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English



15 & 16 JANUARY

2025

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< Feb 2024

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PIB News



Feb 29 2024 CA Q&A - English
Ebook



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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

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PIB News



February 29 2024 PIB News - English
Article



February 28 2024 PIB News - English
Article

AFFAIRSCLOUD TODAY

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Hand Written Notes

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

1)

Inaugurated
Narendra Modi → 6.5 km Z-Morh Tunnel → *B/w* Gagangir & Sonmarg → *In* Jammu & Kashmir
PM of India
(Sonamarg Tunnel)
↓
Cost - Rs. 2,700 cr
Altitude - 8,650 feet

PM - Prime Minister

2)

C-DOT, + IIT Mandi + IIT Jammu → *To develop* WSS → *To* ↑ Spectrum efficiency
MoC
(ASIC chip)
↓
Supported by → TTDF
MoC

C-DOT - Centre for Development of Telematics

MoC - Ministry of Communications

IIT - Indian Institute of Technology

WSS - Wideband Spectrum-Sensor

ASIC - Application-specific integrated circuit

TTDF - Telecom Technology Development Fund

3)

Indichip + YMTL, + AP → *To establish* India's 1st private semiconductor → *In* Kurnool,
Semiconductors *Japan* *manufacturing facility* *AP*
↓
Cost - >Rs 14,000 cr

YMTL - Yitoo Micro Technology Limited

AP - Andhra Pradesh

4)
Om Birla ^{Announced} → India ^{To Host} → 28th CSPOC ^{In} → 2026
(Speaker of Lok Sabha)
^{Aim} ↓

To focus on application of AI & social media in parliamentary operations

CSPOC - Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Parliaments of Commonwealth Countries

AI - Artificial Intelligence

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

1)

Tracxn Technology ^{Released} → Annual India Fintech Report 2024

- Rank 1 - USA
- Rank 2 - UK
- Rank 3 - India

→ Fund received in fintech segment (2024) by India - ↓ by 33% to USD 1.9 bn

Top cities for fintech funding

1. Bengaluru, Karnataka
2. Mumbai, Maharashtra
3. New Delhi, (Delhi)

Top 3 Investing Companies

1. Peak XV Partners, Karnataka
2. LetsVenture, Karnataka
3. Y Combinator, LLC, USA

Unicorns emerged in 2024

Money View (Karnataka)
Perfios (Karnataka)

USA - United States of America

UK - United Kingdom

2)

India-Nepal IGC meeting 2025 ^{On} → Trade, Transit, & Cooperation ^{Held in} → Kathmandu, Nepal
to Combat Unauthorized Trade

^{Highlights} ↓

- To develop Raxaul (Bihar, India) - Birgunj (Kathmandu, Nepal) rail line
- India approved to supply of 2 lakh MT Wheat to Nepal
- Sal seeds & Chayote included in Plant Quarantine of India
- Agreed JWG on acceptance of Online Certificate of Origin with Nepal & SAFTA

→ 2nd Joint Business Forum ^{B/w} → India & Nepal ^{Organised by} → CII & FNCCI ^{Held} → Kathmandu, Nepal

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

1)

Brand Ambassador of PUMA India → PV Sindhu ^{Award} → 2016 - Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna
↓
1st badminton player to promote German sportswear giant

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

1)

China ^{Launched} → 'Shijian-25' ^{Into} → GTO ^{Via} → Long March 3B ^{From} → Xichang Satellite Launch Center
satellite rocket China
↓ Aim ↓ Developed by
To conduct tests for in-orbit refueling Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology

GTO - Geostationary Transfer Orbit

SPORTS

1)

41st Spanish Super Cup (Football) → FC Barcelona ^{Defeated} → Real Madrid
↓ Final held ↓ Prize money
King Abdullah Sports City stadium (Saudi Arabia) USD 20.7 million

