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**English**



# 31 DECEMBER

# 2024

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State Current Affairs



< Feb 2024

Monthly

Weekly

**Daily**

PIB News



Feb 29 2024 CA Q&A - English  
Ebook



AffairsCloud Dailyscoop Feb 29 2024 - English  
Ebook



Feb 29 2024 CA Quiz - English  
**START**

Monthly

**Weekly**

Daily

PIB News



Weekly: 24-29 Feb 2024 CA Q&A - English  
Ebook



Weekly Top 60: 24-29 Feb 2024 CA Q&A - English  
Ebook



Weekly: 24-29 Feb 2024 CA Quiz - English  
**START**

Monthly

Weekly

Daily

**PIB News**



February 29 2024 PIB News - English  
Article



February 28 2024 PIB News - English  
Article

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## AFFAIRSCLOUD TODAY

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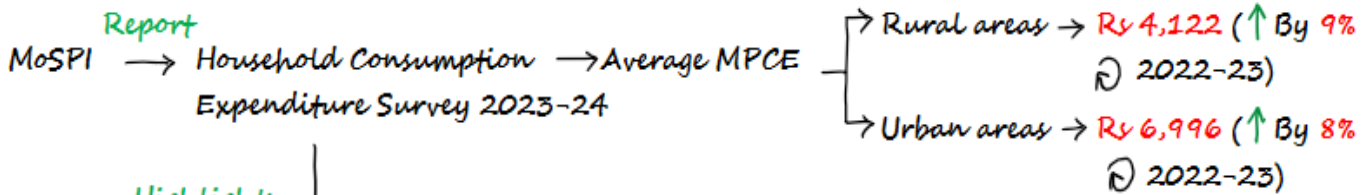
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## Hand Written Notes

### NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1)



Urban-rural gap in MPCE → ↓ to 70% (in 2023-24) → 71% (in 2022-23)

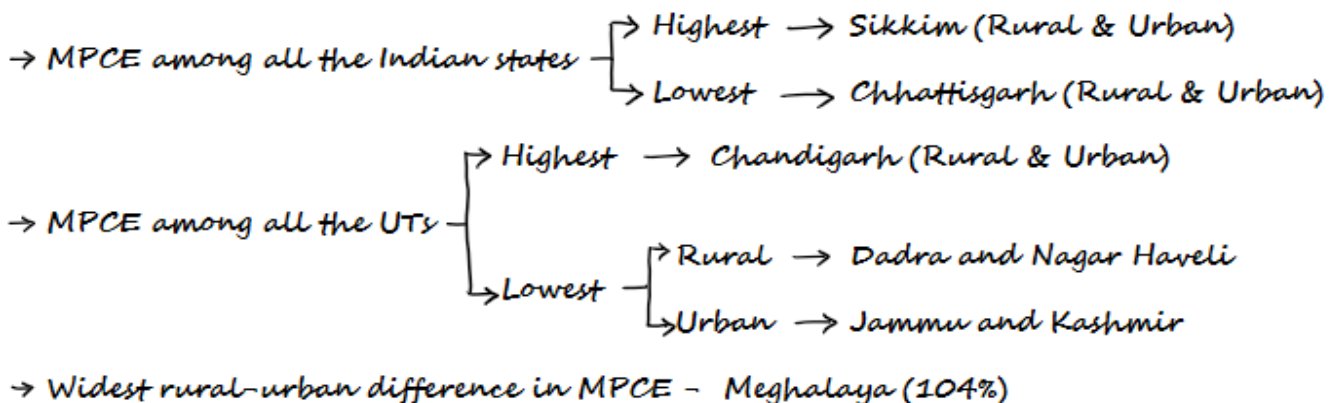
### States with highest average MPCE

#### Urban areas

1. Telangana (₹ 8,978)
2. Tamil Nadu (₹ 8,165)
3. Karnataka (₹ 8,076)
4. Maharashtra (₹ 7,363)
5. Andhra Pradesh (₹ 7,182)

#### Rural areas

1. Kerala (₹ 6,611)
2. Punjab (₹ 5,817)
3. Tamil Nadu (₹ 5,701)
4. Telangana (₹ 5,435)

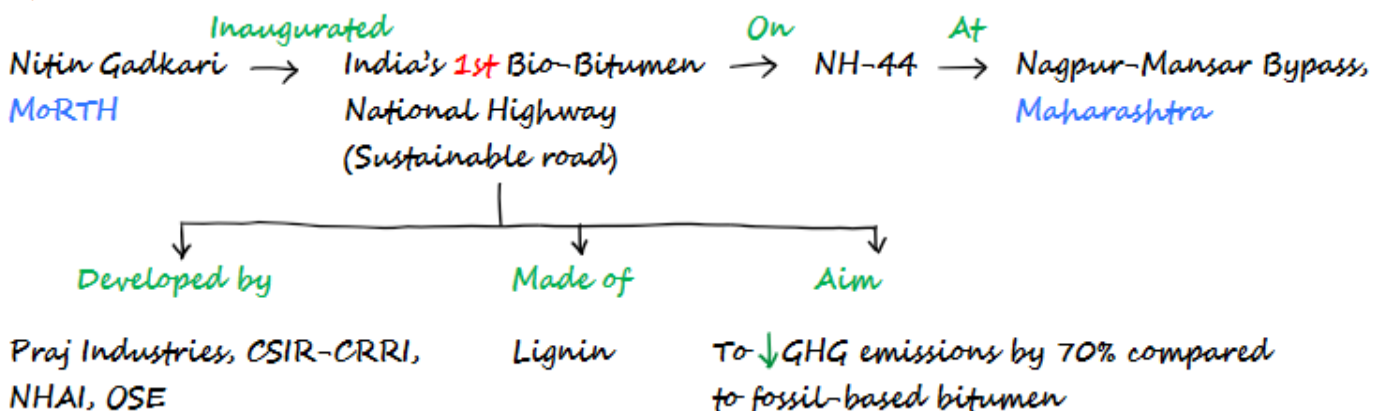


MoSPI - Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation

MPCE - Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure

UT - Union Territory

2)



MoRTH - Ministry of Road Transport and Highways

NH - National Highway

CSIR-CRRI - Council of Scientific and Industrial Research-Central Road Research Institute

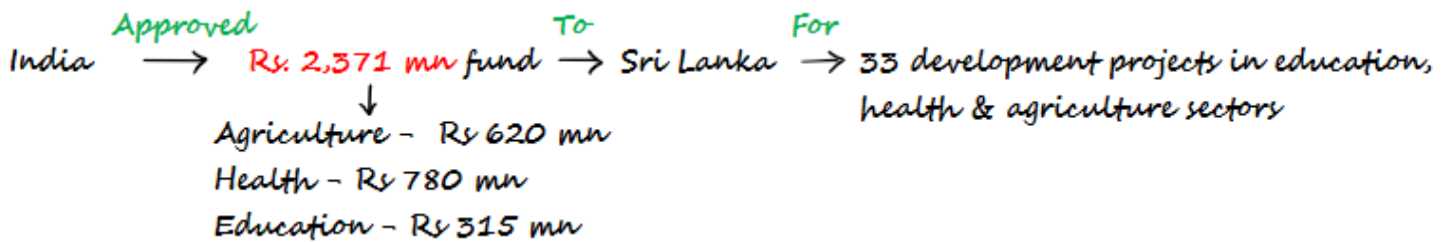
NHAI - National Highways Authority of India

