

# CURRENT AFFAIRS

Weekly

2025

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March

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## Current Affairs Weekly PDF – March 2025 – 1st Week (1 – 7)

### NATIONAL AFFAIRS

#### MeitY Launches Aadhaar Good Governance Portal to Enhance Ease of Living

In February 2025, the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY) launched the **'Aadhaar Good Governance portal'** to streamline the approval process for Aadhaar authentication requests. This initiative highlights the government's dedication to improving the quality of life for citizens by increasing access to services, and strengthening the overall citizen-centric approach to service delivery

#### Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Unveils New Maritime Initiatives to Boost India's Global Trade

On February 27, 2025, Union Minister **Sarbananda Sonowal**, Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (**MoPSW**), launched several initiatives includes One Nation-One Port Process (ONOP), Bharat Global Ports Consortium and **MAITRI** Application(app), aimed at modernizing India's maritime infrastructure and enhancing its position in global trade.

- ✓ **ONOP:** The One Nation-One Port Process (ONOP) was launched to standardize and streamline operations across India's major ports.
- ✓ **Sagar Ankalan -LPPI:** The Sagar Ankalan Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI) for the Financial Year 2023-24 (FY24) was introduced to enhance port efficiency.
- ✓ **MAITRI App & Digital Integration:** The Master Application for International Trade and Regulatory Interface(MAITRI) App was launched to streamline trade processes, reduce bureaucratic redundancies, and expedite clearances.
- ✓ **NCoEGPS:** A website for the National Centre of Excellence in Green Port and Shipping (NCoEGPS) was also launched to promote sustainability in the maritime sector.

#### MoSPI's TUS 2024: Women Spent 71 mins a day on 'work related activities' in 2024

In February 2025, the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI) released the [2nd edition all-India Time Use Survey \(TUS\)](#) conducted during **January-December, 2024** by the National Statistics Office (NSO) under MoSPI.

- ✓ As per TUS 2024, the amount of time spent by women in 'employment-related activities' was **71 minutes per day in 2024**, which is 10 minutes more compared to TUS 2019.
- ✓ While, the amount of time spent by men in 'employment-related activities' has increased from 263 minutes per day (in TUS, 2019) to **287 minutes per day (in TUS, 2024)**.

#### CSE and DTE Release 12th Edition of State of India's Environment Report 2025

In February 2025, The Centre for Science and Environment (**CSE**) based in New Delhi, Delhi and Down To Earth (DTE) Magazine released the **12th edition** of [Annual State of India's Environment Report 2025](#). The report was launched at the Anil Agarwal Dialogue 2025 held at the Anil Agarwal Environment Training Institute in Nimli, Rajasthan.

- ✓ A special focus has been placed on the **40th anniversary of the Bhopal Gas Tragedy**, reflecting on its long-term effects.

#### AISEF Organised International Spice Conference 2025 in Bengaluru, Karnataka

Ernakulam (Kerala)-based All India Spices Exporters Forum (**AISEF**) organised International Spice Conference (**ISC**) **2025** which was held from February 24 to February 27, 2025 at Leela Bhartiya City in Bengaluru, Karnataka.

- ✓ **Theme of ISC 2025:** 'Building Trust Beyond Borders: Transparency, Sustainability, Conference'.
- ✓ The AISEF signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the American Spice Trade Association (ASTA) during ISC 2025, to improve collaboration in the international spice trade..

## **PM Narendra Modi Inaugurates Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment & Infrastructure Summit in Guwahati**

In February 2025, Prime Minister (PM) of India, Narendra Modi inaugurated the two-day **Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment & Infrastructure Summit** at Khanpara locality Guwahati, Assam held from February 25 to 26.

- ✓ Union Minister **Ashwini Vaishnaw**, Ministry of Railways (MoR) and Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MoE&IT), announced several new projects aimed at boosting the **railway and Information Technology (IT) sectors** in the region during the Advantage Assam 2.0 Summit.
- ✓ Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW), announced an investment of over **Rs 4,800 crore** to boost Assam's inland waterways sector during the Advantage Assam 2.0 Summit.
- ✓ Reliance Industries Limited (**RIL**) based in Mumbai, Maharashtra, **Vedanta Limited** also based in Mumbai, and **the Adani Group** based in Ahmedabad, Gujarat have pledged to invest over **Rs 1.5 lakh crore** in Assam across various sectors, as announced by their respective leaders at the Advantage Assam Summit 2.0.

## **Overview of EC President Ursula von der Leyen's visit to India from 27-28 February 2025**

European Commission(EC) President **Ursula von der Leyen** made a **two-day** visit along with the European Union (EU) College of Commissioners to India from **27th February to 28th February 2025**.

- ✓ This was the first visit of the **College of Commissioners** outside the European continent and also the **first** visit in the history of India-EU bilateral ties.
- ✓ The 2nd meeting of the **India-EU Trade and Technology Council (TTC)** took place on **28th February 2025** in New Delhi.
- ✓ An India-EU S&T Cooperation meeting held at the Office of the Principal Scientific Adviser(PSA), Vigyan Bhawan Annexe, New Delhi.

## **IAF Conducted Exercise 'Desert Hunt 2025' in Rajasthan**

The Indian Air Force (**IAF**) conducted the integrated **Tri-Service** Special Forces exercise named **Exercise 'Desert Hunt 2025'** at Air Force Station Jodhpur, Rajasthan from 24 to 28 February 2025.

- ✓ The exercise brought together elite Special Forces units from the Indian Army (**IA**), the Indian Navy (**IN**), and **the IAF** to practice interoperability, coordination, and combat efficiency in simulated real-world scenarios.

## **Gujarat Leads India with 19,020 Hectares of Mangrove Plantation in Two Years Under 'MISHTI' Scheme**

In February 2025, **Gujarat** emerged as the national leader in mangrove afforestation, by planting mangroves across approximately **19,020 hectares** at a cost of over Rs 76 crore under the Mangrove Initiative for Shoreline Habitats and Tangible Incomes(**MISHTI**) **scheme**.

- ✓ The Gol aims to plant **540 sq km** of mangroves in five years under 'MISHTI' scheme. The scheme was implemented by the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC).

## **TRIFED Signs MoUs with NIFT & HPMC to Enhance Tribal Entrepreneurship**

In February 2025, New Delhi (Delhi) based Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Limited (**TRIFED**), under the Ministry of Tribal Affairs (MoTA) has signed Memoranda of Understanding (**MoUs**) with New Delhi based National Institute of Fashion Technology (**NIFT**), and Shimla (Himachal Pradesh, HP) based Himachal Pradesh Horticultural Produce Marketing and Processing Corporation (**HPMC**) to promote tribal businesses.

- ✓ The MoU between TRIFED and NIFT was signed and exchanged between TRIFED General Manager (GM) Sandeep Pahalwan and NIFT Director Head Office Gaurav Mishra.

## **Union Labour Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya Chaired 237th Meeting of CBT of EPF; Recommended 8.25% Interest Rate on EPF for FY25**

In February 2025, Union Minister **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**, Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoL&E) chaired the **237th** meeting of



the Central Board of Trustees (CBT), Employees' Provident Fund (EPF) in New Delhi, Delhi.

- ✓ During the meeting, CBT recommended to retain an annual rate of interest of **8.25%** to be credited on EPF subscribers for Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25), as provided in last fiscal year.
- ✓ **Minimum Life Insurance for death within 1 year of service:** CBT introduced a minimum life insurance of **Rs 50,000** for EPF members who die within the 1st year of service.

### 8th edition of Invest Madhya Pradesh – Global Investors Summit 2025 Held in Bhopal

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **8th** edition of the premier **biennial event, Invest Madhya Pradesh – Global Investors Summit (GIS) 2025** which was held on 24 and 25 February 2025, at Indira Gandhi Rashtriya Manav Sangrahalaya (IGRMS) in Bhopal, MP. The summit was organized by the Department of Industrial Policy and Investment Promotion (DIPIP), Government of MP.

- ✓ During the GIS- 2025, **MP** secured investment commitments through Memoranda of Understanding (**MoUs**) worth **Rs 30.77 lakh crore**, and the proposals were expected to generate 21.36 lakh employment opportunities.
- ✓ New Delhi (Delhi) based **NTPC Limited** (formerly National Thermal Power Corporation), India's largest integrated energy company and its subsidiary NTPC Green Energy Ltd (**NGEL**) have signed multiple MoUs with the MP government during the GIS 2025.  
[Click here to read full News](#)

### Gol Elevated Railways CPSE's IRCTC and IRFC to Navratna Status

On March 3, 2025, The Department of Public Enterprises (**DoPE**), Ministry of Finance (MoF) upgraded two Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSE's) under the Ministry of Railways (MoR), Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (**IRCTC**) and Indian Railway Finance Corporation (**IRFC**) to the prestigious **Navratna status**.