FC - Futbol Club

OBITUARY

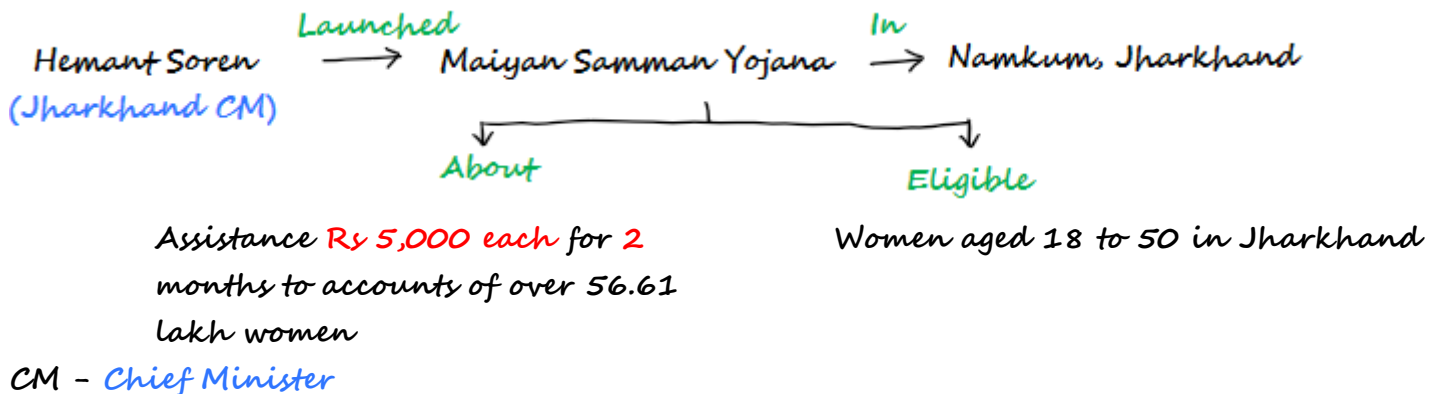
1)

Iqbal M Chagla → Senior advocate & Lawyer

Born ↓ Passed away
Maharashtra

STATE NEWS

1)



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Aim

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Less Important NEWS

- [“Indian Telecom Services Performance Indicator Report” for the Quarter July-September, 2024](#)
- [Union Home Minister and Minister of Cooperation Shri Amit Shah chairs a review meeting of the National Cooperative Organic Limited at the Ministry of Cooperation](#)
- [AIR MARSHAL JEETENDRA MISHRA ASSUMES COMMAND OF IAF'S WESTERN AIR COMMAND](#)
- [Centre amends prison manual rules, asks States to address issue of caste-based discrimination](#)
- [Most deported foreigners in 2023-24 were Nigerian nationals: Home Ministry report](#)

Detailed Content

Current Affairs 15 & 16 January 2025 : Headlines

 **AFFAIRSCLOUD TODAY** **ENGLISH**



PM Modi inaugurates Z-Morh tunnel in J&K's Sonamarg

C-DOT and IIT Mandi signs agreement for "Developing Semiconductor Chip of Wideband Spectrum Sensor for Dynamic Spectrum Access"

CURRENT AFFAIRS **15 & 16 JANUARY 2025**

- ▶ PM Narendra Modi Inaugurates Z-Morh Tunnel in J&K
- ▶ C-DOT Partners with IIT Mandi and IIT Jammu to Develop Spectrum Efficiency Chip
- ▶ Indichip Semiconductors to Establish India's First Private Semiconductor Facility in AP
- ▶ 28th CSPOC to be hosted in India in 2026
- ▶ Tracxn's Annual India Fintech Report 2024: India Ranked 3rd in Global Fintech Funding
- ▶ India-Nepal IGC on Trade, Transit, and Cooperation to Combat Unauthorised Trade Held in Kathmandu, Nepal
- ▶ IDBI Bank launches 'Chiranjeevi-Super Senior Citizen FD'
- ▶ PNB Launches 1st 'Cybersecurity Hackathon 2024-25' to Combat Malware Threats
- ▶ BHEL and ONGC Signed MoU to Collaborate on RE Projects
- ▶ APSSDC Partners with Infosys to Bridge Skill Gaps in AP
- ▶ PV Sindhu appoints PUMA India as brand ambassador
- ▶ China launches 'Shijian-25' satellite to test orbital refueling in space
- ▶ Spanish Super Cup: FC Barcelona defeats Real Madrid to win 15th title
- ▶ Senior Advocate Iqbal M Chagla passed away
- ▶ Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren Launches Maiyyaan Sampan Yojana

NATIONAL AFFAIRS

PM Narendra Modi Inaugurates Z-Morh Tunnel in J&K

On January 13 2025, Prime Minister (PM) **Narendra Modi** inaugurated the **Z-Morh Tunnel** in Sonamarg, located in the Ganderbal district of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).