OSE - Oriental Structural Engineers

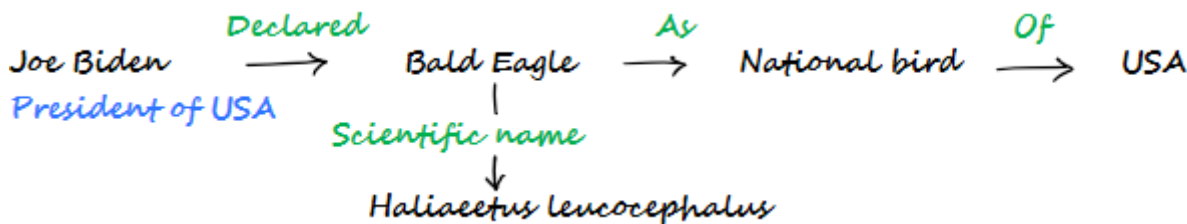
GHG - Green House Gas

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

1)



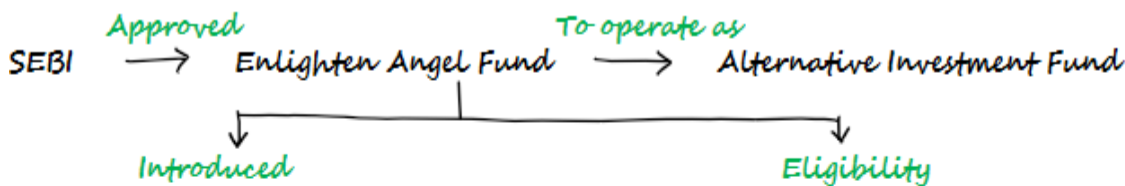
2)



USA - United States of America

## BANKING & FINANCE

1)



Rs. 200 cr Micro-VC fund

with Rs. 100 cr greenshoe option

→ Resident Indians, NRIs & Foreign nationals

→ Min. investment

→ Investors - Rs. 1 cr

→ Directors, employees, & fund managers - Rs. 25 lakh

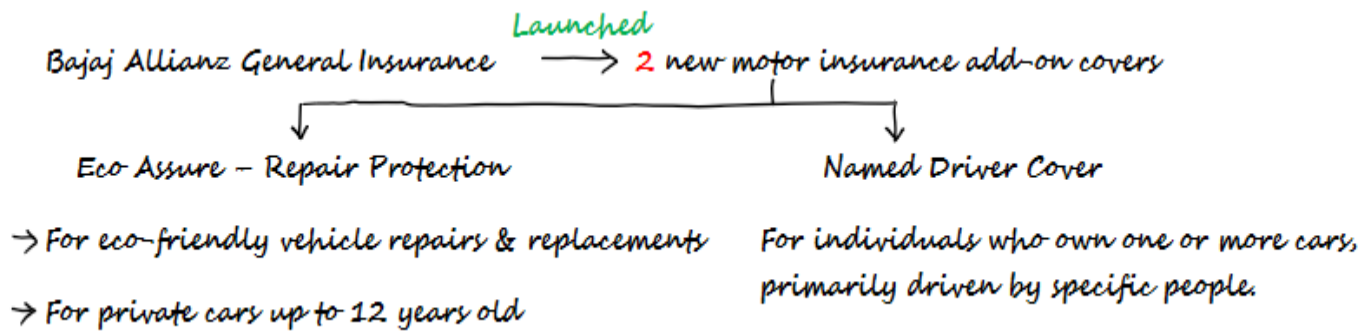
→ Min. lock-in period - 3 years

SEBI - Securities and Exchange Board of India

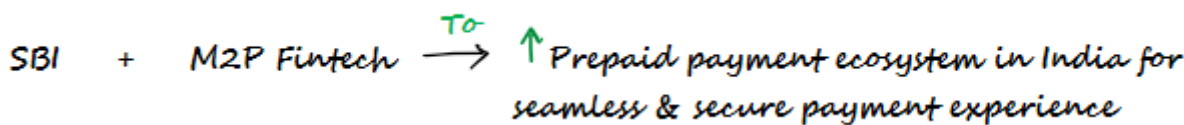
VC - Venture Capital

NRI - Non-Resident Indians

2)

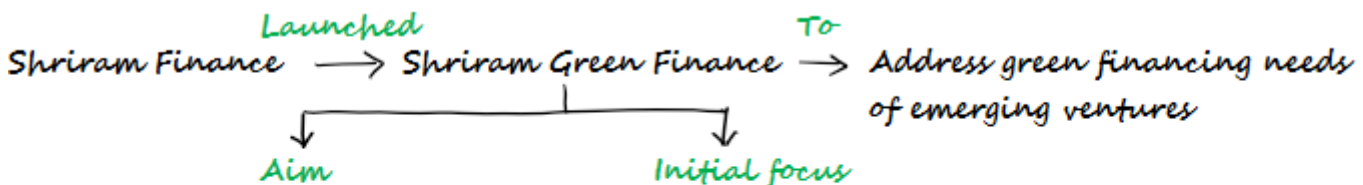


3)



SBI – **State Bank of India**

4)



**AUM** – **Asset Under Management**

**NCR** – **National Capital Region**

## **ECONOMY & BUSINESS**

1)

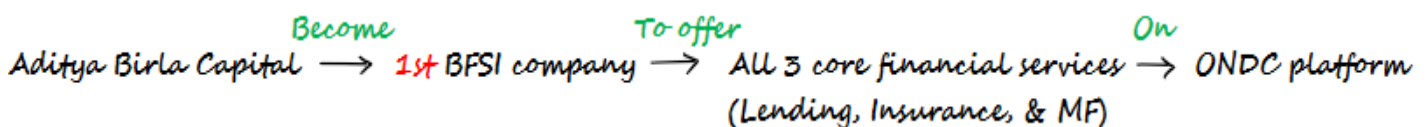


**MoF**

**DEA** – **Department of Economic Affairs**

**MoF** – **Ministry of Finance**

2)



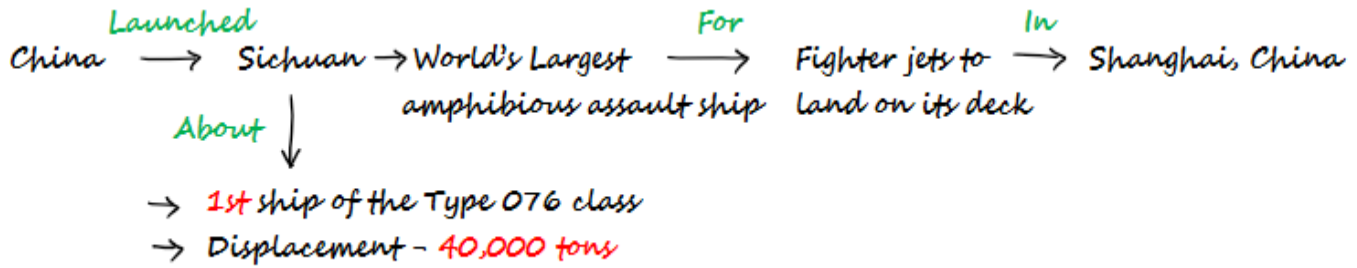
**BFSI** – **Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance**