- ✓ With this upgrade, IRCTC and IRFC join 24 existing Navratna companies, becoming the **25th** and **26th** respectively.
- ✓ This upgrade empowers CPSEs with enhanced financial autonomy, enabling them to invest up to **Rs 1,000 crore** without prior government approval.

### Gol Approves Rs 42,000 Crore Arunachal Frontier Highway along the LAC

In February 2025, the Government of India (Gol) approved the **Rs 42,000 crore Arunachal Frontier Highway project**, the first road project in India to be sanctioned on such a large scale. The project is a part of the Act East Policy, which seeks to expand the region's air, rail, and road networks while improving connection with Southeast Asia.

### PM Narendra Modi Participates in the NXT Conclave

In March 2025, Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** participated in the **NXT Conclave** in New Delhi, Delhi. During the event, he launched the **NewsX World** channel. He highlighted that the network includes channels in Hindi, English, and various regional languages.

### 'Sugamya Yatra' Launched on International Wheelchair Day 2025

In March 2025, **Sugamya Yatra** was launched Rajiv Chowk Metro Station in New Delhi, Delhi by the Department of Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities (**DEPwD**), Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MoSJE) and the Office of the Chief Commissioner for Persons with Disabilities (CCPD). **Sugamya Yatra** was launched on the occasion of International Wheelchair Day, **1 March 2025**.

### NITI Aayog Report: Women's Credit Monitoring Surges 42%, Hits 27 Million in 2024

On March 3, 2025, the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (WEP) of the National Institution for Transforming India (**NITI Aayog**), in partnership with **TransUnion CIBIL Limited** (formerly Credit Information Bureau (India) Limited) and Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh, UP) based MicroSave Consulting (**MSC**), unveiled a new report titled **"From Borrowers to Builders: Women's Role in India's Financial Growth Story."**

- ✓ The report, launched by **B.V.R. Subrahmanyam**, CEO of NITI Aayog, highlights a significant increase in financial awareness among women, with 27 million actively monitoring their credit as of December 2024, marking a **42% growth** compared to the previous year.

## India and Nepal Sign MoU to Strengthen Cooperation in WASH Sector

On 3 March 2025, the Government of **India**(GoI) and the Government of **Nepal** signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) to strengthen cooperation in the Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (**WASH**) sector, including waste management.

## IIFT & APEC-Antwerp Signed MoU to Bolster Trade and Logistics Education

In March 2025, New Delhi (Delhi)-based Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (**IIFT**), autonomous body under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I) and Antwerp (Belgium)-based **APEC-Antwerp/Flanders Port Training Center**, a leading training institute affiliated with the Port of Antwerp-Bruges International, have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) to enhance academic collaboration and knowledge exchange in the fields of global trade, logistics, and supply chain management.

- ✓ The MoU aims to bolster trade education and training ties between India and Belgium by facilitating faculty and student exchanges for improved cross-culture business learning.

## PM Modi Released India's 1st ever Riverine Dolphin Estimation Report: 6,327 dolphins, Highest in UP

In March 2025, Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** released India's **1st ever riverine dolphin estimation report** during his visit to Gir National Park (NP) in Gujarat, where he chaired the 7th meeting of the National Board for Wildlife (**NBWL**). The report was released on the eve of World Wildlife Day (**WWD**) observed annually on March 3 worldwide.

- ✓ As per the report, India has **6,327 riverine dolphins** across 28 rivers in 8 states. **6,324** dolphins found across the Ganga and Brahmaputra river basins and remaining 3 Indus river dolphins in the Beas river basin in Punjab.
- ✓ UP with **2,397 dolphins**, has topped among the 8 states with highest number of dolphins in the country, followed by Bihar (2,220); WB (815) and Assam (635).

## Union Minister of Cooperation Amit Shah Inaugurated 'Workshop on Sustainability & Circularity in Dairy Sector' in New Delhi

In March 2025, Union Minister **Amit Shah**, Ministry of Cooperation (MoC) inaugurated the '**Workshop on Sustainability and Circularity in the Dairy Sector**' at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi (Delhi).

- ✓ The workshop was organised by the Department of Animal Husbandry & Dairying (**DAHD**) under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry and Dairying (**MoFAH&D**) in partnership with National Dairy Development Board (**NDDB**).
- ✓ During the workshop, NDDB signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) with National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD) aimed at promoting sustainable and inclusive growth in the dairy sector by using the technical, financial and implementation support.
- ✓ NDDB has also signed MoUs with **26** Milk Union of 15 states, to establish biogas plants across the country.

## India's First World Peace Center Inaugurated in Gurugram, Haryana

In March 2025, India's first **World Peace Center** was established under the leadership of Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti founder, Jain Acharya Lokesh Muni and the efforts of Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti and inaugurated in Gurugram, Haryana.



## Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana: Ensuring Financial Security for India's Unorganised Workforce

Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan (**PM-SYM**) **Yojana**, a landmark initiative led by Government of India (GoI) which aimed to provide financial security to millions of unorganized workers in India. It is a part of the GoI's wider **social security initiatives** and aligns

with the vision of universal pension coverage for workers in the unorganised sector.

- ✓ The scheme is monitored by the Ministry of Labour and Employment (**MoL&E**) in partnership with Life Insurance Corporation of India (**LIC**) and Common Services Centres e-Governance Services India Limited (**CSC SPV**) for smooth implementation.
- ✓ The scheme ensures a minimum pension of **Rs 3,000 per month** after the age of 60 for workers who are employed in the unorganised sector and have a monthly income of **up to Rs 15,000**.
- ✓ As on March 3, 2025, **top 5 states** with maximum number of PM-SYM card issued: **Haryana (8,26,208)**; Uttar Pradesh (UP) (6,94,169); Maharashtra (6,21,500); Gujarat (3,91,043); and Chhattisgarh (2,33,172).

### Gol Launches Pilot projects of Hydrogen-Fuelled Vehicle under NHGM

In March 2025, the Government of India (**Gol**) launched **five pilot projects** to use hydrogen-fuelled buses and trucks as part of the National Green Hydrogen Mission (**NGHM**). The Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (**MNRE**) had issued guidelines for implementing Pilot projects in the Transport Sector under NGHM in February 2025.

### 15th IPR 2025: India's Philanthropy Spending to Grow by 10-12% in Next 5 Years

In February 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **Dasra**, a venture philanthropy firm, and the United States of America (USA) based **Bain & Company, Inc.** released the **15th edition** of the [India Philanthropy Report \(IPR\) 2025](#).

- ✓ The report highlighted that private funding in India's social sector is projected to grow by **10% to 12%** annually over the next five years, primarily driven by family philanthropy from Ultra-High-Net-Worth Individuals (UHNIs), High-Net-Worth Individuals (HNIs), and affluent individuals.

### India's EPHL & Belgium's JCD Form JV in India for Light Tank Program

In March 2025, Seraing (Belgium) based John Cockerill Defence (**JCD**), the world's top-turret manufacturer for battle tanks, and Pune (Maharashtra) based Electro

Pneumatics and Hydraulics Private Limited (**EPHL**) announced a Joint Venture (**JV**) in India.

- ✓ The JV primarily focuses on the Indian Army's (**IA's**) Light Tank program, particularly **Zorawar**, a light tank jointly developed by Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) and Larsen & Toubro (L&T), which is currently undergoing advanced trials.

### Union Minister Pralhad Joshi Launches India's first AI-Powered Solar Manufacturing Line in Gujarat

In March 2025, Union Minister **Pralhad Joshi**, Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE), inaugurated India's **first Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered solar manufacturing line** at Goldi Solar Private Limited's newly built facility in Kosamba, Surat, Gujarat.

### Cabinet approvals on March 5 2025

On March 5 2025, the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** has approved the following proposals:

- ✓ Revision of Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (**LHDGP**) with a total outlay of **Rs. 3,880 crore**.
- ✓ The construction of a **12.4 kilometer (km) ropeway** from Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji in **Uttarakhand** under the National Ropeways Development Programme (NRDP)– Parvatmala Pariyojana at a total cost of **Rs. 2,730.13 crore**.
- ✓ The construction of a **12.9 km ropeway** connecting Sonprayag to Kedarnath in **Uttarakhand** under NRDP – Parvatmala Pariyojana, at a total cost of **Rs. 4,081.28 crore**. [Click here to read full News](#)

### Overview of PM Narendra Modi's 3-day Visit to Gujarat from March 1 to 3, 2025

Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** paid a 3-day visit to Gujarat from March 1 to March 03, 2025 focusing on wildlife conservation.

