Odisha
D) Tamil Nadu

Answer : A

- ✓ Ningol Chakkouba festival was held with religious fervour and gaiety across the State of Manipur.
- ✓ The festival is held every year on the second day of the lunar month of Hiyangei of the Meitei calendar.
- ✓ The festival is mainly celebrated by the Meiteis but nowadays many other communities also have started to celebrate it as it emphasises the importance of happiness and reunion of a family in bringing peace and harmony in a society.
- ✓ Ningol means 'married woman' and Chakouba means 'invitation for feast'; so the festival is the one where the married women are invited to their parents' home for a feast.

Q.

- A) Andhra Pradesh
B) Manipur
C) Meghalaya
D) Arunachal Pradesh

Answer : D

- ✓ Recently, defence Minister inaugurated the Major Ralengnao 'Bob' Khathing Museum of Valour at Tawang in Arunachal Pradesh.

- ✓ Ranenglao 'Bob' Khathing was born on February 28, 1912, in Manipur's Ukhrul district. He was a Tangkhul Naga.
- ✓ During World War II he became the first Manipuri to get the King's Commission.
- ✓ Bob Khathing's Army service
- ✓ He was given the coveted award of Member of British Empire (MBE) for his role in galvanising Naga support against the Japanese in Burma and India and also the Military Cross (MC) for his acts of bravery above and beyond the call of duty.

Q. Mount Lewotobi Laki-laki, recently in news, is situated in:

A) South Africa	B) Japan
C) Kenya	D) Indonesia

Answer : D

- ✓ Recently, at least 10 people died after Mount Lewotobi Laki-laki in eastern Indonesia erupted and forced authorities to evacuate several nearby villages.
- ✓ It is located on Flores Island.
- ✓ It is the volcanic mountain situated in East Nusa Tenggara province of Indonesia.
- ✓ The volcano is part of a twin-volcano system that the local residents perceive as male and female mountains.
- ✓ The ongoing volcanic eruption has occurred at the male counterpart of the system (Lewotobi Lakilaki) while the female mountain is known as Lewotobi Perempuan.

Q. Who has won the men's singles title at the World Table Tennis (WTT) Feeder Caracas 2024 tournament?

A) Harmeet Desai	B) Ramesh Krishnan
C) Vijay Amritraj	D) Yuki Bhambri

Answer : A

- ✓ Harmeet Desai of India had a fabulous run at the 2024 WTT Feeder Caracas tournament, winning both the men's singles and mixed doubles titles.
- ✓ The World Table Tennis (WTT) Feeder Series was held in Caracas, Venezuela, from 31 October to 3 November 2024.
- ✓ Harmeet Desai partnered with Kritika Roy to win the mixed doubles title of the WTT Caracas 2024. The Indian duo defeated Cuba's Jorge Campos and Daniela Fonseca Carrazana 3-2 (8-11, 11-9, 11-8, 9-11, 11-5) in a closely-fought final to bag the mixed doubles title

Q. "VINBAX-24" is a military exercise between the armies of India and which country?

A) Singapore	B) Vietnam
C) Malaysia	D) Indonesia

Answer : B

- ✓ 5th edition of India-Vietnam Exercise 'Vinbax 2024 Commences at Ambala.
- ✓ The 5th edition of the India-Vietnam bilateral military exercise 'Vinbax 2024' commenced at Ambala, Haryana on 4 November 2024. The 5th edition of the Vinbax 2024 will be held from 4-23 November at Ambala and Chandimandir .
- ✓ The 4th edition of the military exercise Vinbax 2023 was held in Vietnam from 10-21 December 2023.
- ✓ Chandimandir in Panchkula, Haryana is the headquarters of the Western Command of the Indian Army.

- ✓ The focus of the 5th edition of the Vinbax 2024 military exercise is to enhance the military capability of both sides in the deployment of the Engineer Company to undertake engineering tasks as part of United Nations Contingent in Peacekeeping Operations under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter.

Q. Who won the World Boxing Federation super featherweight world title?

- A) Mandeep Jangra
- B) Bajrang Punia
- C) Vijay Singh
- D) Deepak Dahiya

Answer : A

- ✓ Indian professional boxer Mandeep Jangra won the World Boxing Federation super featherweight world title by defeating Britain's Conor McIntosh in Cayman Islands.
- ✓ Jangra, 31, is training under former Olympic silver medallist Roy Jones Jr.