**MF** – **Mutual Fund**

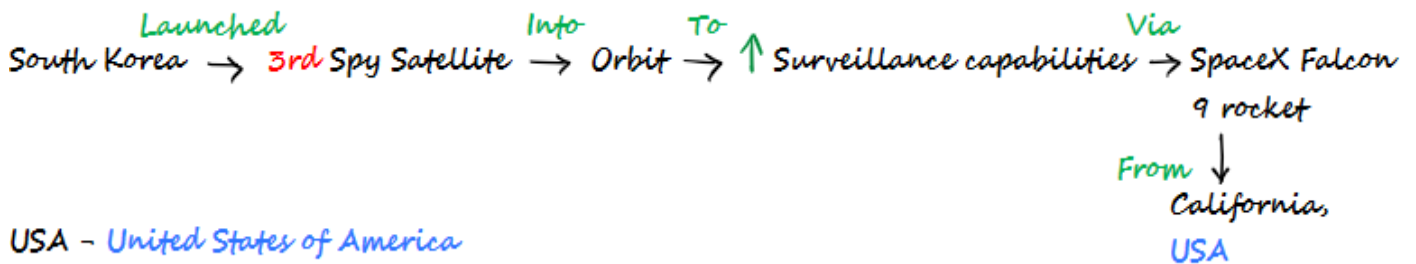
**ONDC** – **Open Network for Digital Commerce**

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1)



2)



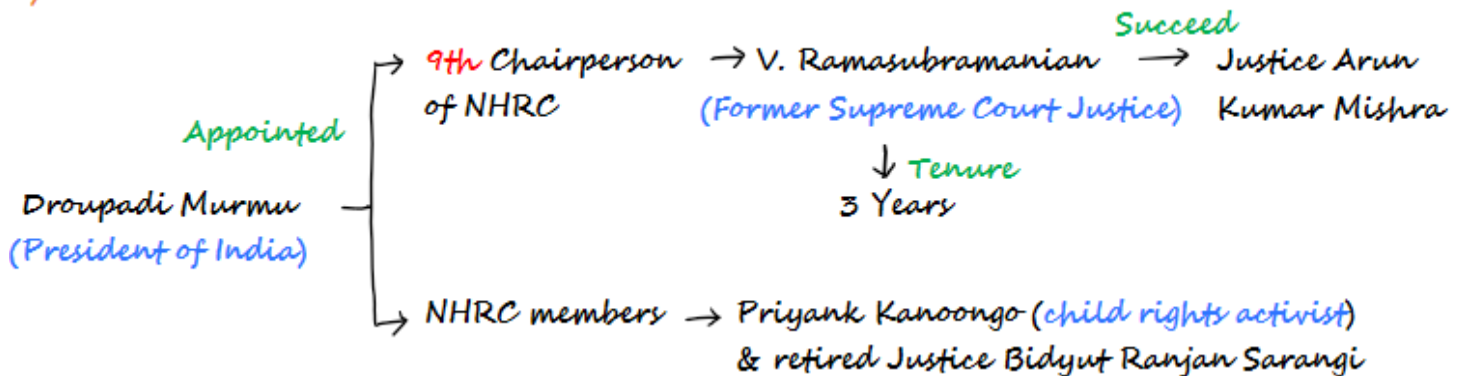
## SPORTS

1)



## APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

1)



NHRC - National Human Rights Commission



## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

1)

Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi → Subrahmanyam Jaishankar → Public Leadership  
 National Eminence Award (Ministry of External Affairs) from SIES (Mumbai, Maharashtra)

↓ *Named after*

Mahaswami Sri Chandrasekarendra  
 Saraswathi (or) Maha Periyavar  
 ("Sage of Kancheepuram")

SIES - South Indian Education Society

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

1)

Book : "Chhaunk On Food, Economics and Society" → *Author* Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee  
 (Nobel Prize laureate)

*Published by* ↓  
 Juggernaut Publication

*Co-author*  
 Cheyenne Olivier

## OBITUARY

1)

James Earl Carter Jr. → 39th President of USA → *Awards* 2002 - Nobel Peace Prize  
 (Peace, Democracy & Human rights)

*Born* ↓ *Passed away* USA  
 As of 2024, Longest-Living USA president after George Bush

2016 & 2019 - Grammy Award  
 (Spoken word album)

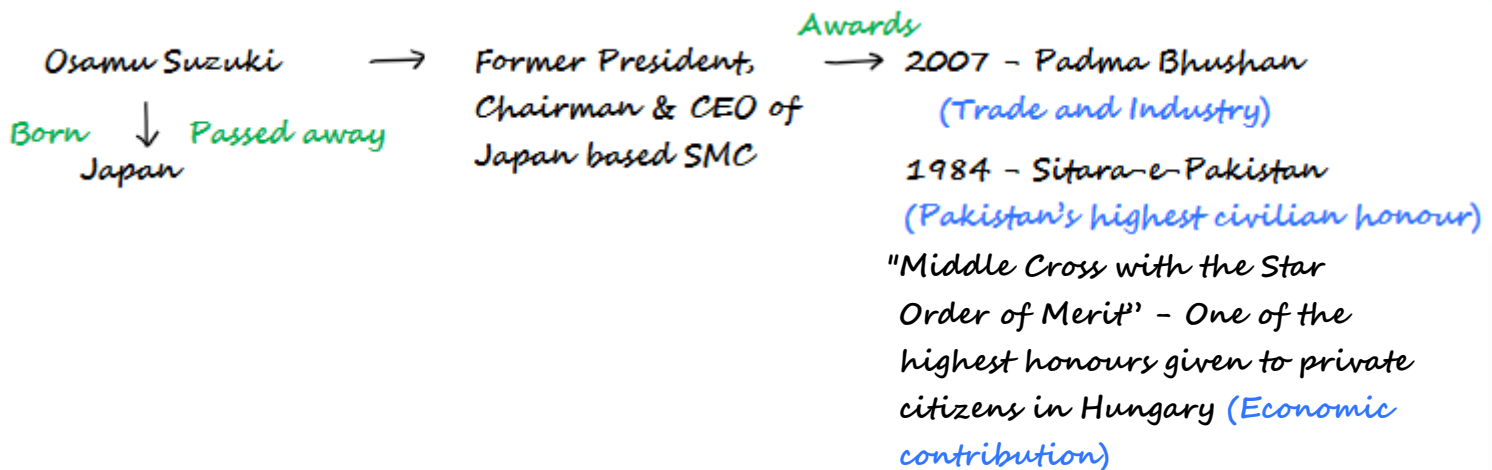
1999 - Presidential Medal of Freedom  
 (Highest civilian award of USA)  
 (Security & world peace of USA)

1998 - United Nations Human Rights Award  
 (Cause of human rights worldwide)

1997 - Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament & Development  
 (Humanitarian work)

USA - United States of America

2)

