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March 2025

NEWS COVERED

- Oscar Awards 2025
- Raisina Dialogue 2025
- Grammy Awards 2025
- PM Narendra Modi's Historic Visit to Mauritius
- IIFA Awards 2025
- 59th Jnanpith Award
- Sangita Kalanidhi award



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Most Important Current Affairs In March 2025

Oscars Awards 2025: Full List of the 97th Academy Awards Winners

The 97th Academy Awards are now underway at the Dolby Theatre in Los Angeles. The 97th Oscars hosted by Conan O'Brien with your own Oscars printable ballot.

Oscars Awards 2025: Full List of the 97th Academy Awards Winners

Category	Winners
Best Picture	Anora
Actor in a Leading Role	The Brutalist
Actor in a Supporting Role	Kieran Culkin, A Real Pain
Actress in a Leading Role	Mikey Madison, "Anora"
Actress in a Supporting Role	Zoe Saldana, Emilia Perez
Animated Feature Film	Flow
Animated Short Film	In the Shadow of the Cypress
Cinematography	Lol Crawley, "The Brutalist"
Costume Design	Wicked
Best Director	Sean Baker, "Anora"
Documentary Feature Film	No Other Land
Documentary Short Film	The Only Girl in the Orchestra
Film Editing	Anora, Sean Baker
International Feature Film	"I'm Still Here" (Brazil)
Makeup and Hairstyling	Pierre-Olivier Persin, Stéphanie Guillon and Marilyne Scarselli, "The Substance"
Music (Original Score)	Daniel Blumberg, "The Brutalist"
Music (Original Song)	"El Mal" from "Emilia Pérez"
Production Design	Nathan Crowley and Lee Sandales, "Wicked"
Live Action Short Film	I'm Not a Robot
Best Sound	Dune: Part Two
Visual Effects	Dune: Part Two
Writing (Adapted Screenplay)	Conclave
Writing (Original Screenplay)	Anora

Forbes India Leadership Awards 2025: Honoring Excellence and Innovation

Final Set of Awards: Celebrating Leadership Across Sectors

Award Category	Winner	Key Contribution
Emerging Innovator Award	BugWorks Research	Innovation in biotechnology
Outstanding Startup Award	BrowserStack	Revolutionizing software testing solutions
Icons of Excellence	Ajay Singh (SpiceJet)	Leadership in aviation sector
	Katrina Kaif (Kay Beauty)	Entrepreneurship in beauty industry
Icons of Excellence	Jay Shah (ICC)	Contributions to global cricket governance
	Shyam Srinivasan (Federal Bank)	Leadership in financial sector
	Mohit Joshi (Tech Mahindra)	Driving technological transformation
Promising Startup	Minimalist	Transparent and effective skincare solutions
Regional Goliath	MTR Foods	Authentic Indian cuisine and quality commitment
Grassroots Philanthropists	Rizwan & Rekha Koita (Koita Foundation)	Social impact in healthcare and education
Climate Warrior	Indra Water	Sustainable water treatment solutions
Turnaround Star	Indian Hotels Co. Ltd. (IHCL)	Revitalization of hospitality and service excellence
Next-Gen Entrepreneur	Varun Jaipuria (Varun Beverages)	Expansion in the beverage sector
Institution Builder	Ashish Dhawan (Central Square Foundation)	Contributions to education reform and policy-making
Entrepreneur of the Year	Supam Maheshwari (FirstCry)	Leadership in baby and kids' retail market
CEO of the Year	Rajesh Jejurikar (Mahindra & Mahindra)	Innovation in automobile sector and business expansion



Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025: Key Provisions, Impact and Significance

In a significant move to modernize India's immigration framework, Minister of State for Home Affairs, Nityanand Rai, introduced the **Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025** in the Parliament. The proposed bill aims to replace colonial-era laws with a more structured and stringent immigration system to enhance **national security, regulate foreign nationals, and introduce stricter penalties** for violations of entry and stay conditions.

Existing Laws to be Replaced

The bill proposes to repeal four existing laws that currently govern India's immigration and foreigner management system. These laws are:

- **The Passport (Entry into India) Act, 1920**
- **The Registration of Foreigners Act, 1939**
- **The Foreigners Act, 1946**
- **The Immigration (Carriers' Liability) Act, 2000**

The government justifies the introduction of this new bill by stating that it aims to remove overlapping provisions, ensure a **simplified legal framework**, and provide better control over foreign nationals in the country.