Q. Which country has extended visa-free entry for Indian tourists indefinitely?

- A) Vietnam
- B) Malaysia
- C) Sri Lanka
- D) Thailand

Answer : D

- ✓ Thailand has extended visa-free entry for Indian tourists indefinitely, which was introduced in November 2023, to promote tourism.
- ✓ Under this visa-free programme, Indian citizens can enjoy hassle-free entry into Thailand for a stay of up to 30 days without obtaining a visa in advance.

PADMA AWARDS 2025

In 2025, the President will confer 139 Padma Awards including a duo case (in a duo case, the Award is counted as one). It includes 7 Padma Vibhushan, 19 Padma Bhushan, and 113 Padma Shri Awards.

This year 23 of the awardees are women, 10 persons are from the category of Foreigners/Non-Resident Indians/Persons of Indian Origin/Overseas Citizen of India and 13 are Posthumous awardees.

About the Civilian Awards

The Bharat Ratna and Padma Awards were instituted by the government of India in 1954.

Initially, the Padma Award was known as the Padma Vibhushan Award and it has three classes Pahlavarg, Dusravarg, and Tisravarg on 8 January 1955 the government of India named them Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan, and Padma Shri respectively.

Bharat Ratna is the highest civilian award in India, followed by Padma Vibhushan, Padma Bhushan and Padma Shri.

List of the 2025 Padma Awardee.

Padma Bhushan Awardee (Seven)

S.No	Awardee Name	Field	State/Country
1.	Duvvur Nageshwar Reddy	Medicine	Telangana
2.	Justice (Retd.) Shri Jagdish Singh Khehar	Public Affairs	Chandigarh
3.	Mrs. Kumudini Rajnikant Lakhia	Art	Gujarat
4.	Lakshminarayana Subramaniam	Art	Karnataka
5.	M. T. Vasudevan Nair (Posthumous)	Literature and Education	Kerala
6.	Osamu Suzuki (Posthumous)	Trade and Industry (founder of Maruti Suzuki)	Japan
7.	Sharda Sinha (Posthumous)	Art (Bihar Kokila)	Bihar

Padma Bhushan Awardee (19)

S.No	Awardee Name	Field	State/Country
8.	A Surya Prakash	Literature and Education-Journalism	Karnataka
9.	Anant Nag	Art	Karnataka
10.	Bibek Debroy(Posthumous)	Literature and Education (former Chairman Prime Minister Economic Advisory Council)	NCT Delhi
11.	Jatin Goswami	Art	Assam
12.	Jose Chacko Periappuram	Medicine	Kerala
13.	Kailash Nath Dikshit	Others-Archaeology	NCT Delhi
14.	Manohar Joshi(Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Maharashtra
15.	Nalli Kuppaswami Chetti	Trade and Industry	Tamil Nadu
16.	Nandamuri Balakrishna	Art (Telugu film actor)	Andhra Pradesh
17.	P R Sreejesh	Sports (Ex Goalkeeper of Indian hockey team)	Kerala
18.	Pankaj Patel	Trade and Industry	Gujarat
19.	Pankaj Udhas(Posthumous)	Art (Ghazal Singer)	Maharashtra
20.	Rambahadur Rai	Literature and Education-Journalism	Uttar Pradesh
21.	Sadhvi Ritambhara	Social Work	Uttar Pradesh
22.	S Ajith Kumar	Art	Tamil Nadu
23.	Shekhar Kapur	Art (Film Director)	Maharashtra
24.	Shobana Chandrakumar	Art	Tamil Nadu
25.	Sushil Kumar Modi(Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Bihar

26.	Vinod Dham	Science and Engineering (Father of Pentium Chip of Intel)	United States of America

Padma Shri Awardee (113)