- The tunnel, also known as the **Sonamarg Tunnel**, enhances connectivity to the Ladakh region, which has defence and tourism value.

Key People:

Union minister Nitin Gadkari, Ministry of Road Transport and Highways(MoRTH), J&K Lieutenant Governor Manoj Sinha and Chief Minister(CM) Omar Abdullah were also present at the event.

About Z-Morh Tunnel :

- i. The two lane, bi-directional Z-Morh Tunnel, measuring **6.5 kilometer (km)** long and **10 metres(m)** wide was built between Gagangir and Sonmarg on the Srinagar-Leh National Highway (NH).
 - It was built at a cost of **Rs.2,700 crore** using the New Austrian Tunneling Method (**NATM**) in view of the fragile Himalayan Geology.
- ii. It includes the main tunnel (10.8 m long), parallel escape tunnel (wide 7.5 km), D-shaped ventilation tunnel (8.3 m), 2 major culverts of 110 m and 270 m length, and one small culvert of 30 m long.
- iii. It is located at an altitude of **8,650 feet** above sea level which facilitates all-weather connectivity between Srinagar and Sonamarg enroute Leh, bypassing landslide and avalanche route.
- iv. The tunnel is designed for the flow of 1,000 vehicles an hour at an approved maximum speed of **80 km per hour (km/h)** enabling uninterrupted travel even during winter months.
 - The western portal of the tunnel (towards Srinagar) is located in the village Rezan just after Gagangir and the eastern portal (towards Sonamarg) is located at village Shetkari.
- iv. The foundation stone for the Z-Morh tunnel was laid in 2012.
 - The construction work commenced in May 2015, was completed in 2023 and had its soft launch in February 2024.
 - The project was initially tendered to Infrastructure Leasing & Financial Services Limited(IL&FS) and was re-tendered in 2019 and awarded to APCO Infratech Private Limited.

Points to Note:

- i. The longest road tunnel in India – '**Shyama Prasad Mukherjee Tunnel**', also known as the 'Chenani-Nashri Tunnel' measuring 9.28 km located in J&K.
- ii. The shortest road tunnel in India – '**Bhanwar Tonk Tunnel**' measuring 1,024 m located in Chhattisgarh.

C-DOT Partners with IIT Mandi and IIT Jammu to Develop Spectrum Efficiency Chip

In January 2025, the Centre for Development of Telematics (**C-DOT**), New Delhi (Delhi)-based telecom Research and Development (R&D) center under the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of

Communications (MoC) has partnered with the Indian Institute of Technology Mandi (**IIT Mandi**) in Himachal Pradesh (HP) and the Indian Institute of Technology Jammu (**IIT Jammu**) in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K) **to create a new chip** designed to improve spectrum efficiency.



- The project is supported by the Telecom Technology Development Fund (**TTDF**), which helps Indian startups, universities, and research institutions create telecom innovations. Its objective is to improve broadband and mobile services across India.

Note: TTDF was launched on October 1, 2022, by the Universal Service Obligation Fund (USOF) under the Ministry of Telecommunications (MoT), for supporting R&D efforts focused on creating technologies and products that enhance telecom services in rural and remote areas.

Key People:

The agreement was signed in the presence of **Dr. Raj Kumar Upadhyay** Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of C-DOT, **Dr. Rahul Shrestha**, Principal Investigator from IIT Mandi, **Dr. Rohit B. Chaurasiya**, Co-Investigator from IIT Jammu, as well as C-DOT Directors **Pankaj Kumar Dalela** and **Shikha Srivastava**.

Key Points:

- This collaboration aims to develop a "Wideband Spectrum-Sensor (**WSS**) an application-specific integrated circuit (**ASIC**) chip designed to optimize spectrum use for broadband services, particularly in rural regions. It will also generate intellectual property (IP) for spectrum sensing technology, crucial for dynamic spectrum access.
- The project includes designing an advanced spectrum sensing algorithm that helps communication systems identify unused frequency bands, or spectrum holes, without causing interference.
- The project focuses on developing hardware-efficient communication algorithms to detect underused bands **above 2 Gigahertz** (GHz), thereby enhancing spectrum utilization.
- The project will demonstrate a wideband **cognitive radio module** for the 6 GHz satellite band (5.925–7.125 GHz) and test designs using Field-Programmable Gate Arrays (FPGA).