Key Provisions of the Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025

1. Entry Restrictions for Foreigners

The bill specifies that **any foreigner who poses a threat to national security, sovereignty, or the integrity of the nation will be denied entry** into India or will not be permitted to stay in the country. This provision reinforces India's stance on **tightening border security and immigration control**.

2. Mandatory Registration and Movement Restrictions

Under the new bill, foreign nationals will be required to register **upon arrival** in India. Additional regulations include:

- Restriction of **movement within India**, preventing access to **protected and restricted areas** without prior permission.
- Limiting **name changes and identity modifications**.
- **Educational institutions, hospitals, and nursing homes** will be obligated to **report foreign nationals' presence** to immigration authorities.

3. Stricter Penalties for Violations

The bill introduces **severe punishments** for foreigners who violate entry and stay conditions in India. The penalties include:

- **Illegal entry without a valid passport or visa:** Up to **5 years of imprisonment** and a **fine of ₹5 lakh**.
- **Usage of forged documents:** Jail term of **2 to 7 years**, with fines ranging from **₹1 lakh to ₹10 lakh**.
- **Overstaying or violating visa conditions:** Up to **3 years of imprisonment** and a **fine of ₹3 lakh**.
- **Trespassing in restricted areas:** Strict legal action, including detention and deportation.

4. Liability of Transport Carriers

The bill places significant responsibility on **transport carriers**, including **airlines, shipping companies, and other means of transportation**. Key provisions include:

- Carriers transporting foreigners **without valid documents** will be subject to a **fine of up to ₹5 lakh**.
- If a foreigner is denied entry into India, the carrier will be **responsible for their immediate removal**.
- Failure to comply could lead to **seizure of the transport vehicle** if penalties are not paid.

5. Powers of Immigration Officers

The bill enhances the authority of immigration officials by granting them the power to:

- **Arrest individuals without a warrant** if they are found violating immigration laws.
- Regulate the **movement and stay of foreigners**.
- **Restrict exit** from India if a foreigner's presence is required for investigation or security purposes.

6. Advance Passenger Data Requirement

To bolster security measures, airlines and vessels will be **required to share passenger and crew data** with immigration authorities before arrival in India. This provision aims to:

- Identify **potential security threats** in advance.
- Enable **real-time monitoring** of incoming and outgoing travelers.

Impact and Significance of the Immigration and Foreigners Bill, 2025

1. Strengthening National Security

The bill aligns with India's objective of ensuring **stronger border control and monitoring foreign nationals** to prevent **illegal immigration, espionage, and terrorism-related activities**.

2. Simplification and Modernization of Immigration Laws

By replacing four separate laws with a **comprehensive legal framework**, the government aims to remove legal ambiguities and create a **streamlined system** that is easier to implement and enforce.

3. Better Control Over Foreigners in India

Mandatory registration, stricter penalties, and movement restrictions will ensure that foreign nationals **comply with Indian laws** and do not pose a threat to **national security and public order**.

4. Increased Accountability of Transport Carriers

By holding airlines, shipping companies, and other carriers accountable, the bill seeks to **prevent human trafficking, illegal immigration, and visa violations**.

Statistics on Foreign Visitors to India

According to the latest government data, a total of **9,840,321 foreigners** visited India between **April 1, 2023, and March 31, 2024**. The new bill is expected to have a significant impact on the way India regulates and manages such large numbers of foreign nationals.



IIFA Awards 2025: Check Full List of Winners

The International Indian Film Academy Awards (IIFA) 2025 marked a spectacular silver jubilee edition, celebrating 25 years of honoring the best in Bollywood. Held in the majestic city of Jaipur, Rajasthan, the event was a glittering affair with the biggest stars of Indian cinema gracing the occasion. The two-day extravaganza, which took place on **March 8 and March 9, 2025**, witnessed breathtaking performances and unforgettable moments, culminating in the announcement of the most prestigious awards in Indian cinema.

The **biggest winner of the night** was Kiran Rao's "Laapataa Ladies," which swept 10 awards, establishing itself as the most celebrated film of the evening. Other notable winners included **Kartik Aaryan**, who won Best Actor, and the action thriller "**Kill**," which bagged multiple trophies. Let's take a detailed look at the full list of winners and key highlights of this year's IIFA Awards.