- ✓ During his visit, he inaugurated Vantara, a 3,000-acre animal rescue and rehabilitation center in Jamnagar, Gujarat and chaired the **7th meeting** of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) at Gir National Park, Gujarat.
- ✓ During the visit, PM Narendra Modi inaugurated '**Vantara**' that houses over 1.5 lakh rescued and endangered animals.



- ✓ A new **Project for Gharials** was launched, focusing on their conservation and the **National Great Indian Bustard Conservation Action Plan** was unveiled.  
[Click here to read full News](#)

### GSI Celebrates 175th Foundation Day & Launches Two Significant Digital Initiatives

On 4 March 2025, Geological Survey of India (GSI) celebrated its **175th Foundation Day** with a grand ceremony at its headquarters in Kolkata, West Bengal (WB). The event was graced by Union minister G. Kishan Reddy, Ministry of Coal (MoC) and Ministry of Mines (MoM).

- ✓ He unveiled a **commemorative plaque** and a **special postal cover** to honour the 175-year journey of GSI.
- ✓ During the event, Union minister G. Kishan Reddy, launched two significant digital initiatives: the **Field Data Acquisition Application** (App) and the Geo-heritage App '**Bhuvirasat**'.

### MoPR Launches 'MWFGP Initiative' for Women's Empowerment

On March 5, 2025, the Ministry of Panchayati Raj (MoPR), Government of India (GoI), launched a 'Model Women-Friendly Gram Panchayats (**MWFGP**)' initiative at the National Convention at Vigyan Bhawan in New Delhi (Delhi). It was launched as a key part of the International Women's Day celebration on March 8, 2025.

- ✓ MWFGP is a program aimed at increasing women's participation, safety, and leadership in local governance.
- ✓ The objective of the initiative is to establish at least **one Model Gram Panchayat in each district** in India, serving as a beacon for gender-sensitive and girl-friendly governance practices.

### 12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in the Asia & the Pacific Held in Jaipur, Rajasthan

The **12th** Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum in the Asia & the Pacific was held from **March 3 to March 5, 2025** at Rajasthan International Centre in **Jaipur, Rajasthan**. The theme of the 2025 forum is 'Realizing Circular Societies Towards Achieving Sustainable Development Goals(SDGs) and Carbon Neutrality in Asia-Pacific'.

- ✓ The 3-day conference was organised by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (**MoHUA**), the Government of India(GoI) in collaboration with United Nations Centre for Regional Development (**UNCRD**), and Institute for Global Environment Strategies (**IGES**).
- ✓ A key Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for City Investments to Innovate, Integrate and Sustain (**CITIIS 2.0**), a flagship initiative of MoHUA which aimed to promote integrated waste management and climate action, was signed, which marked a major milestone in urban sustainability initiatives.

### ISM, TEPL, & TSMPL Sign Fiscal Support Agreement for Semiconductor Fab

On 5 March 2025, the India Semiconductor Mission (**ISM**), Tata Electronics Private Limited (**TEPL**), and Tata Semiconductor Manufacturing Private Limited (**TSMPL**) have signed a Fiscal Support Agreement (**FSA**) to establish **India's first** commercial semiconductor fabrication unit in Dholera, Gujarat.

- ✓ EPL's semiconductor fab in Dholera (**SIR**) has a total investment of over **Rs 91,000 crore** with a capacity of 50,000 wafer starts per month (WSPM).

### NITI Aayog Launches NITI-FTH & Releases a Paper on "Quantum Computing: National Security Implications & Strategic Preparedness"

In March 2025, National Institution for Transforming India (**NITI**) Aayog launched the 'Frontier Tech Hub (**NITI-FTH**)', a pioneering initiative aimed at transforming India into a technology-driven economy and released a strategic paper on quantum computing titled "**Quantum Computing: National Security Implications & Strategic Preparedness**" in partnership with Noida (Uttar Pradesh) based Data Security Council of India (**DSCI**).

### Solar Defence and Aerospace Signs a Contract Worth Rs 239 Crore with MoD

In March 2025, Nagpur (Maharashtra) based Solar Industries India Limited (SIIL) announced that its wholly owned subsidiary, **Solar Defence and Aerospace Limited**, has signed a contract worth **Rs 239 crore** with the Ministry of Defence (**MoD**), Government of India (GoI), for the supply of multi-mode hand grenade.

## INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

### 16th CoP to the Convention on Biological Diversity Resumed in Rome, Italy

The 16th meeting of the Conference of the Parties (**COP16.2**) to the Convention on Biological Diversity (**CBD**) resumed from February 25 to 27, 2025 at the headquarters of Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Rome, Italy.

- ✓ Earlier, the COP 16 held in Cali, Columbia in October 2024, which was paused due to lack of quorum required for biodiversity finance related agreements. Later, it was resumed virtually in December 2024 but again it was ended abruptly.
- ✓ **Susana Muhamad**, the COP16 President from Colombia, stressed the need for urgent action and highlighted that ambitious plans require adequate funding to succeed.
- ✓ The key outcome of the resumed CBD COP16 was the launch of a new international fund, '**Cali Fund**', aimed to help protect biodiversity as well as boost the biodiversity funds.
- ✓ **Note: Armenia** will host the 17th COP (COP17) to the CBD in 2026.

### Forbes' The Highest-Paid Actors of 2024: American Actor Dwayne Johnson Tops, 3 Actress Make the Top 20 List

In February 2025, Forbes released its annual list of '[The highest-paid actors of 2024](#)', showcasing the immense earnings of Hollywood's top stars across various platforms.

- ✓ American Actor **Dwayne Douglas Johnson** has secured the **top position** globally with a staggering estimated income of **USD 88 million**.
- ✓ Canadian-American Actor **Ryan Rodney Reynolds** claimed the **2nd spot**, with earnings of USD 85 million, followed by American Actor **Kevin Darnell Hart**, who ranked third, with USD 81 million.
- ✓ American Actress **Nicole Mary Kidman** was the highest-paid actress 2024, ranking **8th** overall with USD 31 million.

### Lists of Top 5 Highest-Paid Actors of 2024:

Rank	Actor	Earnings (in million USD)	Country
1	Dwayne Douglas Johnson	USD 88	United States of America (USA)
2	Ryan Rodney Reynolds	USD 85	Canada
3	Kevin Darnell Hart	USD 81	USA
4	Jerome (Jerry) Allen Seinfeld	USD 60	USA
5	Hugh Michael Jackman	USD 50	Australia

### Brand Finance IT Services 25, 2025: USA's Accenture Tops, India's TCS & Infosys in Top 3, Hexaware Enters Top 25

In March 2025, Brand Finance released its annual [IT Services 25 2025](#) rankings, highlighting the most valuable Information Technology (IT) services brands worldwide based on their financial performance, market position, and brand perception.

- ✓ American multinational **Accenture PLC** (Public Limited Company) has secured the **top position** globally, with a brand value of USD 41.50 billion.
- ✓ Indian IT firms Tata Consultancy Services (**TCS**) Limited and **Infosys Limited** ranked **2nd** and **3rd**, respectively, reflecting India's strong presence in the industry.
- ✓ For the first time, India's **Hexaware Technologies Limited** has entered the Brand Finance IT Services rankings

2025 at Rank **24th**, showcasing its growing influence and market presence.

**Top 5 IT Services Brands in 2025:**

Rank	Brand Name	Country	Brand Value (USD Billion)	Rating
1	Accenture plc	USA	41.50	AAA
2	TCS Limited	India	21.27	AA A-
3	Infosys Limited	India	16.34	AA A-
4	International Business Machines (IBM) Consulting	USA	10.20	AAA
5	NTT DATA Group Corporation	Japan	10.01	AA

**The Wealth Report 2025: India Ranked 4th Globally with 85,698 HNWI's; behind US, China and Japan**

In March 2025, London (the United Kingdom, UK)-based global property consultant firm **Knight Frank** released the **19th** edition of '[The Wealth Report 2025](#)'. As per the report, India ranked at **4th** position globally with estimated **85,698** High Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs) in 2024, marking an increase of **6%** compared to 80,686 HNWIs in 2024.

**Top 5 Countries with highest number of HNWI's in 2024:**

Rank	Name of the Country	Number of HNWI's	Percentage increase
1	The United States of America (USA)	905,413	38.7%
2	Chinese Mainland	471,634	20.1%
3	Japan	122,119	5.2%
4	India	85,698	3.7%
5	Germany	69,798	3.0%

**BANKING & FINANCE**

**India Extends USD 1 Million for Food Fortification Project in Lao PDR**

On February 28, 2025, the Government of India (GoI) extended a grant of approximately **USD 1 million** to the Government of the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) under the India-United Nations (UN) Development Partnership Fund.