Indichip Semiconductors to Establish India's First Private Semiconductor Facility in AP

In January 2025, **Indichip Semiconductors Limited**, headquartered in Noida, Uttar Pradesh (UP), in collaboration with its Joint Venture (JV) partner Yitoa Micro Technology Limited (**YMTL**) from Japan, has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (**MoU**) with the government of Andhra Pradesh (**AP**) to establish **India's first** private semiconductor manufacturing facility at the Orvakal Mega Industrial Hub in Kurnool, AP.

- The project entails an investment of over Rs 14,000 crores.

Key Signatories: The MoU was signed between **Piyush Bichhoriya**, Managing Director (MD) of Indichip Semiconductors Limited, and **Saikanth Varma**, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the AP Economic Development Board (APEDB).



Key Points:

- i. This initiative aligns with **AP's Semiconductor Policy**, launched in November 2024, which aims to make the state a hub for electronics and semiconductor manufacturing.
 - It also supports India's Aatmanirbhar Bharat vision by boosting domestic production and reducing reliance on imports.
- ii. The AP government will allocate land for the facility in the Orvakal Mega Industrial Hub. The state has also committed to providing the necessary infrastructure and support to ensure the success of this project.
- iii. The facility will specialize in manufacturing Silicon Carbide (**SiC**) chips, which are critical for energy-efficient technologies, Electric Vehicles (EVs), and Renewable Energy (RE) systems.
- iii. Initially, the plant will produce **10,000 wafers per month**, with plans to scale up production to 50,000 wafers per month within 2–3 years.
- iv. This development is anticipated to generate substantial local employment opportunities, foster advancements in technology, and play a crucial role in strengthening India's self-reliance in the semiconductor industry.

Key Facts:

- In November 2024, the Gujarat government launched India's first 'Gujarat Semiconductor Policy 2022-2027'.
- India's first semiconductor will be set up in Sanand district of Gujarat.
- India's first Artificial intelligence (AI) -enabled semiconductor fabrication plant has officially started construction in Dholera, Gujarat.

About Andhra Pradesh (AP):

Chief Minister (**CM**)– N. Chandrababu Naidu

Governor– Syed Abdul Nazeer

Capital– Amaravati

National Parks (**NP**)– Sri Venkateswara NP, Papikonda NP

28th CSPOC to be hosted in India in 2026

The 28th Conference of Speakers and Presiding Officers of Parliaments of Commonwealth Countries (CSPOC) is set to be hosted in New Delhi (Delhi), India in 2026. The announcement was made by **Om Birla**, Speaker of Lok Sabha on January 10, 2025 at the CSPOC Standing Committee Meeting held in Guernsey.

- CSPOC aims to focus on the application of Artificial Intelligence (AI) and social media in parliamentary operations for enhancing cooperation among member countries.
- These cutting-edge technologies are used to provide regional language translations for Members of Parliament (MPs) and make available parliamentary papers in different languages.

i. India has emerged as the world's 5th-largest economy and the 3rd-largest startup ecosystem, undergoing transformative growth in sectors such as agriculture, fintech, AI, and research and innovation.

ii. India's selection as the host for the 28th CSPOC showcases its rich cultural heritage, rooted in the philosophy of Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam, "the whole world is one family."

Note: India had hosted the CSPOC in 1970-71, 1986, and 2010.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

Tracxn's Annual India Fintech Report 2024: India Ranked 3rd in Global Fintech Funding

According to Bengaluru (Karnataka)-based **Tracxn Technologies Limited**, a leading global market intelligence platform, '**Annual India Fintech Report 2024**', India ranked at **3rd** position globally in terms of funding received in the fintech segment, despite witnessing a decline of 33% on a Year-over-Year (Y-o-Y) to **USD 1.9 billion**, down from USD 2.8 billion funding garnered in 2023.



- The report highlighted that this decline in fintech industry is mainly driven by a wider slowdown in demand and geopolitical headwinds.
- As per the report, the United States of America (USA) topped the ranking globally, followed by the United Kingdom (UK) which secured 2nd position.

Highlights of the Report:

i. The report highlighted that fintech sector received highest funding of **USD 805 million** during the 3rd quarter (Q3) of 2024, which was 61% higher than on a Year-over-Year (Y-o-Y) basis.

- In addition to it, 59% of the total funding in 2024 was garnered during the second half (H2) of the year.
- As per the report, August emerged as the most robust month for funding in 2024, contributing USD 434 million to total funding of USD 1.9 billion.