S.No	Awardee Name	Field	State/Country
27.	Adwaita Charan Gadanayak	Art	Odisha
28.	Achyut Ramchandra Palav	Art	Maharashtra
29.	Ajay V Bhatt	Science and Engineering	United States of America
30.	Anil Kumar Boro	Literature and Education	Assam
31.	Arijit Singh	Art (Hindi film singer)	West Bengal
32.	Mrs. Arundhati Bhattacharya	Trade and Industry	Maharashtra
33.	Arunoday Saha	Literature and Education	Tripura
34.	Arvind Sharma	Literature and Education	Canada
35.	Ashok Kumar Mahapatra	Medicine	Odisha
36.	Ashok Laxman Saraf	Art	Maharashtra
37.	Ashutosh Sharma	Science and Engineering	Uttar Pradesh
38.	Ashwini Bhide Deshpande	Art	Maharashtra
39.	Bajinath Maharaj	Others-Spiritualism	Rajasthan
40.	Barry Godfray John	Art	NCT Delhi
41.	Begam Batool	Art	Rajasthan
42.	Bharat Gupt	Art	NCT Delhi
43.	Bheru Singh Chouhan	Art	Madhya Pradesh

44.	Bhim Singh Bhavesh	Social Work	Bihar
45.	Mrs. Bhimavva Doddabalappa Shillekyathara	Art	Karnataka
46.	Budhendra Kumar Jain	Medicine	Madhya Pradesh
47.	C S Vaidyanathan	Public Affairs	NCT Delhi
48.	Chaitram Deochand Pawar	Social Work	Maharashtra
49.	Chandrakant Sheth(Posthumous)	Literature and Education	Gujarat
50.	Chandrakant Sompura	Others-Architecture	Gujarat
51.	Chetan E Chitnis	Science and Engineering	France
52.	David R Syiemlieh	Literature and Education	Meghalaya
53.	Durga Charan Ranbir	Art	Odisha
54.	Farooq Ahmad Mir	Art	Jammu And Kashmir
55.	Ganeshwar Shastri Dravid	Literature and Education	Uttar Pradesh
56.	Mrs. Gita Upadhyay	Literature and Education	Assam
57.	Gokul Chandra Das	Art	West Bengal
58.	Guruvayur Dorai	Art	Tamil Nadu
59.	Harchandan Singh Bhatt	Art	Madhya Pradesh
60.	Hariman Sharma	Others-Agriculture	Himachal Pradesh
61.	Harjinder Singh Srinagar Wale	Art	Punjab
62.	Harvinder Singh	Sports (first para archer to get this award.won gold at 2024 Paris Paralympics)	Haryana
63.	Hassan Raghu	Art	Karnataka

64.	Hemant Kumar	Medicine	Bihar
65.	Hriday Narayan Dixit	Literature and Education	Uttar Pradesh
66.	Hugh and Colleen Gantzer(Posthumous)(Duo)	Literature and Education-Journalism	Uttarakhand
67.	Inivalappil Mani Vijayan	Sports (former captain of the Indian football team)	Kerala
68.	Jagadish Joshila	Literature and Education	Madhya Pradesh
69.	Mrs.Jaspinder Narula	Art (singer)	Maharashtra
70.	Jonas Masetti	Others-Spiritualism	Brazil
71.	Joynacharan Bathari	Art	Assam
72.	Jumde Yomgam Gamlin	Social Work	Arunachal Pradesh
73.	K. Damodaran	Others-Culinary	Tamil Nadu
74.	K L Krishna	Literature and Education	Andhra Pradesh
75.	Mrs. K Omanakutty Amma	Art	Kerala
76.	Kishore Kunal(Posthumous)	Civil Service (IPS)	Bihar
77.	L Hangthing	Others-Agriculture	Nagaland
78.	Lakshmipathy Ramasubbaiyer	Literature and Education-Journalism	Tamil Nadu
79.	Lalit Kumar Mangotra	Literature and Education	Jammu And Kashmir
80.	Lama Lobzang(Posthumous)	Others-Spiritualism	Ladakh
81.	Mrs. Libia Lobo Sardesai	Social Work	Goa
82.	M D Srinivas	Science and Engineering	Tamil Nadu
83.	Madugula Nagaphani Sarma	Art	Andhra Pradesh