- ✓ The grant will support the project titled '**Strengthening Large-scale Food Fortification: The Case of Investing in Rice Fortification.**'

**RBI Imposed Monetary Penalty on Bombay Mercantile Co-operative Bank Limited and Two Others**

In February 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed monetary penalty of Rs 33.30 lakh on Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based **Bombay Mercantile Co-operative Bank Limited**, for violating certain provisions and earning more income from business not allowed under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

- ✓ It has also imposed monetary penalty of **Rs 1 lakh each** on two other co-operative Banks: Nashik (Maharashtra)-based **Business Co-operative Bank Limited** and Nashik-



based **Lasalgaon Merchant Co-operative Bank Limited**.

### BoB Launches Merchant Loyalty/Cashback Programme to Boost CBDC

On 27 February 2025, Vadodara (Gujarat) based Bank of Baroda (**BoB**) launched a pilot for a “**Merchant Loyalty/Cashback Programme**” using programmable Central Bank Digital Currency (**CBDC**) for their customers using “bob Merchant App”.

### Japan and India Renewed Bilateral Swap Arrangement of USD 75 Billion

On February 28, 2025, Japan and India renewed their 2nd Amendment and Restatement Agreement of the Bilateral Swap Arrangement (BSA), maintaining the agreement of up to **USD 75 billion**. The agreement was signed by the Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**) and the Tokyo(Japan) based Bank of Japan (**BoJ**), acting as the agent for Japan’s Ministry of Finance.

### SEBI Introduced Framework for Specialized Investment Funds Effective From April 1, 2025

In February 2025, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (**SEBI**) introduced new framework for Specialized Investment Fund (**SIF**), the new category of investment product, which aimed to fix gaps between Mutual Funds (**MFs**) and Portfolio Management Services (**PMS**) in terms of portfolio flexibility.

- ✓ The new framework will come into force with effect from **April 1, 2025**.
- ✓ **Eligibility Criteria:** In order to launch SIFs, Asset Management Companies (**AMCs**) are required to have minimum 3 years of operation and an average Asset Under Management (AUM) of Rs 10,000 crore over the last 3 years.
- ✓ **Appointment of CIO for SIF:** AMCs have been mandated by SEBI to appoint a Chief Investment Officer (**CIO**) with a fund management experience of **10 years** and has managed an average AUM of not less than **Rs 5,000 crore**.

### Federal Bank Launched ‘Annuity Deposit’ for Resident Customers

Aluva (Kerala) based **Federal Bank Limited**, one of India’s leading private sector banks, has launched a new term deposit product “**Annuity Deposit**”,

specifically designed for resident customers offering stable income for a period of 5 to 20 years.

### Yes Bank Tops S&P Global CSA 2024, CDP, & Featured in Sustainability Yearbook 2025

In February 2025, the United States of America (USA) based S&P Global released the **S&P Global Corporate Sustainability Assessment (CSA) 2024** and the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), where Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **Yes Bank Limited** was recognized as **India’s highest-rated bank** in sustainability for the third consecutive year.

### CUB Partnered with CSK to Launch Co-Branded Credit Card

In March 2025, the Kumbakonam (Tamil Nadu, TN) based City Union Bank (**CUB**) announced a strategic partnership with Chennai Super Kings (**CSK**), to introduce a new **co-branded credit card** for cricket fans.

- ✓ The initiative provides CSK fans with a one-of-a-kind financial solution that combines banking privileges with exclusive bonuses tied to their favourite Indian Premier League (**IPL**) franchise.

### HDFC Bank Executes 1st gold trade through IIBX

In February 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **HDFC Bank Limited** becomes the **first domestic bank** to trade 5 kilograms (kg) of gold at the India International Bullion Exchange (IIBX) in Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (**GIFT City**), Gujarat.

- ✓ The transaction was carried out by HDFC Bank’s GIFT City International Banking Unit

(IBU) in partnership with Mumbai based **Hindustan Platinum Private Limited**, a global leader in refining and manufacturing high-purity precious metal products and industrial services.

### Paytm Partners with RBL Bank to Strengthen Digital Payment

In March 2025, **Paytm(Pay Through Mobile)**, a wholly owned subsidiary of Noida (Uttar Pradesh) based One97 Communication, has partnered with Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **RBL Bank Limited** to provide its **sound box** and **card machines** to RBL Banks's merchants, making transactions easier and more efficient.

### SEBI Allowed All NBFCs, HFCs to Invest in Security Receipts Issued by ARCs

In March 2025, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (**SEBI**) has allowed all Non-Banking Finance Companies (**NBFCs**), including Housing Finance Companies (**HFCs**) to invest in Security Receipts (SRs) issued by Asset Reconstruction Companies (**ARCs**).

- ✓ The Net Owned Funds (NOFs) of ARCs should be **Rs 100 crore or above** and they are required to maintain a Capital Adequacy Ratio (CAR) of 15% of its risk-weighted assets.
- ✓ As per the circular, SEBI has extended the **deadline for reporting differential rights** issued by Alternative Investment Funds (**AIFs**) to **March 31, 2025** (previously, the deadline was February 28, 2025), following industry representations seeking more time for compliance.

## ECONOMY & BUSINESS

### SEBI & OBPP Association Launches Bond Central Portal to Boost Retail Investor Participation in Corporate Bonds

On February 28, 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Securities and Exchange Board of India (**SEBI**) launched '**Bond Central**' portal, a centralized database portal for corporate bonds to Boost Retail Investor Participation in Corporate Bonds. The portal has been developed by Online Bond Platform Providers Association (OBPP Association), in collaboration with Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs) such as the National Stock Exchange (NSE), Bombay Stock Exchange (BSE), National Securities Depository Limited (NSDL), and Central Depository Services Limited (CDSL)

### India's Grew at 6.2% in Q3FY25; Economy to Expand 6.5% in FY25: NSO's 2nd sAdvanced Estimates

On February 28 2025, the National Statistics Office (**NSO**), Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (**MoSPI**) released the [Second Advance Estimates \(SAE\) of Annual Gross Domestic Product \(GDP\) for Financial Year 2024-25 \(FY25\)](#): Quarterly Estimates of GDP for Q3 (October-December 2024) of FY25 along with its expenditure components.

- ✓ As per the NSO data, India's Real GDP grew at **6.2% in Q3FY25**, which is higher than 5.6% (revised estimate) in Q2(July-September) of

FY25. However, this growth rate is significantly lower than 9.5% registered in Q3FY24.

- ✓ **Real GDP or GDP at Constant (2011-12) prices** is estimated at 6.5% during 2024-25 as compared to 9.2% in 2023-24. It is estimated at Rs.187.95 lakh crore in FY25 compared to Rs.176.51 lakh crore in FRY of GDP for FY24.

### India and Thailand Sign Three MoUs to Enhance Gem & Jewellery Exports

A high-level **Indian delegation** of **18 members** from the Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Gem and Jewellery Export Promotion Council (**GJEPC**), Jaipur (Rajasthan) based Jewellers Association Jaipur (**JAJ**), and Jaipur (Rajasthan) based Sitapura Gems and Jewellery Industry Association (**SGJIA**) visited **Thailand** from 22 to 24 February 2025.

### GRSE signed MoU with Indian Army for Modular Steel Bridge in Arunachal Pradesh

Kolkata (West Bengal) based Garden Reach Shipbuilders and Engineers (**GRSE**) Limited has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) with the **Indian Army** (IA) for the construction of a 130-foot-long Single Lane Modular (SLM) **Steel Bridge** (70R) in Arunachal Pradesh (AR).

- ✓ The agreement was signed by Natarajan Partheepan, General Manager (GM) (Bailey Bridges), representing GRSE with the IA.

### RBI Reports 3.1% Increase in All-India HPI for Q3 FY25

In February 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released its quarterly House Price Index (HPI) for the December quarter of 2024-25, showing a **3.1% increase** in the All-India HPI for third quarter of the Financial Year 2024-25 (**Q3 FY25**) compared to the 4.3% in Q2 FY25 and a 3.8% growth in the same quarter of the previous year. On a sequential quarter-on-quarter (q-o-q) basis, the All-India HPI rose by 0.4% in Q3 FY25.

### Rupee112 Launches India's First Fully Automated WhatsApp Loan Disbursal

In February 2025, Gurugram (Haryana) based fintech startup **Rupee112** launched India's **first** fully automated **loan** disbursal service through **WhatsApp**, enabling salaried professionals to access unsecured loans immediately.

### India's GDP Growth Estimated at 7.6% in Q4 FY25: SBI Research

According to the State Bank of India (**SBI**) [Research report](#) released in February 2025, India's Gross Domestic Product (**GDP**) growth for the fourth quarter of the Financial Year 2024-25 (**Q4 FY25**) is estimated at **7.6%**.