Top Investing Companies in Fintech Sector in 2024:

i. **Top 3 Indian cities which emerged as hub for fintech funding in 2024:** Bengaluru (Karnataka), Mumbai (Maharashtra) and Delhi (Delhi).

ii. **Top 3 Investing Companies:** Karnataka-based Peak XV Partners, LetsVenture Technologies Private Limited based in Bengaluru, Karnataka, and California (the United States of America, USA)-based Y Combinator, LLC.

iii. **Top 3 companies in Seed Investments:** Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Venture Catalysts Private Limited, Y Combinator LLC, and Singapore-based Antler.

iv. **Top 3 companies in Early-Stage Funding:** Gurugram (Haryana)-based Elevation Capital, Tokyo (Japan)-based GMO VenturePartners, Inc. and Peak XV Partners.

v. **Top 3 companies in Late-Stage Funding:** Karnataka-based Creaegis Investment Advisers Private Limited, USA-based The Rise Fund, and Amara Partners.

Unicorns and IPOs Emerged in 2024:

i. As per the report, Bengaluru (Karnataka)-based **Money View** and Fintech-focussed Software as a Service (SaaS) company, **Perfios** emerged as Unicorns in 2024 compared to single unicorn in 2023.

- This year, only 3 USD 100 million plus funding rounds recorded, registering a decrease of 50% from 6 such rounds in 2023. The notable deals in 2024 included DMI Finance raising USD 334 million funding led by Mitsubishi UFJ Financial Group (MUFG).

ii. The fintech sector recorded 8 Initial Public Offerings (IPOs) in 2024, which marks an increase of 300% compared to the 2 IPOs in 2023.

Key Findings of the Report:

ii. The report showed that Early-stage funding rounds registered a **16% decrease** Y-o-Y, from USD 667 million (in 2023) to USD 562 million (in 2024) and a 70% decline compared to USD 1.9 billion recorded in 2022.

- Also, Seed-stage funding saw a decline of 19% Y-o-Y, from USD 219 million (in 2023) to USD 178 million (in 2024) and 66% from USD 529 million in 2022.

iii. Mergers and Acquisition activity in India saw a marginal decrease of 16%, from 31 acquisitions recorded (in 2023) to 26 (in 2024).

iv. As per the report, Payment segment witnessed significant decrease of 77%, from USD 836 million (in 2023) and 81% decrease from USD 1.01 billion (in 2022) to USD 194 million (2024).

- Investment Tech Segment raised USD 320 million in funding in 2024, registering a decrease of 11% compared to USD 358 million secured in 2023.

v. The report showed that digital lending solutions received maximum funding in 2024, accounting 64% of the total funding raised during 2024.

About Tracxn Technologies Limited:

Managing Director (MD) and **Chairperson**- Neha Singh

Headquarters- Bengaluru, Karnataka

India-Nepal IGC on Trade, Transit, and Cooperation to Combat Unauthorised Trade Held in Kathmandu, Nepal

The India-Nepal Inter-Governmental Committee (IGC) on Trade, Transit, and Cooperation to Combat Unauthorised Trade was held from January 10 to January 11, 2025 in Kathmandu, Nepal. This meeting is a bilateral mechanism which aims at bolstering trade and ties between both countries.

- Both countries carried out a comprehensive review of the whole scenario of bilateral trade and economic relationship.



- They also reviewed mutual market access issues, Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and duty related issues.

Participants:

i. The Indian delegation was led by **Sunil Barthwal**, Secretary of Department of Commerce (DoC), Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I), which also included senior officials from various ministries and the Embassy of India in Nepal.

ii. **Gobinda Bahadar Karkee**, Secretary, Ministry of Industry, Commerce and Supplies, represented Nepal at the meeting. He was accompanied by representatives from various ministries and departments of the Government of Nepal.

Key Highlights of India-Nepal IGC:

i. The key issues which were discussed during the meeting: review of the Treaty of Transit and The Treaty of Trade, proposed amendments to existing agreements, synchronized development of trade infrastructure including, the electrification the **Raxaul (Bihar, India)-Birgunj (Kathmandu, Nepal) rail line**.

ii. India informed that the request of Nepal for supply of **2 lakh Metric Tonne (MT) Wheat** had been accepted by the Government of India (GoI).

iii. Also, at the request of Nepal, India may apply the existing regulations of Ministry of Road Transport and Highways (**MoRTH**) which include maximum axle weight of 18.5 tonnes for two axle vehicles and 28 tonnes for three axle vehicles to Nepali vehicles with respect to the cargo-in-transit on Kakarbhitta (Nepal)-Banglabandha (Bangladesh) via Phulbari (India) route.

iii. India has informed that Sal seeds and Chayote have been included in the Plant Quarantine of India.