IIFA 2025 Full List of Winners

Best Film Categories

- **Best Picture:** Laapataa Ladies
- **Best Direction:** Kiran Rao (Laapataa Ladies)
- **Best Story (Original) In The Popular Category:** Biplob Goswami (Laapataa Ladies)
- **Best Story (Adapted):** Sriram Raghavan, Arijit Biswas, Pooja Ladha Surti, Anukriti Pandey (Merry Christmas)
- **Best Screenplay:** Sneha Desai (Laapataa Ladies)
- **Best Dialogue:** Arjun Dhawan, Aditya Dhar, Aditya Suhas Jambhale, Monal Thakkar (Article 370)

Acting Categories

- **Best Performance in a Leading Role (Male):** Kartik Aaryan (Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3)
- **Best Performance in a Leading Role (Female):** Nitanshi Goel (Laapataa Ladies)
- **Best Performance in a Supporting Role (Female):** Janki Bodiwala (Shaistaan)
- **Best Performance in a Supporting Role (Male):** Ravi Kishan (Laapataa Ladies)
- **Best Performance in a Negative Role:** Raghav Juyal (Kill)

Debut Categories

- **Best Directorial Debut:** Kunal Kemmu (Madgaon Express)
- **Best Debut (Male):** Lakshya Lalwani (Kill)
- **Best Debut (Female):** Pratibha Ranta (Laapataa Ladies)

Music and Technical Categories

- **Best Music Director:** Ram Sampath (Laapataa Ladies)
- **Best Lyrics:** Prashant Pandey (Sajni from Laapataa Ladies)
- **Best Singer (Male):** Jubin Nautiyal (Dua from Article 370)
- **Best Singer (Female):** Shreya Ghoshal (Ami Je Tomar 3.0 from Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3)

- **Best Choreography:** Bosco-Caesar (Tauba Tauba from Bad Newz)
- **Best Sound Design:** Subash Sahoo, Boloy Kumar Doloi, Rahul Karpe (Kill)
- **Best Editing:** Jabeen Merchant (Laapataa Ladies)
- **Best Cinematography:** Rafey Mahmood (Kill)
- **Best Special Effects:** Red Chillies VFX (Bhool Bhulaiyaa 3)

Lifetime Achievement and Special Honors

- **Outstanding Achievement in Indian Cinema:** Rakesh Roshan

Top 10 Largest Arms Importing Countries (2020–2024): SIPRI Report

The latest report from the **Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI)** has unveiled the **top 10 largest arms-importing countries from 2020 to 2024**. A key highlight of this report is the emergence of **Ukraine as the world's largest arms importer**, surpassing all other nations due to its ongoing war with Russia. Additionally, **India continues to be a dominant player**, ranking as the **second-largest arms importer** globally.

This period has witnessed a **significant increase in arms imports** across European nations, a trend largely influenced by geopolitical conflicts, particularly the **Russia-Ukraine war**. The global arms trade continues to be dominated by a few major suppliers, with the **United States leading in arms exports**.

Global Surge in Arms Imports

According to SIPRI, European countries have significantly increased their arms imports, with a staggering **155% rise** between **2020-2024** compared to the previous period (**2015-2019**). This surge is primarily driven by the **Russia-Ukraine war**, prompting nations to bolster their defense capabilities.

Prior to **2022**, Ukraine imported very few major arms, but the war with Russia, which began in **February 2022**, led to a **massive spike in arms imports in 2023 and 2024**. At least **35 countries** have supplied major arms to Ukraine as part of military aid, solidifying its position as the **world's top arms importer**.



The World's Largest Arms Importers (2020-2024)

The report identifies the **top five largest arms importers**, which together account for **35% of global arms imports** among **162 nations** classified by SIPRI.