- ✓ The real GDP growth rate of **9.2%** for FY24 is the highest in the past 12 years, excluding FY22, which recorded 9.7% growth, the highest since India's independence.

### CRISIL Projects India's GDP Growth at 6.5% in FY26

In March 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **CRISIL Limited** (formerly Credit Rating Information Services of India Limited), a leading global rating agency, released its outlook for the Financial Year 2025-26 (**FY26**). It projects India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth at **6.5%** for FY26. This forecast indicates a deceleration from the **9.2%** growth achieved in FY25.

### India Must Grow 7.8% Annually to Achieve High-Income Status by 2047: World Bank

In February 2025, the World Bank(WB) released its latest report titled '[India Country Economic Memorandum, titled 'Becoming a High-Income Economy in a Generation'](#)', which is a comprehensive analysis of economic developments, prospects, and policy agenda of the country.

- ✓ As per the report, India will need to grow by **7.8%** on average over the next **22 years** to achieve India's ambitious target of reaching High-Income Nation (HIN) status by **2047**.
- ✓ As per the report, India has the potential to take benefit of its demographic dividend by making investments in human capital, creating enabling conditions for more and better jobs and increasing female LFP rates from **35.6%** to **50% by 2047**.

### IOB & IGBC Signed MoU to Promote Green Finance for IGBC-Certified Projects

In March 2025, Chennai (Tamil Nadu, TN) based Public sector Indian Overseas Bank (**IOB**) signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) with Hyderabad (Telangana) based Confederation of Indian Industry (CII) -Indian Green Building Council (**IGBC**) to provide accessible and affordable financing solutions for developers and home buyers.

### YES Bank Partnered with WTC Mumbai to Support MSME

In February 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **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 (WTCA), hosted the **Export Conclave 2025** at YES Bank House on 21 February 2025.

- ✓ A strategic Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) between YES Bank and WTC Mumbai was signed during the conference.

## AWARDS & RECOGNITIONS

### AWBI Confers "Prani Mitra" & "Jeev Daya" Awards 2025 for Animal Welfare and Protection

On 27 February 2025, the Animal Welfare Board of India (**AWBI**) conferred the **Prani Mitra and Jeev Daya Award Ceremony**, held in New Delhi, Delhi. AWBI was

established under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (PCA) Act of 1960 to ensure that animals are not subjected to undue pain or suffering.

- ✓ The awards will be presented under two major categories: **Prani Mitra Award** and **Jeev Daya**



**Award.** The Prani Mitra Award was introduced in **1966** and the Jeev Daya Award in **2001**.

## 97th Academy Awards – Oscars 2025: ‘Anora’ Won 5 awards, ‘The Brutalist’ won 3 awards

The **97th Edition of the Academy Awards – Oscars 2025** was held on March 2, 2025, at the Dolby Theatre in Hollywood, Los Angeles, California, United States of America (USA). The Academy Awards annually hosted by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences (AMPAS).

- ✓ The 97th Academy Awards recognized outstanding achievements in **23 categories**, honoring films released in **2024**. Comedian **Conan O’Brien** hosted the ceremony, marking his first time in this role.
- ✓ **Anora** emerged as the biggest winner, securing 5 Oscars, including Best Picture, Best Director (Sean Baker), Best Actress (Mikey Madison), Best Film Editing, and Best Writing (Original Screenplay).
- ✓ **The Brutalist** won 3 awards, including Best Actor (Adrien Brody), Best Cinematography (Dávid Jancsó), and Best Original Score (Daniel Blumberg).
- ✓ **Emilia Pérez**, a French musical crime comedy, earned 2 awards, including Best Supporting Actress (Zoe Saldana) and Best Original Song (“El Mal”).
- ✓ **Dune: Part Two** won 2 awards, including Best Sound and Best Visual Effects. [Click here to read full news](#)

## Chinese Architect Liu Jiakun wins ‘Pritzker Architecture Prize’ 2025

On March 4, 2025, Chinese architect **Liu Jiakun** was named as the ‘**2025 Pritzker Architecture Prize Laureate**’, the highest accolade in the field of Architecture. He will be honoured at a celebration in Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates (UAE) in May 2025.

- ✓ Liu Jiakun, becomes the **54th laureate** and the **2nd Chinese architect** to receive this distinction, following Wang Shu in 2012.
- ✓ It is often referred to as “architecture’s Nobel” and “the profession’s highest honor.” The prize includes a **USD 100,000** grant and a **bronze medallion**.

## Dr. Uma Sharma Honored at the 5th BRICS CCI WE Annual Women’s Summit & Felicitations

In March 2025, **Dr. Uma Sharma**, Chairperson of Kailash Group of Hospitals, received a **National Award** at the ‘5th Annual Summit of BRICS Chamber of Commerce and Industry (CCI) Women’s Entrepreneurship & Empowerment(WEE) and Felicitations 2025’ in New Delhi, Delhi. The theme of the Summit was ‘Women Changemakers: Transforming the World, Shaping the Future’.

## Nithin Kamath of Zerodha Named EY Entrepreneur Of The Year 2024

In March 2025, **Nithin Kamath**, Founder and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Bengaluru (Karnataka) based Zerodha, was named the Ernst and Young (**EY**) **Entrepreneur Of The Year (EOY) 2024**. Union Minister **Bhupender Yadav**, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) felicitated awards to EOY 2024 winners at an event held in New Delhi, Delhi.

## APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

### Tuhin Kanta Pandey Appointed as 11th Chairman of SEBI



On 27 February 2025, **Tuhin Kanta Pandey**, Finance Secretary and Secretary of Department of Revenue (DoR), Ministry of Finance (MoF), was appointed as the **11th Chairman** of the Securities and Exchange Board of

India (**SEBI**).

- ✓ The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) has approved his appointment for an

initial term of three years from the date he assumes charge or until further orders, whichever is earlier.

- ✓ He will replace **Madhabi Puri Buch**, SEBI’s first woman chairperson, whose term ends on 1 March 2025.

### PB Fintech Limited Appoints Santosh Agarwal as CEO of Paisabazaar

In February 2025, **PB Fintech Limited** announced the appointment of **Santosh Agarwal** as Chief Executive

Officer (**CEO**) of **Paisabazaar**, effective March 1, 2025. She succeeds **Naveen Kukreja**, co-founder of Paisabazaar, who is stepping down after 11 years as CEO. However, he will continue as a Non-Executive Director (NED) on Paisabazaar's board.

### **Padma Shri Awardee Koneru Humpy, India's Youngest-ever Woman Grand Master Appointed Brand Master of SOG Grandmaster Series**

In March 2025, New Delhi (Delhi)-based Skillhub Online Games Federation (SOGF) appointed Padma Shri awardee **Koneru Humpy**, India's youngest-ever woman Chess Grandmaster (GM) as Brand Ambassador of **SOGF Grandmaster series**.



### **Dr. Mayank Sharma Officially Took Charge as CGDA**

On March 1 2025, **Dr. Mayank Sharma** officially took charge as the Controller General of Defence Accounts (**CGDA**), who is responsible for monitoring the Defence Accounts Departments (DAD) under the Ministry of Defence (MoD), which manages the financial aspects of the Indian Armed Forces and other defence related organisations.

### **Christian Stocker Sworn in as the new Chancellor of Austria**

In March 2025, Austria has ended five months of political deadlock with the swearing-in of **Christian Stocker** as the new chancellor, leading a three-party coalition government. He replaced **Alexander Schallenberg**, who stepped down following political changes.



### **Pro-Russian Politician Badra Gunba Won in Abkhazia's Presidential Election**

In March 2025, Pro-Russian politician **Badra Gunba** was declared the winner of the runoff presidential election in **Abkhazia**, a breakaway region of Georgia under de-facto Russian control since the 2008 war between Moscow and Tbilisi.

### **Gol appointed Ajay Bhadoo as CEO of GeM**

In March 2025, the Government of India (GoI) has appointed **Ajay Bhadoo**, Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce (DoC) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I) as the Chief Executive Officer (**CEO**) of the Government e-Marketplace (**GeM**) with effect from **March 3, 2025**. He will replace **L Satya Srinivas** (additional charge), incumbent CEO of GeM.



### **RBI Appoints Dr Ajit Ratnakar Joshi as its Executive Director**

In March 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based the Reserve Bank of India (**RBI**) appointed **Dr. Ajit Ratnakar Joshi** as its new Executive Director (**ED**) effective from 3rd March 2025, where he will oversee the Department of Statistics and Information Management (**DSIM**) and the **Financial Stability Department**.