- It has further accepted the request to include Jatamansi-Root extract; Sugandhkoka berry extracts; Sugandhwal Rhizome extract and Timur berry extracts into the list of Processed Items (Plant Products).

iv. Nepal expressed willingness to review the documentation regarding the reclassification of products like: EPAQUE and POLYHIDE 28 in their technical systems.

v. They also agreed to form a Joint Working Group (JWG) for discussion on the acceptance of Online Certificate of Origin (CoO) with Nepal and South Asian Free Trade Area (SAFTA).

vi. During the meeting, India raised concerns about the problems faced in milk exports to Nepal. Nepal agreed to consider the request of India for milk products not adequately produced in Nepal like: whey and cheese.

2nd Joint Business Forum:

i. On the sidelines of India-Nepal IGC, the 2nd edition of Joint Business Forum (JBF) was held between India and Nepal on January 11, 2025 in Kathmandu, Nepal.

- The forum was co-chaired by **N. Sethil Kumar**, Director of Pipelines, Planning & Business Development, Indian Oil Corporation (IOC) and Bhawani **Rana**, Member of Investment Board of Nepal.

ii. It was organised by Confederation of Indian Industries (CII) and Federation of Nepalese Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FNCCI).

iii. This forum provides a platform to both countries to explore business opportunities on both sides and highlight their suggestions to enhance ease of doing business in the context of bilateral trade and investment.

About Nepal:

Prime Minister (**PM**)- Khadga Prasad Sharma Oli

President – Ram Chandra Poudel

Capital- Kathmandu

Currency- Nepalese Rupee (NPR)

BANKING & FINANCE

IDBI Bank launches 'Chiranjeevi-Super Senior Citizen FD'

On January 13 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI) Limited launched the '**IDBI Chiranjeevi-Super Senior Citizen Fixed Deposit (FD)**' scheme. This special FD product is specifically designed for individuals aged 80 years and above, offering them higher interest rates to cater to their unique financial needs.



- The scheme provides a safe and secure investment option with guaranteed returns for super senior citizens.

Key Points:

i. The IDBI Chiranjeevi-Super Senior Citizen FD rates will remain valid only for the duration of the respective Utsav FD buckets (300 days, 375 days, 444 days, and 555 days).

Special FD Buckets & Interest Rates:

- 375 Days: 7.90% p.a. (per annum)
- 444 Days: 8.00% p.a.
- 555 Days: 8.05% p.a.
- 700 Days: 7.85% p.a.

ii. Not applicable to Non-Resident Ordinary (NRO) or Non-Resident External (NRE) term deposits.

iii. Premature withdrawal and closure are allowed but will incur a penalty of 1% on the applicable rate. All other terms and conditions of the FD will remain unchanged and applicable to this scheme as well.

Note:

i. IDBI Bank also offers Utsav Callable FD scheme, which has varied interest rates based on the tenure.

- A recent addition is the 555-day tenure offering 7.40% for general citizens and 7.90% for senior citizens which will be available until **March 31, 2025**.

About Industrial Development Bank of India (IDBI):

Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer (CEO) – Rakesh Sharma

Headquarters – Mumbai, Maharashtra

Established – July 01, 1964

Tagline – 'Banking for all, Aao Sochein Bada' & 'Bank Aisa Dost Jaisa'

PNB Launches 1st 'Cybersecurity Hackathon 2024-25' to Combat Malware Threats

On January 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based Punjab National Bank (PNB) launched its 1st-ever '**Cybersecurity Hackathon 2024-25**' with the theme "**Code Against Malware**". The hackathon aims to combat the increasing threat of malware by inviting innovators, researchers, and academicians from across India.

- The aim is to strengthen the nation's cybersecurity defence in the banking sector by developing state-of-the-art solutions to detect, mitigate & prevent malware attacks.