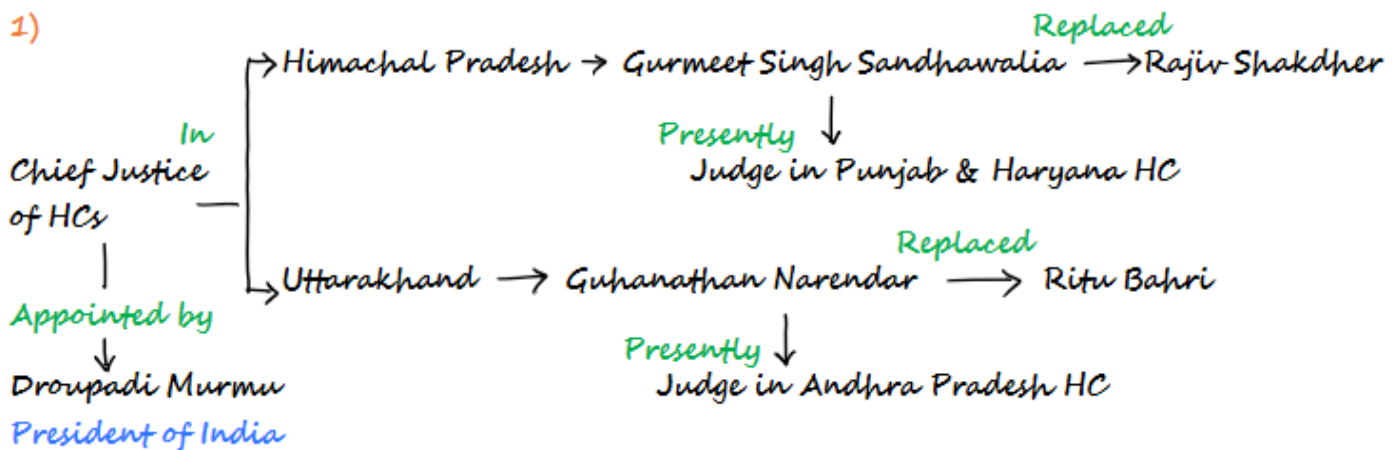


CEO - Chief Executive Officer

SMC - Suzuki Motor Corporation

## STATE NEWS

1)



HC - High Court

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## Less Important NEWS

- ▶ [Aditya Birla Sun Life MF launches first index fund tracking BSE India Infrastructure Index](#)
- ▶ [Rakesh Sharma takes charge as MD & CEO Of Cent Bank Home Finance Ltd.](#)
- ▶ [Clean Ganga mission to start special Dolphin Ambulance](#)
- ▶ [India ships first Akash air defence missile system battery to Armenia](#)
- ▶ [NHB raises Rs 3,830 cr through 10-yr bonds at 7.14%; gets 'AAA' rating](#)

## Detailed Content

Current Affairs 31 December 2024 : Headlines




**AFFAIRSCLOUD TODAY**

**ENGLISH**



**Monthly Per Capita Expenditure increases by 9% in rural areas & around 8% in urban areas in 2023-24: MoSPI**



**Indian economy to grow nearly 6.5% in FY25 amid global triggers, GDP to bounce back in second-half: FinMin report**

**CURRENT AFFAIRS**

**31 DECEMBER 2024**

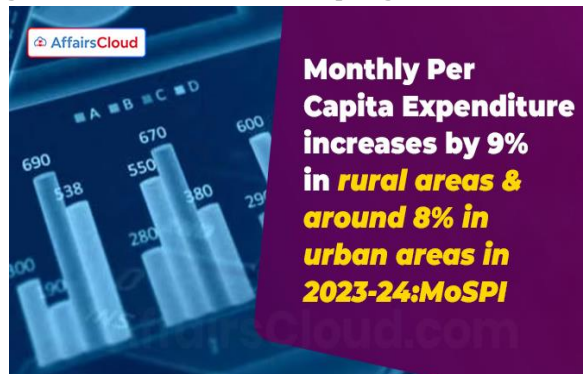
- MoSPI: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure Increased by 9% in rural areas and around 8% in urban areas in 2023-24
- Union Minister Nitin Gadkari Inaugurated India's First Bio-Bitumen National Highway
- India to fund worth Rs 2,371 million in Sri Lanka for development projects
- USA declares 'Bald eagle' as National Bird after 240 years
- SEBI approves Enlighten Angel Fund to operate as AIF
- Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Launched Two Motor Insurance Add-ons
- M2P Fintech partners with SBI to Revolutionize Prepaid Payment Systems
- Shriram Finance Launches new vertical 'Green Finance' for Rs 5,000 Crore AUM
- MoF Report: Indian Economy Likely to Grow at 6.5% in FY25
- Aditya Birla Capital becomes the first BFSI company to offer all financial services on ONDC Network
- Union Minister S. Jaishankar Honoured with Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award
- Former Justice V. Ramasubramanian Appointed as NHRC Chairperson
- China Launches World's Largest Amphibious Assault Ship 'Sichuan' for Fighter Jets
- South Korea Launches Third Spy Satellite into Orbit
- Bihar to Host Women's Kabaddi World Cup 2025
- Former Suzuki Motor Chairman and CEO Osamu Suzuki Passed Away
- Former USA President & Nobel Laureate James Earl Carter Jr. passed away
- Nobel Prize laureate Abhijit Banerjee's launched his new book "Chhaunk on Food, Economics, and Society"
- President Droupadi Murmu Appointed CJs for Himachal, Uttarakhand High Courts



## NATIONAL AFFAIRS

### MoSPI: Monthly Per Capita Expenditure Increased by 9% in rural areas and around 8% in urban areas in 2023-24

In December 2024, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (**MoSPI**) released the results of **Household Consumption Expenditure Survey: 2023-24 (HCES: 2023-24)**. As per the latest survey, the average Monthly Per Capita Consumption Expenditure (**MPCE**) in rural and urban India has been estimated to be **Rs 4,122 and Rs 6,996**, respectively in 2023-24, without considering the values of items received free of cost by the households through various social welfare programmes.



- While, the average MPCE (without imputation) in nominal terms has increased by **about 8% and 9%** in urban and rural areas of the country, respectively in 2023-24 from the level of 2022-23.
- If imputed values of items received free of cost through various social welfare programmes is considered, then, these estimates will amount to Rs 4,247 and Rs 7,078, respectively for rural and urban areas.

#### Key Findings:

i. The survey showed that the urban-rural gap in MPCE has decreased from 84% (in 2011-12) to 71% (in 2022-23), which has further **decreased to 70% (in 2023-24)** which reflects sustained momentum of consumption growth in rural areas.

ii. As per the survey, **Non-food items** continue to be the major contributor to average monthly expenditure of households in 2023-24 with about 53% and 60% share in MPCE in rural and urban areas respectively.

v. The Gini coefficient for rural areas, has decreased from 0.266 (in 2022-23) to 0.237 (in 2023-24) and similarly, it decreased for urban areas, from 0.314 (in 2022-23) to 0.284 (in 2023-24).

#### Top Indian States with Average MPCE for Urban and Rural Areas:

i. The survey revealed that among 18 major Indian states, the average MPCE of 9 states have exceeded the all-India average MPCE both in rural and urban areas.

ii. **States with highest average MPCE for urban areas in 2023-24:** Telangana (Rs 8,978); Tamil Nadu (TN) (Rs 8,165); Karnataka (Rs 8,076); Maharashtra (Rs 7,363) and Andhra Pradesh (AP) (Rs 7,182).

iii. **States with highest average MPCE for rural areas in 2023-24:** Kerala (Rs 6,611); Punjab (Rs 5,817); TN (Rs 5,701) and Telangana (Rs 5,435).