### **Shubman Gill Becomes Brand Ambassador of MRF**

In March 2025, Chennai (Tamil Nadu, TN) based **MRF (Madras Rubber Factory) Limited**, India's largest tyre manufacturer, announced the appointment of **Shubman Gill**, the Indian cricketer and vice-captain of Team India for the 2025 International Cricket Council (ICC) Champions Trophy, as its new **brand ambassador**.

## **ACQUISITIONS & MERGERS**

### **ARCIL Acquires Ujjivan SFB's Stressed Loan Portfolio for Rs. 34 Crore**

On March 3, 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Asset Reconstruction Company (India) Limited (**ARCIL**), backed by United States of America (USA) based **Avenue Capital Group** and the Mumbai

(Maharashtra) based State Bank of India (**SBI**), acquired Bengaluru (Karnataka) based Ujjivan Small Finance Bank's (SFB) non-performing microfinance loan portfolio worth **Rs.365.5 crore** for **Rs.34.26 crore**.

### Mintoak Acquires Digiledge in India's First E-Rupee Deal Worth USD 3.5 Million

On March 3, 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **Mintoak Innovations Private Limited**, an Indian startup backed by PayPal and Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **HDFC (formerly Housing Development Finance Corporation Bank) Bank Limited**, acquired Bengaluru (Karnataka) based '**Digiledge**' for, marking the **first** acquisition in the nascent Central Bank Digital Currency (CBDC) sector worth **USD 3.5 million**.

### CCI approvals on March 4th 2025

On March 4, 2025, the Competition Commission of India (**CCI**) has approved the following proposals:

- ✓ Singapore based **TPG Scion Singapore Private Limited** acquired a stake in Pune (Maharashtra) based **Schott Poonawalla Private Limited (SPPL)** by a secondary purchase from Pune (Maharashtra) based **Serum Institute of India (SII) Private Limited**.
- ✓ Ahmedabad (Gujarat) based **Adani Infra (India) Limited (AIIIL)**, a subsidiary of Adani Enterprises Limited, acquired a **30.07%** equity stake in Ahmedabad (Gujarat) based **PSP Projects Limited (PSP Projects)** for **Rs. 685.36 crore**.
- ✓ Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **Ambuja Cements Limited (ACL)**, acquired up to **72.8%** stake in New Delhi (Delhi) based **Orient Cement Limited (OCL)**.

- ✓ **Shell Deutschland GmbH**, a subsidiary of the global energy company **Shell Plc**, based in the Netherlands and **Shell Overseas Investments B.V.** acquired **100%** of Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **Raj Petro Specialities Private Limited**.
- ✓ France based **Roquette Frères S.A** acquired the **Pharma Solutions** and specific product lines from the **Nourish** segment of the **United States of America (USA)** based **International Flavors & Fragrances Inc. (IFF)**
- ✓ Florida(the USA) based **Alpha Wave Ventures II, LP** acquired a **12.44%** stake in Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **Advanta Enterprises Limited**.
- ✓ Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **JSW (Jindal South West) Energy Limited (JSWEL)** acquired a **100%** shareholding in Hyderabad (Telangana) based **KSK Mahanadi Power Company Limited** for nearly **Rs. 16,000 crore**.

### JFSL buys out SBI's stake in JPBL for Rs 104.5 Crore

In March 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based **Jio Financial Services Limited (JFSL)**, the fintech arm of Reliance Group, announced the acquisition of remaining **17.8%** stake in **Jio Payments Bank Limited (JPBL)** from the **State Bank of India (SBI)** for **Rs 104.5 crore**.

## SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

### China Launched Two Satellites Featuring Highest Spatial Resolution

In February 2025, China successfully launched two new satellites named '**Siwei Gaojing-1 03**' and '**Siwei Gaojing-1 04**' through **Long March-2C** carrier rocket into sun-synchronous orbit about 500 kilometers (km) above the land. The rocket was lifted off from **Jiuquan Satellite Launch Center** in Northwest China, China.

- ✓ The two satellites consist of high-resolution optical imagers and will be used to collect data for the management of natural resources, city construction planning, and other commercial operations.

### Indian-origin Tushar Mehta joins Blue Origin crew on 10th space tourism mission

In February 2025, Indian-origin **Tushar Mehta** was among the **six** crew members to be included in

the **10th** space tourism mission of billionaire **Jeff Bezos'** space company **Blue Origin Enterprises, L.P.**, Washington(USA).

- ✓ **Tushar Mehta** is a partner and the co-head of **research** at a quantitative **hedge fund** in New York, United States of America (USA).

### Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost Lander Landed on the Moon

On 2 March 2025, Texas (United States of America, USA) based **Firefly Aerospace** successfully landed its uncrewed **Blue Ghost** lander on the lunar surface in an upright, stable posture on the company's first attempt.

- ✓ **Blue Ghost Mission 1**, also known as **Ghost Riders in the Sky**, is the **first commercial firm** to accomplish a successful soft-landing on the Moon and sets the standard for future exploration across cislunar space as part of **Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS)**



program of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

### DRDO Successfully Tests Indigenous Life Support System for LCA Tejas

On March 4 2025, The **Defence Bio-Engineering & ElectroMedical Laboratory (DEBEL)**, a Bengaluru(Karnataka)-based laboratory under the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), Ministry of Defence (MoD) **conducted the high-altitude trials** of the **On-Board Oxygen Generating System (OBOGS)-based Integrated Life Support System (ILSS)** for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas.

- ✓ **Design & Testing:** DEBEL, specialized in aerospace life-support systems, **designed and developed the OBOGS-ILSS** and conducted its high-altitude trials on the Tejas Prototype Vehicle-3.
- ✓ **Trials:** Tests included extreme conditions like altitudes up to **50,000 feet** and high-G maneuvers, validated by the **Centre for Military Airworthiness & Certification (CEMILAC)**.
- ✓ **Manufacturing:** Larsen & Toubro (L&T) was responsible for **production** of the system under DRDO's guidance, ensuring adherence to technical specifications.

### NASA & Nokia Launch the First Mobile Network on Moon

In February 2025, Washington, D.C., (United States of America, USA) based National Aeronautics and Space Administration (**NASA**) and Espoo (Finland) based **Nokia** are set to use the first mobile network on the **Moon** as part of the Intuitive Machines' (**IM**)-**2 mission**. The project is part of NASA's **Artemis**

**program**, aiming to return humans to the lunar surface by 2027.

- ✓ As part of the IM-2 mission, the **Athena** lander will launch to deploy Nokia's Lunar Surface Communication System (LSCS), which will use Earth-based cellular technology to establish connectivity on the Moon.

### Lockheed Martin Concludes Flight Tests of F-35B with Advanced LRASM

United States of America (USA) based defence and aerospace manufacturer **Lockheed Martin Corporation** has completed an initial flight test integrating the Long Range Anti-Ship Missile (**LRASM**) onto the **F-35B Lightning II stealth fighter jet**.

- ✓ The test was conducted in partnership with USA-based **F-35 Pax River Integrated Test Force (ITF)**, marking a significant step in enhancing the fighter jet's capabilities.

## ENVIRONMENT

### Two New Species of Jumping Spiders Discovered in Western Ghats

In March 2025, Researchers from the University of Kerala discovered two new species of jumping spiders, '**Epidelaxia falciformis sp. nov**' and '**Epidelaxia palustris sp. nov**' from Shendurney Wildlife Sanctuary in Kerala. This marks the **first** record of the **Epidelaxia** genus in India.

### ZSI Scientists Discover Soil Nematode 'Crassolabium dhritiae' in Odisha

In March 2025, Scientists from Kolkata (West Bengal) based Zoological Survey of India (**ZSI**) discovered the species of soil-dwelling nematode '**Crassolabium dhritiae**' in the Deccan Peninsula biogeographic zone in Keonjhar, Odisha.

## SPORTS

### Aleksandra Goryachkina Wins Monaco GP 2025: Tops FIDE Women's Grand Prix Standings

Russian Grandmaster(GM) **Aleksandra Goryachkina** clinched victory at the Fédération Internationale des Échecs (International Chess Federation, FIDE) **Monaco Grand Prix (GP) 2025**, held from February 18–28 2025 in Monte Carlo, Monaco.

#### Monaco GP 2025: Top 3 Players & Prize Money

Rank	Player	Country	Points	Prize Money (Euro)
1 (Gold)	Aleksandra Goryachkina	FIDE	5.5	13833
2 (Silver)	Humpy Koneru	India	5.5	13833
3 (Bronze)	Batkhyag Munguntuul	Mongolia	5.5	13833

### IOC Grants Provisional Recognition to World Boxing

In February 2025, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Executive Board (EB) granted provisional recognition to World Boxing (WB) as the International Federation (IF) governing global boxing within the Olympic Movement.