- This hackathon is being held under the Ministry of Finance (MoF) and in line with the Department of Financial Services (DFS) directive for Public Sector Banks (PSBs) to host annual hackathons issued on **December 9, 2024**.

i. The hackathon will focus on the key areas including Intelligence-powered malware detection & removal, Real-time threat monitoring & mitigation, Ransomware resilience solution & Next-generation antivirus tools and attack surface management.

ii. The competition is open to students, researchers, and academicians, either individually or in teams.

iii. Winners will receive prizes worth up to **Rs 11 lakhs** and have the opportunity to implement their solutions in live environments with PNB.

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

BHEL and ONGC Signed MoU to Collaborate on RE Projects

In January 2025, New Delhi (Delhi)-based Bharat Heavy Electronics Limited (**BHEL**), a leading Central Public Sector Enterprise (CPSE) under the Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI) and New Delhi -based 'Maharatna' CPSE, Oil & Natural Gas Corporation Limited (**ONGC**) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to explore collaboration in the area of New and Renewable Energy (NRE) sector.

i. As per the MoU, this strategic partnership will focus on key areas of NRE such as: fuel cell, electrolyser and battery energy storage system projects.

ii. Both Public Sector entities will leverage the combined strengths for promoting innovations in the clean energy ecosystem and will also support India's National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM).

- This partnership marks a significant step in aligning India's RE targets and promoting the adoption of clean energy solutions.

APSSDC Partners with Infosys to Bridge Skill Gaps in AP

In January 2025, The Andhra Pradesh State Skill Development Corporation (**APSSDC**) partnered with Bengaluru (Karnataka) based **Infosys Limited**, to enhance employment prospects and provide technical assistance for the Skill Census programme.

- The agreement was signed between the officials of the APSSDC and representatives of Infosys Limited in the presence of Nara Lokesh, Minister for Human Resource Development and Information Technology (IT), along with Kona Sashidhar, Secretary of APSSDC, and other senior officials from both APSSDC and Infosys.

Note: The skill census is a first-of-its-kind initiative of the AP government to assess the skill set and competencies of 35 million people in the state's working-age population.

i. As a part of the partnership, Infosys will develop a generative Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered digital platform to evaluate the skills of 3.59 crore individuals aged 15-59 years in AP. This platform will assess current skill levels, identify gaps, and provide tailored recommendations for further development.

ii. The Infosys **Springboard initiative** will offer free online courses, workshops, and learning pathways to support continuous skill development. Using advanced technology, it will enable transparent evaluations to track progress and align training with career goals.

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iii. As part of the skill census, Infosys will provide technical support at no cost, linking skill assessments to job opportunities.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

PV Sindhu appoints PUMA India as brand ambassador

On January 13 2025, Global sportswear brand **PUMA India** has officially partnered with two-time Olympic medalist Pusarla Venkata **(PV) Sindhu** in a multi-year collaboration as **brand ambassador**. The collaboration is aimed at utilizing the sport's popularity in India.

- This marks official entry of PUMA India into the badminton sector with PV Sindhu being the **first** badminton player to promote the German sportswear giant.

i. She is now a part of PUMA's exclusive list of athletes and icons, including cricketers Harmanpreet Kaur and Mohammed Shami, Olympian Sarabjot Singh, Paralympian Avani Lekhara, and international legends like Usain Bolt and Neymar Junior.

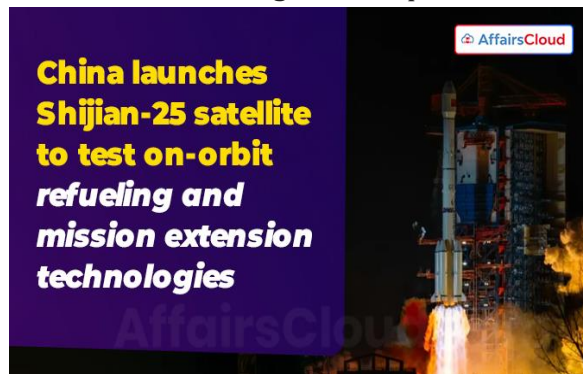
ii. PV Sindhu is the first Indian to win **five** badminton world championship medals and is victorious across the Olympics, Commonwealth Games and Asian Games.

- She has been awarded with the Major Dhyan Chand Khel Ratna(2016), the Padma Shri(2015), the Padma Bhushan(2020), and the Arjuna Award(2013) for her contributions in the field of sport.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

China launches 'Shijian-25' satellite to test orbital refueling in space

In January 2025, **China** successfully launched the '**Shijian-25**' satellite into Geostationary Transfer Orbit(GTO) aboard a **Long March 3B** rocket marking its first space mission of 2025.