84.	Mahabir Nayak	Art	Jharkhand
85.	Mrs. Mamata Shankar	Art	West Bengal
86.	Manda Krishna Madiga	Public Affairs	Telangana
87.	Maruti Bhujangrao Chitampalli	Literature and Education	Maharashtra
88.	Miriyala Apparao(Posthumous)	Art	Andhra Pradesh
89.	Nagendra Nath Roy	Literature and Education	West Bengal
90.	Narayan (Bhulai Bhai)(Posthumous)	Public Affairs	Uttar Pradesh
91.	Naren Gurung	Art	Sikkim
92.	Mrs. Neerja Bhatla	Medicine	NCT Delhi
93.	Mrs. Nirmala Devi	Art	Bihar
94.	Nitin Nohria	Literature and Education	United States of America
95.	Onkar Singh Pahwa	Trade and Industry	Punjab
96.	P Datchanamoorthy	Art	Puducherry
97.	Pandi Ram Mandavi	Art	Chhattisgarh
98.	Parmar Lavjibhai Nagjibhai	Art	Gujarat
99.	Pawan Goenka	Trade and Industry	West Bengal
100.	Prashanth Prakash	Trade and Industry	Karnataka
101.	Mrs. Pratibha Satpathy	Literature and Education	Odisha
102.	Purisai Kannappa Sambandan	Art	Tamil Nadu
103.	R Ashwin	Sports (Cricketer)	Tamil Nadu

104.	R G Chandramogan	Trade and Industry	Tamil Nadu
105.	Mrs. Radha Bahin Bhatt	Social Work	Uttarakhand
106.	Radhakrishnan Devasenapathy	Art	Tamil Nadu
107.	Ramdarash Mishra	Literature and Education (2021 Saraswati Samman winner)	NCT Delhi
108.	Ranendra Bhanu Majumdar	Art	Maharashtra
109.	Ratan Kumar Parimoo	Art	Gujarat
110.	Reba Kanta Mahanta	Art	Assam
111.	Renthlei Lalrawna	Literature and Education	Mizoram
112.	Ricky Gyan Kej	Art (three-time Grammy Award winner, music composer)	Karnataka
113.	Sajjan Bhajanka	Trade and Industry	West Bengal
114.	Mrs. Sally Holkar	Trade and Industry	Madhya Pradesh
115.	Sant Ram Deswal	Literature and Education	Haryana
116.	Satyapal Singh	Sports (Para Athlete Coach)	Uttar Pradesh
117.	Seeni Viswanathan	Literature and Education	Tamil Nadu
118.	Sethuraman Panchanathan	Science and Engineering	United States of America
119.	Mrs. Sheikha Shaikha Ali Al-Jaber Al-Sabah	Medicine	Kuwait
120.	Sheen Kaaf Nizam (Shiv Kishan Bissa)	Literature and Education	Rajasthan
121.	Shyam Bihari Agrawal	Art	Uttar Pradesh
122.	Mrs. Soniya Nityanand	Medicine	Uttar Pradesh

123.	Stephen Knapp	Literature and Education	United States of America
124.	Subhash Khetulal Sharma	Others-Agriculture	Maharashtra
125.	Suresh Harilal Soni	Social Work	Gujarat
126.	Surinder Kumar Vasal	Science and Engineering	Delhi
127.	Swami Pradiptananda (Kartik Maharaj)	Others-Spiritualism	West Bengal
128.	Syed Ainul Hasan	Literature and Education	Uttar Pradesh
129.	Tejendra Narayan Majumdar	Art	West Bengal
130.	Mrs. Thiyam Suryamukhi Devi	Art	Manipur
131.	Tushar Durgeshbhai Shukla	Literature and Education	Gujarat
132.	Vadiraj Raghawendracharya Panchamukhi	Literature and Education	Andhra Pradesh
133.	Vasudeo Kamath	Art	Maharashtra
134.	Velu Aasaan	Art	Tamil Nadu
135.	Venkappa Ambaji Sugatekar	Art	Karnataka
136.	Vijay Nityanand Surishwar Ji Maharaj	Others-Spiritualism	Bihar
137.	Mrs.Vijayalakshmi Deshamane	Medicine	Karnataka
138.	Vilas Dangre	Medicine	Maharashtra
139.	Vinayak Lohani	Social Work	West Bengal

UNION BUDGET 2025-26 HIGHLIGHTS

Nirmala Sitharaman presented her eight consecutive budget as the Union Finance Minister in the Lok Sabha on 1st February 2025..

She holds the record for presenting the union budget for eight consecutive times. Morarji Desai holds the record for presenting **ten union budgets** from 1959 to 1963 and then from 1967 to 1969.

Nirmala Sitharaman was appointed the Union Minister for Finance and Corporate Affairs on 31 May 2019.

Following are the main highlights of the 2025-26 Union Budget.