### 2024-25 Ranji Trophy: Vidarbha defeated Kerala to Clinch 3rd Title

On March 2 2025, The **Vidarbha cricket team** won the **2024-25 Ranji Trophy** by defeating **Kerala cricket team** based on a first-innings lead in the final at the Vidarbha Cricket Association(VCA) Stadium in Nagpur, Maharashtra.

- ✓ This victory marks Vidarbha's **3rd Ranji Trophy title**, having previously won in the 2017-18 and 2018-19 seasons.

### Indian Grandmaster Pa Inian Wins 38th 'Cannes International Open Chess Tournament'

On March 3, 2025, Indian Grandmaster(GM) **Panneerselvam (Pa) Inian** won the 38th 'Cannes International Open Chess Tournament 2025' title, by defeating compatriot **V Pranesh** in the ninth and final round held in Cannes, France.

#### Winners of Cannes International Open Chess Tournament:

Rank	Name	Earned Points	Medal
1	Pa Inian	7.5	Gold
2	Aradhya Garg	7	Silver
3	Kazybek Noderbek	7	Bronze

### Indian Table Tennis Champion Achanta Sharath Kamal Announces Retirement

On March 4, 2025, Indian Table Tennis (TT) Champion and Padma Shri Awardee, **Achanta Sharath Kamal** announced his retirement from Professional TT at the age of 42, marking the end of an illustrious career that spanned over **2 decades**. His final competition will be the World Table Tennis (WTT) Star Contender in Chennai, (Tamil Nadu, TN) starting on **March 25, 2025**.

- ✓ Sharath Kamal holds the record for winning the 'Senior National Champion' title **10 times**.
- ✓ He won **13** Commonwealth Games medals, including **7 golds**, 3 silver and 3 bronze, along with 2 bronze medals at the Asian Games 2018.

#### Awards and Honors:

- Arjuna Award (2004)**: Received the award for his outstanding contribution to sports.
- Padma Shri (2019)**: Received India's fourth-highest civilian award, for his exceptional achievements in TT..
- Khel Ratna Award (2022)**: Received this award, 'now Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna Award', India's highest sporting honor, further cementing his legacy in Indian sports for TT.

### Australian Cricketer & Former Captain Steve Smith Announces Retirement from ODI Cricket

On March 5, 2025, **Steven Peter Devereux Smith**, the stand-in captain of Australia, announced his retirement from One Day International (ODI) cricket following the team's semi-final loss to India in the 'International Cricket Council (ICC) Champions Trophy 2025' in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE).

- ✓ He played pivotal roles in Australia's 2015 and 2023 ICC Cricket World Cup victories and was the first player to record 5 consecutive 50-plus scores in a World Cup.
- ✓ **ICC Cricket World Cup Player of the Tournament (2015)** : Named for his contributions to Australia's World Cup victory, including scoring 402 runs, with a memorable century in the semi-final.

- ✓ **Sir Garfield Sobers Trophy for ICC Men's Cricketer of the Year (2015)**: A recognition of his overall excellence across all formats during 2015. And also ICC Test Player of the Year (2015).

### PCI launches logo of World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2025

In March 2025, the Paralympic Committee of India (PCI) revealed the logo for the **World Para Athletics Grand Prix 2025**, which will take place from March 11 to 13, 2025, at Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium in New Delhi (Delhi).

- ✓ The official logo of the World Para Athletics Grand Prix New Delhi 2025 is a vibrant symbol of India's rich cultural heritage and sporting excellence.

## OBITUARY

### Russian Chess Grandmaster Boris Spassky Passed Away

On 27 February 2025, Russian chess grandmaster **Boris Spassky** passed away at the age of 88 in Moscow, Russia. He was born on 30 January 1937 in Leningrad (now Saint Petersburg), Russia. He became the **10th World Chess Champion** in 1969 and held the title from 1969-1972.

- ✓ In 2023, she received the **Maharashtra Sahitya Parishad's Lifetime Achievement Award** for her significant contribution to literature.

### Renowned Marathi Travel Writer Dr Meena Prabhu Passed Away

Veteran Marathi writer and renowned travelogue author **Dr. Meena Prabhu** passed away on March 1, 2025. Born on 27th August 1939, in Pune (Maharashtra), she was well known in Maharashtra for her travel writings, novels, and poetry.

### Indian Domestic Cricketer Padmakar Shivalkar Passed Away

In March 2025, Indian cricketer **Padmakar Shivalkar** passed away at the age of 84 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He was born on 14 September, 1940 in Mumbai. He was known as '**Paddy**' and renowned for his achievements in the Ranji Trophy as the best left-arm spinner of India and as Bombay's prominent player.

## BOOKS & AUTHORS

### Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Kailash Satyarthi's Autobiography titled 'Diyasalai' Explored at IGCNA

In February 2025, Nobel laureate and social reformer **Kailash Satyarthi** launched his autobiography

'**Diyasalai**' during the Jaipur Literature Festival in Jaipur, Rajasthan. The book was published by **Rajkamal Prakashan** and launched by former President of India **Ram Nath Kovind**, who attended the event as Chief Guest.



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**IMPORTANT DAYS****Rare Disease Day 2025 – February 28**

**Rare Disease Day** is observed annually across the globe on the last day of **February, either 28 or 29** in leap years (the rarest day of the year), to raise awareness for the people impacted by rare diseases and unite individuals from over 100 nations. This day also aims to build a community and promote the need for healthcare equity, better access to treatments, and enhanced medical research for those living with rare conditions.

- ✓ Rare Disease Day 2025, observed on 28 February 2025, marks the observance of **18th** Rare Disease Day.
- ✓ The 2025 theme of Rare Disease Day, **“More than you can imagine; an anthology of rare experiences,”** highlights the challenges, resilience, and experiences of people living with rare diseases.

**National Science Day 2025 – February 28**

National Science Day (**NSD**) is observed annually on **February 28** across India to honor the groundbreaking discovery of the ‘**Raman Effect**’ by Sir Chandrasekhara Venkata Raman (**CV Raman**), a pioneering Indian physicist, in 1928. This day serves to highlight the importance of science in everyday life and acknowledges the invaluable contributions of scientists in shaping the progress of India.

- ✓ 28th February 2025 marks the observance of the **39th NSD**.
- ✓ The theme of NSD 2025, **“Empowering Indian Youth for Global Leadership in Science and Innovation for Viksit Bharat,”**
- ✓ In 1930, he received the ‘**Nobel Prize**’ in Physics for his groundbreaking discovery of the “Raman Effect” and became the first Asian to receive a Nobel Prize in a scientific field.

**Zero Discrimination Day 2025 – March 1**

The United Nations (UN’s) ‘**Zero Discrimination Day**’ is observed annually on **March 1st** across the globe to promote equality, inclusion, peace, and diversity. The day serves to raise awareness about the damaging effects of discrimination and emphasizes the right of every individual to live a fulfilling and dignified life.

- ✓ March 01, 2025, marks the observance of the **11th** Zero Discrimination Day.
- ✓ The theme for Zero Discrimination Day 2025 is **“We Stand Together,”** highlighting a particular aspect of discrimination.

**World Civil Defence Day 2025- March 1**

World Civil Defence Day (**WCDD**), also known as World Civil Protection Day, is observed annually on **March 1** across the globe to raise awareness about civil defence and highlight its crucial role in protecting communities and individuals during emergencies and disasters. This day also honors the efforts and sacrifices of civil defence personnel who have worked tirelessly to safeguard lives.

- ✓ 1st March 2025 marks the observance of the **36th WCDD**.
- ✓ The theme for WCDD 2025, **“Civil Defence, Guarantee of Security for the Population,”** emphasizes the essential role that civil defence organizations play in safeguarding public security.

**World Seagrass Day 2025 – March 1**

The United Nations (UN)’s **World Seagrass Day** is annually observed on **1 March** across the globe to raise awareness of the importance of seagrasses as a fundamental element of marine biodiversity, the challenges they face, and their role in sustainable development and climate change mitigation and adaptation. 1 March 2025 marks the observance of the **3rd World Seagrass Day**.

**Civil Accounts Day 2025 – March 1**

**Civil Accounts Day** is celebrated every year on **1st March** in India to commemorate the Foundation Day of the Indian Civil Accounts Service (ICAS), which operates under the Department of Expenditure, Ministry of Finance (MoF). **1st March 2025** marks the **49th Civil Accounts Day**.

**World Wildlife Day 2025 – March 3**

The United Nations (UN’s) World Wildlife Day (**WWD**) is observed annually on **3rd March** across the globe to honor and raise awareness about the diverse array of the world’s wild fauna (animals) and flora (plants). This day emphasizes the importance of conserving wildlife and the critical role that conservation plays in preserving our ecosystems.