- The launch took place from the **Xichang Satellite Launch Center** in southwest China. This launch marked China's first rocket launch in 2025 and the 555th mission of Long March series carrier rockets.
- The satellite is been developed by the Shanghai Academy of Spaceflight Technology (**SAST**), to conduct tests related to developing technologies for **in-orbit refueling** and extending the operational lifespan of satellites.



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Note: The Long March 3B rocket is one of the primary vehicles of China for launching payloads into GTO since its introduction in **1996**.

Key Highlights:

- i. The mission follows the **2021** launch of the **Shijian-21** space debris mitigation satellite which was also developed by SAST.
- ii. It will support China in enhancing sustainability and reduce costs in space operations.
 - The satellite is primarily used for the verification of satellite fuel replenishment and life extension service technologies.
- iii. The satellites feature sophisticated Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) technology, enabling high-resolution imagery and precise spatial data collection.

In addition to Shijian-25, China is going to conduct numerous other missions throughout 2025, including crewed missions to its **Tiangong space station** and the **Tianwen-2** asteroid sample return mission.

About China:

President– Xi Jinping

Capital– Beijing

Currency – Renminbi

SPORTS

Spanish Super Cup: FC Barcelona defeats Real Madrid to win 15th title

In January 2025, **Futbol Club(FC) Barcelona**, defeated **Real Madrid** by 5-2 to win the **41st** edition of **Spanish Super Cup** (also known as Supercopa de España) Clasico final held at the King Abdullah Sports City stadium in **Jeddah, Saudi Arabia**.

- The tournament was held from **8th** January to **12th** January 2025.
 - Barcelona has won the Spanish Cup for the **15th** time after this win which is two more than Real Madrid (13).
- i. The Supercopa de Espana 2025 has a prize money pool of **USD 20.7 million**.
- FC Barcelona and Real Madrid will receive USD 6.2 million while Athletic Bilbao will receive around USD 2.1 million and RCD Mallorca will get USD 880,150.
- ii. In addition to the prize money, the champions of the tournament will be rewarded with USD 2.1 million, and the runners-up with USD 1 million.

Note: FC Barcelona won their first Super Cup in **1983-84** – that has been followed by wins in 1991-92, 1992-93, 1994-95, 1996-97, 2005-06, 2006-07, 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12, 2013-14, 2016-17, 2018-19, 2022-23 and now 2024-25.

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OBITUARY

Senior Advocate Iqbal M Chagla passed away

In January 2025, **Iqbal M Chagla**, senior advocate and one of India's leading lawyer, passed away at the age of 85 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He was born on March 7 1939 in Mumbai.

- He was the son of M C Chagla, the **1st permanent** Chief Justice of India (CJI) of the Bombay High Court (BHC), Mumbai from 1948-58.

i. Iqbal Chagla was a distinguished Indian lawyer, known for his exceptional legal acumen, integrity, and leadership.

ii. He began his career as an advocate at the BHC, under the mentorship of Kharshedji Hormasji Bhabha. He was conferred as the Senior Advocate at the age of 39 in 1979.

iii. He served as the President of the Bombay Bar Association (BBA) for 3 times from 1990 to 1999.

- He also served as a Member of the Executive Committee of the Bar Association of India (BBI), as well as the National Legal Services Authority (NLSA), New Delhi (Delhi).

STATE NEWS

Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren Launches Maiyyaan Sampan Yojana

In January 2025, Jharkhand CM Hemant Soren launched the **enhanced 'Maiyan Samman Yojana'** in Namkum (Jharkhand) by transferring assistance for two months totalling Rs 5,000 each to the accounts of over 56.61 lakh women beneficiaries.

- Initially launched in **August 2024**, the scheme provided Rs 1,000 per month to women aged 18 to 50.

ii. From December 2024, the Government of Jharkhand enhanced the financial assistance to **Rs 2,500 per month**, offering stronger support to women beneficiaries.

iii. To be eligible for the scheme, the applicant must be a female and a resident of Jharkhand.

iv. The applicant must not have a spouse or herself employed in the Central/State Government, Public Sector Undertakings, (PSUs), local bodies, government-aided institutions, or receiving a pension.

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Current Static Banking	1	—	—	—
Current Static GK	2	1	—	—
Static Banking	—	—	—	—
Static GK	—	—	—	—
Total	45	38	29	16

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