#### Variation in MPCE Among States and UTs:

i. **Sikkim** reported the highest MPCE among all the Indian states, with Rs 9,377 in rural areas and Rs 13,927 in urban areas for 2023-24.

- While, Chhattisgarh recorded the lowest MPCE, with Rs 2,739 in rural areas and Rs 4,927 in urban areas for 2023-24.

ii. **Chandigarh** reported the highest MPCE among all the UTs, with Rs 8,857 in rural areas and Rs 13,425 in urban areas for 2023-24.

- While, Dadra and Nagar Haveli (Rs 4,311) and Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) (Rs 6,327) recorded the lowest MPCE in rural and urban areas of the country, in 2023-24.

iii. Among the states, **Meghalaya (104%)** has the widest rural-urban difference in MPCE, followed by Jharkhand (83%) and Chhattisgarh (80%).

#### Variation in MPCE across fractiles classes:

i. Average MPCE for the **bottom 5%** of India's rural and urban population, ranked by MPCE, has increased by **22%** and about **19%**, respectively in 2023-24 compared to the level of 2022-23.

ii. The survey revealed that the bottom 5% of rural and urban population of India, ranked by MPCE has an average MPCE of **Rs 1,677 and Rs 2,376**, respectively.

iii. Also, average MPCE for the top 5% of rural and urban population of India, ranked by MPCE is Rs 10,137 and Rs 20,310, respectively.

#### Recent Related News:

In November 2024, the National Statistical Office (**NSO**) under the MoSPI released the **24th Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) Quarterly Bulletin (July to September 2024)**.

- As per the report, Unemployment Rate (UR) in urban areas among persons aged 15 years and above has decreased by **20 basis points (bps)**, to **6.4%** in 2nd Quarter (**Q2: July-September**) of Financial Year 2024-25 (**FY25**), from **6.6%** in Q1 of FY25.

### Union Minister Nitin Gadkari Inaugurated India's First Bio-Bitumen National Highway

India's first sustainable road using **lignin-based bio bitumen** was inaugurated by Union Minister Nitin Gadkari, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (**MoRTH**) at the Nagpur-Mansar Bypass on NH (National Highway)-44. The project has been launched by the Pune (Maharashtra) based Praj Industries, a leading company in industrial biotechnology.

#### Key Points

i. Praj Industries developed this project in collaboration with Council of Scientific and Industrial Research – Central Road Research Institute (**CSIR-CRRI**), the National Highways Authority of India (**NHAI**), and Oriental Structural Engineers (**OSE**).

ii. Bio-bitumen saves India Rs.4,000–Rs.4,500 crore annually in foreign exchange on imported bitumen and promotes sustainable road development.

iii. India consumed 88 lakh tons of fossil-based bitumen in 2023-24, with consumption expected to rise to 100 lakh tons in 2024-25. About 50% is imported, costing Rs.25,000-30,000 crore annually.

**How is it considered a Sustainable Road** – The project aims to replace crude-derived bitumen with up to 15% lignin bio-bitumen, reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 70% compared to fossil-based bitumen, while the remaining 85% is still crude bitumen.

**What is Bio-Bitumen?** – Bio-Bitumen is an eco-friendly alternative to petroleum-based bitumen, made from renewable sources like agricultural waste. It's used in roads, roofing, and waterproofing, offering durability while reducing environmental impact.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### India to fund worth Rs 2,371 million in Sri Lanka for development projects

In December 2024, **India** will provide **Rs 2,371 million** to **Sri Lanka** for 33 development projects in education, health and agriculture sectors in the eastern province.

- Nalinda Jayathissa, the cabinet spokesman and the Health Minister of Sri Lanka informed that the Sri Lanka Government has approved a proposal to sign a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) to strengthen bilateral ties and socio-economic growth between India and Sri Lanka.

- i. Under the agreement, India will provide Rs 620 million for agriculture, Rs 780 million for health, and Rs 315 million for education.
- ii. These projects aimed at enhancing infrastructure, growth and empowering local communities.

### USA declares 'Bald eagle' as National Bird after 240 years

In December 2024, President of the United States of America (USA), **Joseph Robinette Biden** signed a bipartisan bill that officially designates the "**Bald Eagle**" as the **National bird of the USA**. The significant recognition formalizes the bald eagle's role as a symbol of American strength and power, a position it has held informally for over 240 years.



- The bald eagle has been a symbol of the USA since 1782, when it was featured on the Great Seal of the USA. The seal includes the eagle, an olive branch, arrows, a shield, the motto "E Pluribus Unum (Out of Many, One)" and a constellation of stars.
- i. The bald eagle is native to North America, Canada, the USA and appears on various national emblems, including the presidential flag, USA currency and military insignia.
  - ii. **Haliaeetus leucocephalus** is the scientific name of the bald eagle, known for its striking white head and yellow beak atop its brown body.

## BANKING & FINANCE

### SEBI approves Enlighten Angel Fund to operate as AIF

In December 2024, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) approved the **Enlighten Angel Fund**, a platform supporting early-stage startups in India, to operate as an Alternative Investment Fund (AIF).

- The company will focus on early-stage startups in emerging technologies, smart manufacturing, and the electric vehicle sectors.



- It has introduced **Rs. 200 crore** Micro Venture Capital (VC) fund, with a **Rs. 100 crore** greenshoe option to enhance its support for India's emerging entrepreneurs.

### Greenshoe option:

- i. Greenshoe option is a facility in Initial Public Offering (IPO) that enables underwriters to purchase additional shares of a company than originally planned. It is also known as an over-allotment option.

ii. It allows underwriters to sell up to **15%** more shares than the original amount offered.

#### About Enlighten Angel Fund:

i. The company has also rebranded itself as **Enlighten Capital Micro VC** to mark the beginning of its growth journey in the expanding startup ecosystem.

- In the past two years, the fund, formerly known as Enlighten Angel Fund, has facilitated over 10 startup investments.
- Enlighten Capital is led by **Koushik Shekar** and **Arvind Subramaniam**.

ii. With a structured investment approach and a strong network of Limited Partners (LPs) and angel investors, the fund focuses on early-stage startups in emerging technologies, smart manufacturing, and the electric vehicle (E-vehicle) sector to address a critical gap in the funding pipeline

#### About Alternative Investment Fund (AIF):

i. AIF is a privately pooled investment vehicle that collects investment from investors to invest in alternative asset classes. Unlike traditional investment instruments, AIFs are designed to meet the needs of High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNIs).

ii. These investment vehicles comply with the SEBI (Alternative Investment Funds) Regulations, 2012.

iii. AIFs can be structured as companies, Limited Liability Partnerships (LLPs), trusts, or other forms.

#### Eligibility to invest in AIF:

i. Open to investment from resident Indians, Non-Resident Indians (NRIs), and Foreign nationals.

ii. The minimum investment is **Rs. 1 crore** for investors, while directors, employees, and fund managers can invest a minimum of **Rs. 25 lakh**.