GDP growth Rate

According to the first estimate of the National Statistical Office, the real GDP (Gross Domestic Product) growth of the Indian economy in 2024-25 was **6.4 percent**. The nominal growth rate was 9.7 percent.

Four Engines of the Indian Economy

The Union Minister identified four engines of the Indian economy - **Agriculture, Micro Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME), Investment, and Export**.

Theme of the Union Budget 2025-26

According to the Finance Minister, the budget's theme is to achieve the target of making India a Viksit Bharat by 2047. The government has identified the following as the sub target for this goal of Vikshit Bharat.

- zero-poverty;
- 100 % good quality school education;
- access to high-quality, affordable, and comprehensive healthcare;
- hundred percent skilled labour with meaningful employment;
- seventy percent of women in economic activities; and
- farmers making our country the 'food basket of the world'.

Focus on Reform in 6 Sectors

The budget targets reform in six sectors;

- Taxation;
- Power Sector;
- Urban Development;
- Mining;
- Financial Sector; and
- Regulatory Reforms.

Agriculture as First Engine

Agriculture has been identified as the **first engine of Growth**

- Allocation of **Rs 1.37 lakh crore** for 2025-26 as compared to Rs 1.32 lakh crore in 2024-25.
- Allocation to **Pradhan Mantri Kisan Samman Nidhi** (Rs 63,500 crore same as last year), **Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana** (Rs 12,242.27 crore in 2025-26 as compared to Rs 15,864 crore in revised estimates for the financial year 2024-25).

Prime Minister Dhan-Dhaanya Krishi Yojana - Developing Agri Districts Programme

- New Scheme to be launched by the central government in partnership with the state government.
- cover **100 districts** with low productivity, moderate crop intensity, and below-average credit parameters.

Aim

- enhance agricultural productivity,
- adopt crop diversification and sustainable agriculture practices,
- augment post-harvest storage at the panchayat and block level,
- improve irrigation facilities, and
- availability of long-term and short-term credit to farmers, to help around 1.7 crore farmers.

Building Rural Prosperity and Resilience

- The programme will be launched by the central government in partnership with states.

Aim

- Address under-employment in agriculture through skilling, investment, and technology to invigorate the rural economy.
- Focus on rural women, young farmers, rural youth, marginal and small farmers, and landless families.
- In Phase 1, **100 developing agri-districts** will be covered.

Aatmanirbharta in Pulses

- a **6-year** “Mission for Aatmanirbharta in Pulses” with a special focus on **Tur, Urad, and Masoor** will be launched.

Makhana Board in Bihar

- The Makhana Board will be set up in Bihar to improve the production, processing, value addition, and marketing of makhana.

National Mission on High-Yielding Seeds

It will be a new scheme to be launched by the central government.

Aim

- strengthening the research ecosystem,
- targeted development and propagation of seeds with high yield, pest resistance, and climate resilience, and
- commercial availability of more than 100 seed varieties released since July 2024.

Mission for Cotton Productivity

- **5-year mission** for cotton productivity to be launched.
- To increase the productivity and sustainability of cotton farming, and promote extra-long staple cotton varieties.

Loan limit through KCC increased to Rs 5 lakh

- Under the Modified Interest Subvention Scheme the short-term loan provided through Kisan Credit Card will be increased from 3 lakh to **5 lakh**.

New Urea Plant in Namrup, Assam

- A new Urea plant is to be set up with an annual capacity of 12.7 lakh metric tons in Namrup, Assam.

MSMEs as the 2nd engine

Contribution of the MSME in India's Economy

- There are 1 crore registered MSMEs (Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises) in the country, employing **7.5 crore people**, contribution to the manufacturing sector **36 %** and **45 % in exports**.

Budget announcement

- Change in the definition of the MSME proposed.
- Introduction of **credit cards** for micro-enterprises registered on the Udyam Portal. **10 lakh** cards to be issued in the first year.
- The credit guarantee cover for MSMEs has been increased from Rs 5 crore to Rs **10 crore**.
- For start-ups, the guarantee cover has doubled from Rs 10 crore to Rs 20 crore, with a moderated guarantee fee of 1 percent for loans in 27 focus sectors under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.

Scheme for First-time Entrepreneurs

- A new start-up scheme to be launched for first-time women, Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes entrepreneurs scheme.