- ✓ The theme for World Wildlife Day 2025, **“Wildlife Conservation Finance: Investing in People and Planet,”** focuses on the importance of improving and making current financial efforts more effective and sustainable.

- ✓ Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired the 7th meeting of the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL) in Junagadh, Gujarat. Minister of Environment, Forest, and Climate Change (MoEFCC) Bhupender Yadav, along with other board members, also attended the meeting.
- ✓ Prime Minister also laid the foundation stone for the **National Referral Centre for Wildlife** in Junagadh and announced the **16th Asiatic Lion** Population Estimation set for May 2025.

### World Hearing Day 2025 – March 3

World Hearing Day (WHD) is observed annually on **3rd March** across the globe to raise awareness about hearing loss and to promote ear and hearing care. The day also serves as a call to action to address hearing loss and its associated challenges. 3rd March 2025 marks the observance of the **19th WHD**.

- ✓ The theme of WHD 2025 is “**Changing mindsets: Empower yourself to make ear and hearing care a reality for all!**”.

### National Security Day 2025 – March 4

National Security Day (NSD), also known as **Rashtriya Suraksha Diwas**, is observed annually on **4 March** across India to honor and show gratitude to the Indian Security Forces including the Police, Military, Para-Military, Guards, Commandos, and other forces who are involved in maintaining the peace and security of the people of India.

### World Day of Fight Against Sexual Exploitation 2025 – March 4

The **World Day Against Sexual Exploitation** is observed globally on **March 4th** each year to raise awareness about sexual exploitation and offer support to victims of sexual abuse. The International Labor Organization (ILO) reports that nearly **5 million women** are victims of forced sexual exploitation each year.

### National Safety Day 2025 – March 4

National Safety Day (NSD) is observed annually on **4 March** across India to emphasize the importance of safety measures in preventing workplace accidents. The day also promotes a culture of safety in

workplaces, encouraging strict adherence to safety guidelines.

- ✓ 4 March also marks the commencement of the ‘**National Safety Week Campaign**’, which is annually observed across India from **4-10 March**.
- ✓ **4 March 2025** marks the observance of the **54th** National Safety Day/National Safety Week Campaign.
- ✓ The theme for NSD 2025 is “**Safety & Well-being Crucial for Viksit Bharat,**” aligns with the vision of ‘Viksit Bharat 2047’ underscoring the role of safety in India’s developmental goals.

### World Obesity Day 2025 – March 4

World Obesity Day (WOD) is annually observed across the globe on **4th March** to create awareness about the risks of obesity and to promote practical solutions to end the growing global obesity crisis. The WOD was organised by the World Obesity Federation (WOF).

- ✓ 4th March 2025 marks the observance of the **11th WOD**.
- ✓ The theme of WOD 2025 is “**Changing Systems, Healthier Lives.**”

### World Engineering Day 2025 – March 4

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)’s **World Engineering Day** (WED) for Sustainable Development is observed annually on **4th March** across the globe to highlight the critical role of engineering in modern life.

- ✓ The UNESCO’s theme for World Engineering Day 2025 is “**Unleashing the power of engineers to advance the Sustainable Development Goals**”.

### International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness 2025 – March 5

The United Nations (UN’s) **International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness** is observed annually on **March 5th** worldwide to raise public awareness and understanding of disarmament issues, especially among young people.

- ✓ **March 5, 2025**, marks the **3rd** observance of the International Day for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness.

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**STATE NEWS****Rajasthan Launched SSBY, providing Rs 1.3 lakh accident insurance cover to School Students**

In February 2025, **Madan Dilawar**, Education and Panchayati Raj Minister of Rajasthan launched the 'Shiksha Sanjeevani Bima Yojana (**SSBY**)' during a special event held at Residency Girls Higher Secondary School in Udaipur, Rajasthan.

- ✓ It is a 1st of-its-kind scheme which aims to provide personal accident insurance coverage of **Rs 1 lakh to Rs 1.30 lakh** to students in the government schools. Initially, the scheme will cover schools in the Udaipur Division of Rajasthan.

**Andhra Pradesh Government Presents Rs 3.22 Lakh Crore Budget for 2025-26**

In February 2025, **Payyavula Keshav**, the Minister for Finance for the Andhra Pradesh (AP) state government, presented the [Annual budget of AP](#) for the Financial Year 2025-26 (**FY 26**) with a total outlay of **Rs 3,22,359 crore**. The budget allocations include a Revenue Expenditure of Rs 2,51,162 crore and a Capital Expenditure of Rs 40,635 crore.

**Mizoram CM Lalduhoma Launches Mizoram Chapter of WEP for Women's Empowerment**

In February 2025, the Chief Minister (CM) of Mizoram, **PU Lalduhoma** launched the Mizoram Chapter of the Women Entrepreneurship Platform (**WEP**) during a state workshop aimed at promoting women-led development through entrepreneurship. The event, held at **Mizoram University** in Aizawl (Mizoram), was organized under New Delhi(Delhi) based the National Institution for Transforming India (**NITI Aayog**) State Support Mission (**SSM**).

- ✓ The initiative aims to enhance women's participation in entrepreneurship, boost Mizoram's economic growth, and support the vision of **Viksit Bharat@2047**.
- ✓ With this, Mizoram became the **first state in the Northeast** to set up a WEP chapter.

**Assam Designated Chirang-Ripu Elephant Reserve as 8th National Park & Renamed as 'Sikhna Jwhlwao National Park'**

In February 2025, the Assam government officially designated the **Chirang-Ripu Elephant Reserve** located in the Kokrajhar and Chirang districts of Assam as the **8th National Park(NP)** in the state. The new NP of Assam is named after the Bodo legend **Sikhna Jwhlwao**, also popularly known as Jaolia Dewan, who fought against the British in the Anglo-Bhutan war in 1865. This naming honors his bravery and contribution to the history and culture of the Bodo community.

**Jharkhand FM Radhakrishna Kishore Presents Rs 1.45 Lakh Crore Budget for FY 26**

On 3 March 2025, Finance Minister (FM) of Jharkhand, **Radhakrishna Kishore Jllhas** introduced the state [budget for the financial year 2025-26 \(FY 26\)](#), amounting to **Rs.1,45,400 crore**. It is called the "**Abua Budget**," symbolizing the state's commitment to the welfare of all its people. It represents an increase from the previous year's budget of Rs 1.28 lakh crore.

- ✓ To strengthen the **agricultural sector** and support farmers, the Government of Jharkhand has set aside **Rs 4,587 crore**.

**Bihar FM Samrat Choudhary Presents Rs 3.17 lakh crore State Budget for FY26**

On 3 March 2025, **Samrat Choudhary**, Deputy Chief Minister (Dy CM), and **Finance Minister (FM)** of Bihar presented a **Rs 3.17 lakh crore** (Rs 3,16,895.02 crore) state [Budget for the Financial Year 2025-26\(FY26\)](#). The budget expenditure estimated for **2025-26** is **Rs 38,169 crore more** than the budget estimate (Rs 2,78,725.72 crore) for FY25.

**Chhattisgarh FM Om Prakash Choudhary Presents Rs 1.65 Lakh Crore Budget for FY26**

On 3 March 2025, Finance Minister (FM) of Chhattisgarh, **Om Prakash (OP) Choudhary** presented the state [budget for the Financial Year 2025-26 \(FY 26\)](#) in the state assembly with an allocation of **Rs 1,65,000 crore** which is Rs.17, 554 crore more than the FY25 Budget.



- ✓ The budget follows the theme 'GATI', focusing on Good Governance, Accelerating Infrastructure, Technology, and Industrial Growth.

### **Mizoram CM Pu Lalduhoma Presented Rs 15,198.76 Crore State Budget for FY26**

In March 2025, the Chief Minister (CM) of Mizoram **Pu Lalduhoma** presented Rs

**15,198.76 crore** [budget for the Financial Year 2025-26 \(FY26\)](#) in the state legislative assembly in Aizawl, Mizoram. He also announced **Rs 350 crore** has been allocated for the implementation of state's flagship, '**Bana Kaih Scheme** (Hand Holding)' for FY26, marking a significant increase of **75%** in fund allocation for the scheme compared to Rs 200 crore allocated in the current fiscal year.

## **Aspirant Queries**

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## GENERAL AWARENESS

OCTOBER 13 2024		COVERED IN AFFAIRSCLOUD		
CATEGORIES	QUESTIONS COLLECTED	OVERALL	QUIZ	HANDWRITTEN NOTES
Current Affairs	42	37	29	16
Current Static Banking	1	—	—	—
Current Static GK	2	1	—	—
Static Banking	—	—	—	—
Static GK	—	—	—	—
Total	45	38	29	16

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