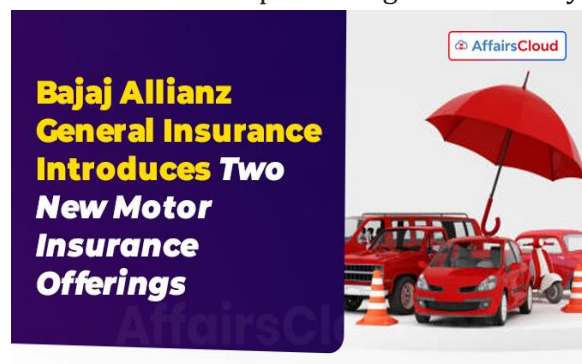
iii. AIFs have a minimum lock-in period of **three years**.

iv. Each scheme can have a maximum of 1,000 investors, except for angel funds, which can have up to 49 investors.



### Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Launched Two Motor Insurance Add-ons

**Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Limited**, a leading private general insurer in India launched two new motor insurance add-on covers '**Eco Assure – Repair Protection**' and '**Named Driver Cover**', offering personalised coverage, enhanced convenience and promoting sustainability.



- The unique offerings are the **first** of their kind in the insurance industry, launched as motor insurance continues to be one of the fastest-growing segments in India's general insurance market.

#### Eco Assure-Repair Protection:

The Eco Assure – Repair Protection add-on enables cost-effective repairs without compulsory deductibles.

i. It focuses on eco-friendly vehicle repairs and replacements, ensuring both sustainability and high-quality



service while prioritising customer benefits.

ii. It is available for private cars up to **12 years old**, offering an eco-friendly and affordable repair option, with policyholders getting a Green Certificate of Acknowledgement (GCA) for contributing to environmental conservation.

iii. The add-on includes a one-year repair protection, door-to-door vehicle pick-up and drop-off, and repair services at Bajaj Allianz's preferred workshops without depreciation costs.

#### **Additional Benefits:**

i. It includes 24/7 roadside assistance, as well as engine and gearbox protection.

ii. It provides special care for electric and hybrid vehicles, along with coverage for consumables.

iii. It also covers specific issues like damage from fuel adulteration and rodent bites.

iv. Other features include coverage for legal costs, personal baggage, and lost keys, all insured up to Rs. 50,000.

#### **Named Driver Cover:**

The Named Driver Cover is tailored for individuals owning one or multiple cars driven primarily by specific individuals.

i. It introduces greater flexibility and protection by providing its own damage coverage based on a named driver.

ii. The feature encourages safe driving and offers personalized insurance benefits, ensuring the vehicle is protected when driven by the owner, a chauffeur, or any other declared driver.

iii. It protects the owner-driver when driving another car with a valid Third-Party policy but no own damage cover, offering coverage up to the sum insured for added security.

- It also allows policyholders to easily add or remove one named driver during the policy term, offering flexibility and convenience.

#### **About Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company Limited:**

It is a joint venture between Bajaj Finserv Limited and German company Allianz SE, the world's leading insurer. In May 2001, it received the Certificate of Registration (COR) from the Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI) to operate in India.

Managing Director **(MD)** and Chief Executive Officer **(CEO)** – Tapan Singhel

**Headquarters** – Pune, Maharashtra

#### **M2P Fintech partners with SBI to Revolutionize Prepaid Payment Systems**

Chennai (Tamil Nadu, TN) based **M2P Fintech** has partnered with Mumbai (Maharashtra) based State Bank of India **(SBI)** to enhance the prepaid payment ecosystem in India. This strategic collaboration aims to leverage M2P Fintech's advanced technology platform and SBI's extensive network to create a seamless and secure payment experience.

- Under this partnership, M2P Fintech will enable SBI to strengthen its prepaid offerings with advanced features such as real-time tracking, instant card issuance, and enhanced fraud prevention mechanisms.

i. The partnership also enhances the capabilities of prepaid payment systems, offering a smarter alternative to traditional payment methods.

ii. This collaboration aligns with the goal of digital transformation in India's payment infrastructure, contributing to financial inclusion and supporting the government's push for a cashless economy.

### Shriram Finance Launches new vertical 'Green Finance' for Rs 5,000 Crore AUM

Chennai(Tamil Nadu,TN) based **Shriram Finance Limited**, the flagship company of the Shriram Group, has launched a dedicated business unit, '**Shriram Green Finance**', to consolidate its green financing efforts. Based in Bengaluru (Karnataka), this new vertical is focused on providing funding solutions for sustainable businesses across India.

- The primary goal of Shriram Green Finance is to achieve an Asset Under Management (AUM) of **Rs 5,000 crore** within the next three to four years.

i.Shriram Green Finance aims to cater to the green financing needs of emerging ventures in sectors like Electric Vehicles (EV), renewable energy, and energy-efficient solutions.

ii.Initially, the company will focus on building the EV portfolio in states like **Karnataka, Kerala**, the National Capital Region (NCR), and **Maharashtra**.

iii.This initiative also helps in funding various green ventures, including EV 2- and 3-wheelers, battery charging stations and energy-efficient machinery and the company is actively partnering with Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) to ensure smooth vehicle financing.

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## ECONOMY & BUSINESS

### MoF Report: Indian Economy Likely to Grow at 6.5% in FY25

In December 2024, Department of Economic Affairs (DEA), Ministry of Finance (MoF) released its [Monthly Economic Review for November 2024](#). As per the report, the Indian economy is likely to grow at **6.5%** in Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25) compared to its previous projection of 6.5% to 7%, due to challenges posed by global uncertainties and triggers.



- This projection came following India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) fell to **5.4%** in the 2nd Quarter (Q2: July to September) of FY25.
- The report has cited the Reserve Bank of India (RBI)'s tight monetary policy among the reasons for the slowdown in the 1st Half (H1: April to September) of FY25.

### Positive Outlook for H2FY25:

i.As per the report, India's GDP growth outlook for 3rd Quarter (Q3: October to December) of **FY25** appears bright, with urban demand picking up in the 1st two months of the quarter.

ii.The report mentioned that factors like: an increase in the Minimum Support Price (MSP) for rabi crops, a high reservoir level, and adequate fertilizer availability supported the sowing of rabi crops.

iii.The report highlighted that the conclusion of the monsoon season and the expected to increase in capital expenditure (capex) of Government of India (GoI) will support the cement, iron, steel, mining and electricity

sectors.

iv. The report showed that the rural demand remains resilient as sales of two and three-wheeler and domestic tractor have increased by **23.2%** and **9.8%**, respectively.

v. The report further highlighted that urban demand is also increasing, with passenger vehicle sales registering Year-on-Year (Y-o-Y) growth of **13.4%** in October to November 2024 and also domestic passenger traffic registering a robust growth.

#### About Ministry of Finance (MoF):

**Union Minister-** Nirmala Sitharaman (Rajya Sabha- Karnataka)

**Minister of State (MoS)-** Pankaj Chaudhary (Constituency- Maharajganj, Uttar Pradesh, UP)

### Aditya Birla Capital becomes the first BFSI company to offer all financial services on ONDC Network

Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Aditya Birla Capital Limited (**ABCL**) has become the **first** Banking, Financial Services, and Insurance (BFSI) company to **offer all three core financial services** lending, insurance, and Mutual Fund (MF) investments on the Open Network for Digital Commerce (**ONDC**) platform.