Target

- 5 lakh entrepreneurs to be covered
- Entrepreneurs to be provided term loans up to Rs 2 crore in the next **5 years**.

National Institute of Food Technology, Entrepreneurship and Management in Bihar

- The institute will be set up in Bihar to provide an impetus to the food processing activities in the entire Eastern region

National Manufacturing Mission

- Will be launched focused on small, medium, and large industries for furthering the "Make in India" initiative of the government.
- The mission will support Clean Tech manufacturing to improve domestic value addition and build an ecosystem for solar PV cells, EV batteries, motors and controllers, electrolyzers, wind turbines, etc.

Investment as the 3rd engine

Atal Tinkering Labs

- Fifty thousand Atal Tinkering Labs** will be set up in Government schools in the next 5 years.

Broadband Connectivity to Government Schools and PHCs

- All Government secondary schools and primary health centers in rural areas to have Broadband connectivity under the Bharatnet project.

Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme

- Government will launch the Bharatiya Bhasha Pustak Scheme to provide digital-form Indian language books for school and higher education.

National Centres of Excellence for Skilling

- **Five National Centres of Excellence** for Skilling will be set up with global expertise and partnerships to upskill the Indian youth in the skills required for “Make for India, Make for the World” manufacturing.

Centre of Excellence in AI for Education

- Government to set up a Centre of Excellence in Artificial Intelligence for education with a total outlay of Rs 500 crore.

Expansion of medical education

- Target -10,000 additional seats in medical colleges and hospitals in 2025-26.
- Goal of adding 75,000 seats in the next 5 years.

Day Care Cancer Centres in all District Hospitals

- Day Care Cancer Centres to be established in all district hospitals in the next 3 years.
- Target- 200 Centres in 2025-26.

PM SVANidhi

- UPI-linked credit cards with a **Rs 30,000 limit** will be introduced for street vendors covered in the scheme.

Online Platform Workers included in PM Jan Arogya Yojana

- Gig workers of online platforms will be included in the PM Jan Arogya Yojana.

Support to States for Infrastructure Development

- Center will provide 50 year, **Rs 1.5 lakh crore interest-free loan** to states for capital expenditure and incentives for reforms.

Jal Jeevan Mission

- The mission to provide piped water to every rural household has been extended till **2028**.
- The outlay for 2025-26- Rs 67,000 crores.

Urban Challenge Fund

- Urban Challenge Fund to be set up to implement ‘Cities as Growth Hubs’, ‘Creative Redevelopment of Cities’, and ‘Water and Sanitation’ initiatives.
- **Corpus** -Rs 1 lakh crore
- Allocation for 2025-26- Rs 10,000 crore.
- The fund will finance up to 25 % of the project cost under these initiatives.

Nuclear Energy Mission for Viksit Bharat

- Target to have **100 GW installed nuclear energy by 2047**.
- The Nuclear Energy Mission for Research & Development of Small Modular Reactors will be launched.
- Target- build and operationalise **5 indigenously developed reactors by 2033**.
- Outlay- Rs 20,000 crore.

Maritime Development Fund

- Maritime Development Fund to be set up to support the maritime sector.
- Corpus - Rs 25,000 crore.
- Contribution of the Center- 49 % and 51 % from the ports and private sector.

SWAMIH Fund 2

- Special Window for Affordable and Mid-Income Housing (SWAMIH) Fund 2 will be launched.
- **Corpus** -Rs 15,000 crore with contribution from central government, banks, and private investors.
- **Target**- completion of 1 lakh houses
- Under this fund financing facility is provided to the Affordable and Middle Income Housing sector projects that could not be completed due to the builder's bankruptcy.

PM Research Fellowship

- Target - **Ten thousand** fellowships to be provided In the next five years for technological research in IITs and Indian Institute of Science Bengaluru.

National Geospatial Mission

- National Geospatial Mission to be launched to develop foundational geospatial infrastructure and data.

Gyan Bharatam Mission & National Digital Repository

- **Gyan Bharatam Mission** is to be launched for the survey, documentation, and conservation of manuscript heritage with academic institutions, museums, libraries, and private collectors.
- It will cover more than 1 crore manuscripts.
- The government will launch the National **Digital Repository of Indian Knowledge Systems** for knowledge sharing.