- This action aims to promote financial inclusion nationwide and offer more access to financial products, especially in underserved markets.

i. The ONDC network will now enable a number of live buyer applications (apps) to provide their customers with MF, health insurance, and personal loans from ABCL.

ii. Aditya Birla Finance Limited (**ABFL**) was an early adopter of credit integration during ONDC's pilot phase, while Aditya Birla Health Insurance Company Limited (**ABHICL**) and Aditya Birla Sun Life Asset Management Company (**ABSLAMC**) were among the first to offer health insurance and MFs on the platform.

## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

### Union Minister S. Jaishankar Honoured with Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award

In December 2024, Union Minister **Subrahmanyam Jaishankar**, Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), was awarded the **Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award** for Public Leadership from the South Indian Education Society (SIES), one of India's oldest educational societies, headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

- The award is named after **Mahaswami Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi**, also known as Maha Periyavar, a revered spiritual leader and the "Sage of Kancheepuram."
- The Award is an annual recognition presented by the SIES to individuals who have made outstanding contributions in their respective fields.

## APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

### Former Justice V. Ramasubramanian Appointed as NHRC Chairperson

In December 2024, President of India, Droupadi Murmu appointed former Supreme Court (SC) **Justice V. Ramasubramanian** as the **9th Chairperson** of the National Human Rights Commission (**NHRC**) for a three-year term ending in December 2027.

- Justice Ramasubramanian succeeds **Justice (Retired) Arun Kumar Mishra**, whose tenure concluded on June 1, 2024. Since then, the NHRC had been functioning under Acting Chairperson Vijaya Bharati Sayani.



- The President also appointed child rights activist **Priyank Kanoongo** and retired Justice **Bidyut Ranjan Sarangi** as **NHRC** members.

i. Justice V. Ramasubramanian, is a noted Tamil scholar and skilled judgment writer. He joined the Bar in 1983 and practiced for about 23 years in the High Court of Madras.

ii. He served in various courts, including as Chief Justice (CJ) of Himachal Pradesh (HP) High Court (HC) and a Supreme Court (SC) judge (2019–2023), delivered 102 key judgments on issues like demonetization and bribery.

**Points to Note:**

- A former Chief Justice of India (CJI) or a retired judge of the top court is appointed as NHRC chairperson by the President on the recommendation of the selection committee.
- The **NHRC**, established in 1993 as a statutory body, is tasked with protecting and promoting human rights.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### China Launches World's Largest Amphibious Assault Ship 'Sichuan' for Fighter Jets

In December 2024, China launched the **World's Largest** amphibious assault ship "**Sichuan**" at a shipyard in Shanghai, China. It is equipped with an electromagnetic catapult for fighter jets to enhance naval combat capabilities in distant seas.



- The Sichuan, the first ship of the **Type 076** class with a displacement of **40,000 tons**, is designed to deploy ground troops in landing crafts and offer them air support.
- China also launched its first icebreaker ship '**Tan Suo San Hao**' for scientific and archaeological research.

**Note:** The only warship in operational service that employs Electromagnetic Aircraft Launch System (EMALS) is the United States (US) Navy carrier USS Gerald R. Ford.

**About the Sichuan:**

i. The Sichuan, the first Yulan-class landing helicopter assault (LHA), is developed by **Chinese researchers** and equipped with "**arrestor**" technology, which allows fighter jets to land on its deck.

ii. The dual-use assault ship was named after a southwestern Chinese province, the Sichuan is an independently developed ship seen as a "key asset" for boosting the Navy's transformation and improving its ability to operate over long distances.

iii. It measures more than 850 feet long and about 170 feet

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wide and designed to carry fixed-wing aircraft, helicopters, and amphibious equipment.

v. It is the third aircraft carrier of the PLAN. The **Fujian** is China's first warship to feature an electromagnetic catapult and arresting technology, began sea trials with its maiden voyage on 1st May 2024, after being launched on 17th June 2022.

- The PLAN's first and second aircraft carriers are the **Liaoning** and the **Shandong**.
- China's first amphibious assault ships, the Type 075, launched in 2019.

vi. Chinese military expert Song Zhongping referred to the Sichuan as a "light aircraft carrier."

#### About China:

**President** – Xi Jinping

**Capital** – Beijing

**Currency** – Renminbi (CNY)

### South Korea Launches Third Spy Satellite into Orbit

In December 2024, South Korea successfully launched its **third surveillance satellite**, equipped with Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) technology, into space using a **SpaceX Falcon 9 rocket**. The launch took place at the Vandenberg Space Force Base in California, the United States of America (USA).

- This launch marks the latest step in the country's "425 Project" to deploy a network of five medium-to-large surveillance satellites.

i. This achievement is part of South Korea's effort to enhance its **surveillance capabilities**. It is the third satellite launched in a year, following earlier launches in December 2023 and April 2024.

- The country plans to launch two more satellites by 2025, reducing its reliance on satellite imagery from the USA.

ii. With three satellites now in orbit, South Korea can independently monitor North Korea, which continues to expand its weapons programs.

## SPORTS

### Bihar to Host Women's Kabaddi World Cup 2025

The Women's Kabaddi World Cup 2025 will take place in **March 2025** at the Rajgir Sports Academy in Bihar, India. The international event will be hosted for the 2nd time in Bihar, after the state successfully organized the **inaugural edition in 2012** at the Patliputra Sports Complex in **Patna (Bihar)**.

- The Women's Kabaddi World Cup is an international competition for women's kabaddi teams, organized by the International Kabaddi Federation (**IKF**).

i. The 2025 edition will feature **14 countries**, including India, China, Japan, South Korea, Nepal, Pakistan, Iran, Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Poland, Argentina, South Africa and South America.

ii. The tournament aims to promote kabaddi as a global sport, providing an international platform for women's teams to showcase their talent.

## OBITUARY

### Former Suzuki Motor Chairman and CEO Osamu Suzuki Passed Away

In December 2024, the former President, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**) of Japan based Suzuki Motor Corporation (**SMC**), **Osamu Suzuki** passed away at the age of 94 in Shizuoka, Japan. He was born in Gifu, Japan in 1930.



- He played a key role in transforming the Japanese mini-vehicle manufacturer into a globally competitive company.

#### About Osamu Suzuki:

- Osamu Suzuki began his career as a loan officer at a local bank. He became the 4th adopted son to head SMC after marrying Shoko Suzuki, the granddaughter of the company's founder, Michio Suzuki.
- He joined SMC in 1958, became its president and CEO in 1978, and in 2000, he was appointed chairman of the company. He retired in June 2021 and became an adviser to SMC.
  - With more than 30 years as the head of SMC, he was one of the longest-serving leaders in the global auto industry.
- Known for his sharp business sense and frugality, he led the Hamamatsu-based automaker for over 40 years, during which he played a key role in expanding the company into international markets, especially in India.

#### Awards and recognitions:

- In 2007, Osamu Suzuki was honoured with the '**Padma Bhushan**', India's third-highest civilian award in field of 'Trade and Industry', for his contribution to the country's economic development through the automobile industry.
- In 1984, he was also awarded the **Sitara-e-Pakistan**, Pakistan's highest civilian honour, by the Government of Pakistan.
- He was awarded the "**Middle Cross with the Star Order of Merit**" for his economic contribution by Hungary, one of the highest honours given to private citizens in Hungary.

#### Points To Note:

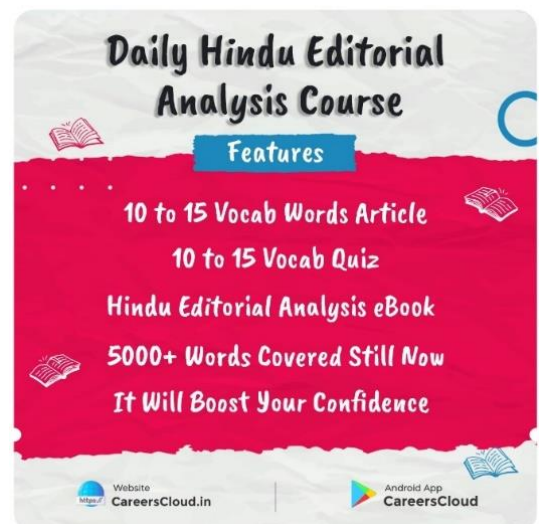
- SMC sold around 3.2 million vehicles globally in the fiscal year ending March 2024, behind Japan's leading carmaker and the world's top automaker, Toyota Motor Corporation.
  - Over half of those vehicles were sold in India, where the company's subsidiary, Maruti Suzuki, holds the largest market share.
- In 1982, Suzuki partnered with the Government of India (GoI) to create **Maruti Udyog Limited**. The partnership changed the market, which had previously been dominated by outdated cars using old technology.


#### About Suzuki Motor Corporation (SMC):

Chief Executive Office(CEO) – Toshihiro Suzuki

Headquarters – Shizuoka, Japan

Established – 1909






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## Former USA President & Nobel Laureate James Earl Carter Jr. passed away

On December 29 2024, **James Earl Carter Jr.** (also known as Jimmy Carter), former President of the United States of America (USA) and the Nobel Laureate passed away at the age of **100** in Georgia, the USA. He was born on October 1, 1924 in Georgia.



- He received numerous accolades and awards including the 'Nobel Peace Prize' and 'Grammy Awards' reflecting his humanitarian efforts on the world stage.

### About James Earl Carter Jr:

i. Jimmy Carter was a prominent American politician, Businessman (a peanut farmer, the US Navy officer, evangelist, negotiator, author, woodworker and humanitarian.

- He graduated from the US Naval Academy in 1946 and joined the US Navy's submarine service.

ii. He won a state Senate seat in 1962 and began his political career by serving as the **76th governor of Georgia**, the USA from 1971 to 1975.

iii. He served as the **39th President** from **1977 to 1981** where he successfully negotiated the 'Camp David Accords' in 1978, leading to a peace treaty between Egypt and Israel in Middle Eastern diplomacy.

- He also championed human rights, making them a central theme of USA foreign policy, and created the **Department of Energy** in 1977 to address the nation's energy crisis.

v. As of 2024, he became the **longest-living** USA president, surpassing former 41st president late George H. W. Bush (2018).

vi. His biography titled 'His Very Best: Jimmy Carter, A Life' written by Jonathan Alter was published in 2020.

### Awards and Recognition:

- **Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development (1997):** He received the award for his post-presidential humanitarian work, including efforts in global health, human rights and conflict resolution.
- **United Nations (UNs) Human Rights Award (1998):** He was presented with this award in recognition of his work to advance the cause of human rights worldwide.
- **Presidential Medal of Freedom (1999):** He was honored with the highest civilian award of the USA for his meritorious contribution to the security and world peace of the USA.
- **Nobel Peace Prize (2002):** He was awarded for recognizing his decades of work in advocating for peace, democracy and human rights.
- **Grammy Award (2016) & (2019):** He won the awards for his **spoken word album**, further demonstrating the breadth of his contributions in his audiobooks beyond politics.

### Notable Works:

In addition to his extensive humanitarian work, Jimmy Carter wrote more than two dozen books including "Keeping the Faith: Memoirs of a President" (1982), "An Hour Before Daylight: Memoirs of My Rural Boyhood" (2001), "The Personal Beliefs of Jimmy Carter" (2002), and "Faith: A Journey for All," (2018).

- He also wrote poetry collections, as well as a fictional work about the Revolutionary War, titled "The Hornet's Nest" (2003).

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

### Nobel Prize laureate Abhijit Banerjee's launched his new book "Chhaunk on Food, Economics, and Society"

The book titled "**Chhaunk On Food, Economics and Society**" was launched during the curtain raiser of Apeejay Kolkata Literary Festival (AKLF), India's only literary festival organised by a bookstore, at the Oxford Bookstore in Kolkata, West Bengal(WB). The book was authored by Nobel Prize laureate **Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee** and co-authored by **Cheyenne Olivier**. It was published by Juggernaut Publication.

- The book explores Indian culinary traditions, blending personal memories, food, and economics. It's a conversational, accessible read with delicious recipes, resonating with those who lived through the 70s and 80s.

i. Abhijit Vinayak Banerjee is an Indian-American economist who was awarded the '**Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences**' in 2019, alongside his co-recipients Esther Duflo and Michael Kremer for their experimental approach to poverty alleviation and economic development.

ii. **Other Books authored by him:** Cooking to Save Your Life (2021); What the Economy Needs Now (2019); Poverty and Income Distribution in India (2019) etc.,

## STATE NEWS

### President Droupadi Murmu Appointed CJs for Himachal, Uttarakhand High Courts

In December 2024, President of India, **Droupadi Murmu** approved several significant judicial appointments based on recommendations from the Supreme Court (SC)

Collegium. **Justice Gurmeet Singh (G.S.) Sandhawalia** has been appointed as the Chief Justice (CJ) of the Himachal Pradesh (HP) High Court (HC). **Justice Guhanathan Narendar** has been appointed as the CJ of the Uttarakhand HC.

i. **Justice G.S. Sandhawalia** was a judge in the Punjab and Haryana HC. He replaced **Justice Rajiv Shakdher**, who retired on 18 October 2024.

ii. **Justice Guhanathan Narendar** was serving as a judge in the Andhra Pradesh (AP) HC. He succeeded **Justice Ritu Bahri**, who retired on 10 October 2024.

iii. **Permanent Judges in Delhi HC:** Justice Shailender Kaur and Justice Ravinder Dudeja, who were previously additional judges of the Delhi High Court, were made permanent judges.

iv. **Permanent Judges in Karnataka HC:** Four additional judges of the Karnataka High Court were elevated to permanent judges: Justice Ramachandra Dattatray Huddar, Justice Venkatesh Naik Thavaryanaik, Justice Vijaykumar Adagouda Patil, Justice Rajesh Rai Kallangala.

**Note:** Additional judges usually serve for two years before becoming permanent.



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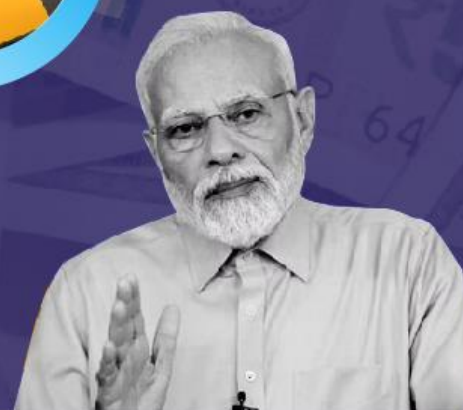
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Static Banking	—	—	—	—
Static GK	—	—	—	—
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