Exports as the 4th engine

Export Promotion Mission

- The Export Promotion Mission will be jointly launched by the Union Ministry of Commerce, MSME, and Finance.
- It will facilitate easy access to export credit, cross-border factoring support, and support to MSMEs to tackle non-tariff measures in overseas markets.

BharatTradeNet

A digital public infrastructure, 'BharatTradeNet' (BTN) for international trade will be set up as a unified platform for trade documentation and financing solutions.

Reform in the Financial Sector

FDI in the Insurance Sector

- The FDI limit for the insurance sector will be raised from 74 to **100 percent** for foreign insurance companies that invest the entire premium in India.

Grameen Credit Score

- Public Sector Banks will develop the 'Grameen Credit Score' framework to serve the credit needs of Self-Help Group (SHG) members and people in rural areas.

High-Level Committee for Regulatory Reforms

- Government to set up a High-Level Committee for Regulatory Reforms to review all non-financial sector regulations, certifications, licenses, and permissions.

Investment Friendliness Index of States

- The Government will launch the Investment Friendliness Index of States in 2025 to further the spirit of competitive cooperative federalism.

Jan Vishwas Bill 2.0

- Government will bring Jan Vishwas Act 2.0 to decriminalise more than 100 legal provisions.
- The first Jan Vishwas Act was introduced in 2023 under which more than 180 legal provisions were decriminalized.

Central Government Finance 2025-26

The money received by the government through taxes and non-tax sources plus borrowings are called receipts.

Revised Estimates 2024-25

- Total **receipts** other than borrowings - Rs 31.47 lakh crore.
- The net tax receipt (after transferring the state share of the taxes) was Rs 25.57 lakh crore.
- Revised Expenditure estimates -Rs ₹47.16 lakh crore.
- Revenue expenditure -, Rs 36.98 lakh crore (11.4 percent of GDP)
- Capital Expenditure - Rs 10.18 lakh crore

Budget Estimates 2025-26

Total Expenditure - Rs 50.65 lakh crore (14.2 percent of GDP)

- Revenue Expenditure - Rs 39.44 lakh crore (11.0 percent of GDP)
- Capital Expenditure - Rs 11.21 lakh crore (3.1 percent of GDP)

Total Receipts other than borrowing - Rs 34.96 lakh crore.

- Revenue Receipts - Rs 34.20 lakh crore
- Net Tax Receipts - Rs 28.37 lakh crore.
- Non-Tax Receipts- Rs 5.83 lakh crore.
- Non-Debt Capital Receipts - Rs `76,000 crore (It includes recovery of loans, dividends received by central governments, etc.)

Borrowings in 2025-26

- Gross Borrowing through dated securities - Rs 14.82 lakh crore (or 4.2 percent of GDP).
- Gross Borrowing through NSSF- Rs 3.43 lakh crore
- External Borrowing - Rs 23,490 crore
- Net Borrowing through State Provident Funds - Rs 5000 crore.

Deficits of the Government of India

All the figures are in percentage of India's Gross Domestic Product at Market prices.

	Revised Estimates for 2024-25 (% of GDP)	Target for 2025-26 (% of GDP)
Fiscal Deficit	4.8 % or Rs15.70 lakh crore	4.4 percent or Rs 15.69 lakh crore.
Revenue Deficit	1.9	1.5
Primary Deficit	1.3	0.8
Tax Revenue (Gross)	11.9	12.0
Non Tax Revenue	1.6	1.6
Central Government Debt	57.1	56.1

Taxation Proposal

Revenue loss to the government due to concession in taxes

- Direct Tax Loss- Rs1 lakh crore
- Indirect Taxes - Rs 2600 crore.

Direct Tax Proposals

-No tax for income up to **Rs 12 lakh per annum**.

-Salaried person will not pay income tax on income up to Rs 12.75 lakh per annum due to standard deduction of Rs 75,000.

Tax Deducted at Source (TDS)

- TDS will be applicable on the interest income of senior citizens if the annual interest income is **Rs one Lakh or more (existing Rs 50,000)**.
- TDS on rent will be applicable if the annual income from rent is Rs 6 lakh per year (at present it is Rs 2.40 lakh).

Tax Collected at Source (TCS)

- TCS will now be applicable on remittance (money sent abroad) under the RBI's Liberalized Remittance Scheme (LRS) if the amount is **Rs 10 lakhs or more** (earlier Rs 7 lakhs or more.)
- No TCS on remittance sent for education purposes.



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STUDENT GOT SELECTION IN
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GOOD LUCK FOR YOUR FUTURE
JOURNEY FEELING PROUD (🔥)

NAME - PRIYADARSHINI
KALIYAMOORTHY
ROLL NO - 2120036944
SELECTED IN - RRB PO
SAPTHA GIRI GRAMEEN BANK
STATE - TAMILNADU



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STUDENT GOT SELECTION IN
IBPS RRB CLERK
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JOURNEY FEELING PROUD.

NAME - GARVITA VARSHNEY
ROLL NO - 2603002298
SELECTED IN - ARYAVART
GRAMIN BANK CLERK
STATE - UTTAR PRADESH



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JOURNEY FEELING PROUD

NAME - ISHITA GARG
ROLL NO - 2283004123
STATE - PUNJAB
BANK - PUNJAB GRAMIN BANK



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IBPS RRB CLERK
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JOURNEY FEELING PROUD.

NAME - NIPUN
ROLL NO - 1533002831
SELECTED IN - RRB CLERK
STATE - HARYANA



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STUDENT GOT SELECTION IN
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JOURNEY FEELING PROUD

NAME - PRAVEEN
ROLL NO - 1801005776
SELECTED IN - RRB PO
KARNATAKA GRAMMENA
BANK
STATE - KARNATAKA



Name: Bathina Maneesha
Rollno: 2543024278
Selected in : RRB clerk
State : Telangana

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STUDENT GOT SELECTION IN
IBPS RRB CLERK
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JOURNEY FEELING PROUD

NAME - BATHINA MANEESHA
ROLL NO - 2543024278
SELECTED IN - RRB CLERK
STATE - TELAGANA



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STUDENT GOT SELECTION IN
IBPS RRB CLERK
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JOURNEY FEELING PROUD

NAME - NISHU SHARMA
ROLL NO - 1523008901
SELECTED IN - RRB CLERK
STATE - HARYANA



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STUDENT GOT SELECTION IN
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JOURNEY FEELING PROUD.

NAME - GURIYA KUMARI
ROLL NO - 1373006773
SELECTED IN - RRB CLERK
DAKSHIN BIHAR GRAMEEN
BANK



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STUDENT GOT SELECTION IN
IBPS RRB CLERK
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JOURNEY FEELING PROUD

NAME - GURPREET KAUR
ROLL NO - 2283002821
BANK - PUNJAB GRAMIN BANK
STATE - FROM PUNJAB



👏👏 MY PAID GROUP
STUDENT GOT SELECTION IN
IBPS RRB CLERK
GOOD LUCK FOR YOUR FUTURE
JOURNEY FEELING PROUD

NAME - MANU VARGHESE
ROLL NO - 2110710970
BANK - KERALA GRAMEEN
BANK CLERK

Aparchit Exam

Top 10 students those obtained highest marks in GA .Those became PO in 2022



Name- PRIYA
Roll No- 3161002146
Bank- PO IN CBI
Roll no- 2611001773
Bank - CLERK IN PNB



Name - Shikang Vijaya
Roll no - 1701001451
State - Andhra Pradesh
Bank - Central Bank of India
Post - PO
Roll no- 121001773
Post - Sps. rrb clerk
Bank - sapientia svamirva bank



Name-- Shakshi
Roll No -- 2611000443
Bank po in cbi



NAME - PRIYANSH KALYANSHREE
ROLL NO - 1120010043
LECTED IN - RRB PO SAPTGA GIRI GRAMEN BAN
STATE - JHARKHAND



Name- Nipun
lected as - RRB PO CLERK, ART CLERK, JDR EXECUTIVE
Roll No 00000000



Name- Prabhu Dayal Sa
Roll no - 4351001578
Bank- SBI PO
Banka, Bihar



Name- Rashmi Ranjan Behera
Roll no- 2521007295
State- Odisha
Bank- Union Bank of India
Post- PO



Name :Sonu
Roll no.- 2671013546
lected in - UCO po, pnb clerk & sb



Name - E. Srivinish
lected - SBI JA & JDR PO Central Bank of India
Roll No - 2310000770



NAME - PRAVEEN
ROLL NO - 00000000
LECTED IN - RRB PO KAPASGA GIRI GRAMEN BAN
STATE - JHARKHAND