Top 10 Arms Importing Countries (2020-2024)

Rank	Country	Share of Global Arms Imports (2020-24)	Top 3 Supplier Countries
1	Ukraine	8.8%	USA, Germany, Poland
2	India	8.3%	Russia, France, Israel
3	Qatar	6.8%	USA, Italy, UK
4	Saudi Arabia	6.8%	USA, Spain, France
5	Pakistan	4.6%	China, Netherlands, Türkiye
6	Japan	3.9%	USA, UK, Germany
7	Australia	3.5%	USA, Spain, Norway
8	Egypt	3.3%	Germany, Italy, France
9	United States	3.1%	UK, France, Israel
10	Kuwait	2.9%	USA, Italy, France

Key Observations

- Ukraine emerged as the **largest arms importer** due to the **Russia-Ukraine war**.
- India, despite being the **second-largest importer**, has witnessed a **decline in arms imports**.
- European countries** saw a **155% increase** in arms imports, driven by security concerns.
- The **United States** remains the dominant supplier, with **Russia, France, and China** playing significant roles in global arms trade.

India: The Second-Largest Arms Importer

India's Share in Global Arms Imports

India accounted for **8.3% of total global arms imports** between **2020 and 2024**, making it the **second-largest importer** after Ukraine. However, this marks a **9.3% decline** compared to the **2015-2019** period. This decline is attributed to India's efforts to **reduce dependency on foreign weapons** by focusing on **domestic defense manufacturing**.

Key Suppliers to India

India's top three arms suppliers during this period were:

- Russia** – Constituting **36% of India's total arms imports**.
- France** – Increasingly becoming a key defense supplier.
- Israel** – Strengthening defense ties with India.

Additionally, **India has been diversifying its sources** by engaging with **Western nations like the USA** to ensure strategic independence and reduce reliance on a single country.

India's Shift Towards Self-Reliance in Defense

The decline in India's arms imports is **not due to a reduction in defense needs** but rather a reflection of its **growing indigenous defense manufacturing capabilities**. The Indian government has introduced initiatives such as:

- 'Make in India'** and **'Atmanirbhar Bharat'** (Self-Reliant India) initiatives.
- Defense Procurement Policy (DPP)** reforms to encourage local production.
- Increased investment in domestic defense technology** to reduce dependence on imports.

These efforts have led to India **manufacturing its own fighter jets, missiles, and naval warships**, decreasing reliance on foreign suppliers.

Global Trends in Arms Imports

Geopolitical Factors Influencing Arms Trade

Several key geopolitical factors have shaped the **global arms trade from 2020 to 2024**:

- Russia-Ukraine War (2022-Present)**: The conflict has driven Ukraine's demand for weapons, with **Western nations** supplying arms in large numbers.
- China's Growing Influence in Asia**: Countries like **India, Japan, and Australia** are strengthening their military capabilities to counterbalance **China's military expansion**.
- Middle East Conflicts**: Nations like **Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Kuwait** remain key importers due to **regional security concerns**.
- European Military Buildup**: Rising tensions with Russia have led to **increased defense spending** in Europe.

PM Narendra Modi's Historic Visit to Mauritius

Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** embarked on a **two-day state visit to Mauritius on March 11, 2025**, reinforcing India's long-standing ties with the island nation. During his visit, PM Modi participated in various diplomatic, cultural, and economic engagements, highlighting the **deep-rooted relationship** between the two countries. His visit was marked by significant announcements, including the **Overseas Citizen of India (OCI) cards** for Mauritian leaders, the **inauguration of over 20 India-funded projects**, and receiving **Mauritius' highest civilian honor, The Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean**.



Mauritius: A Bridge Between India and the Global South

During his address, PM Modi emphasized Mauritius' role as a bridge between India and the Global South, reaffirming the strong historical and cultural ties that unite the two nations. He stated that Mauritius is not just a partner country but a vital part of India's extended family. His visit reflected India's commitment to strengthening diplomatic, economic, and cultural ties with Mauritius.

Ceremonial Welcome and State Visit Highlights

PM Modi commenced his visit with a ceremonial welcome in Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius. His itinerary included:

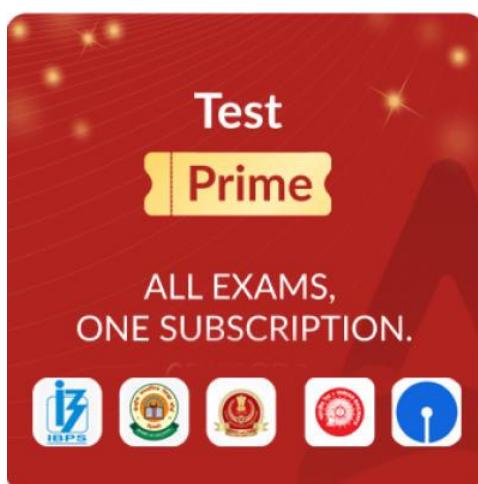
- A sapling planting ceremony at the Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam Botanical Garden alongside Mauritian Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam.
- Paying homage at the Samadhi of Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, the founding father of Mauritius.
- Paying tribute at the Samadhi of Anerood Jugnauth, former President and Prime Minister of Mauritius.
- Meeting with Mauritius' President Dharam Gokhool, where he gifted Gangajal from the Maha Kumbh as a token of India's spiritual heritage.

PM Modi Conferred with Mauritius' Highest Civilian Honour

The Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean

In a historic moment, PM Modi became the first Indian to receive Mauritius' highest civilian honor, The Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean. This marks the 21st international award conferred upon him by a foreign nation.

Mauritius' Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam stated that PM Modi is only the fifth foreign national to receive this distinguished honor. In his acceptance speech, PM Modi dedicated the honor to the strong Indo-Mauritian bond, saying, "This is not just an individual honor but a tribute to the historic relationship between our nations."



OCI Cards for Mauritius PM and Key Leaders

Strengthening India's Diaspora Ties

In a special gesture, PM Modi announced the issuance of OCI (Overseas Citizen of India) cards to Mauritius' Prime Minister Navin Ramgoolam and his spouse Veena Ramgoolam. This was part of India's continued commitment to fostering strong ties with the Indian diaspora in Mauritius.

Earlier in the day, OCI cards were also presented to President Dharam Gokhool and First Lady Brinda Gokhool. The OCI status grants lifelong visa-free travel, residency, and work rights in India, further strengthening Mauritius' historical connection to India.

PM Modi Attends Mauritius National Day Celebrations

As the Chief Guest at Mauritius' National Day celebrations, PM Modi reaffirmed India's strong diplomatic and cultural ties with the island nation. During a special lunch hosted by President Gokhool, PM Modi expressed his appreciation for Mauritius' warm hospitality and shared heritage.

In his speech, he highlighted the cultural bonds between the two nations, stating:

- "The Mauritian platter reflects the country's diverse social fabric, carrying the sweetness of our friendship."
- "This occasion is not just about celebration but a reaffirmation of our deep-rooted ties."

PM Modi extended his best wishes for the prosperity and well-being of the people of Mauritius and emphasized India's continued commitment to strengthening bilateral relations.

Cultural and Traditional Engagements

Paying Tribute to Mauritius' Leaders

PM Modi paid respects to the founding father of Mauritius, Sir Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, and former PM Anerood Jugnauth by laying wreaths at their Samadhis. These tributes underscored India's historical respect and admiration for Mauritius' national leaders.

Traditional Bhojpuri Performance: Geet Gawai

PM Modi received a warm welcome from the Indian diaspora in Mauritius. Women from the community honored him through a traditional Bhojpuri performance called Geet Gawai, which was recognized by UNESCO as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity in 2016.

PM Modi's Gifts to Mauritius Leaders

As a symbol of India's cultural and agricultural wealth, PM Modi presented unique gifts to Mauritius' leadership:

- Gangajal from the Maha Kumbh (to President Dharam Gokhool).
- Makhana (superfood from Bihar) (to Mauritius' President).
- Banarasi saree in a Sadeli box (to First Lady Brinda Gokhool).

These gifts were a reflection of India's traditional craftsmanship and spiritual heritage.



Inauguration of India-Funded Projects in Mauritius
 PM Modi also focused on **economic and infrastructural collaborations** by **inaugurating over 20 India-funded projects**. These included:

- **Civil Services College Building** (constructed at a cost of **\$4.75 million**).
- **Area Health Centre and 20 Community Projects** (costing approximately **₹7 crores**).
- **Sports and community-linked infrastructure projects**, strengthening local development initiatives.

Additionally, **PM Modi announced new major infrastructure projects** aimed at **democracy enhancement** and **capacity-building** in Mauritius.

What is Raisina Dialogue 2025?

The **Raisina Dialogue** is India's premier conference on **geopolitics and geo-economics**, dedicated to addressing some of the most pressing global challenges. Hosted annually in **New Delhi**, this dialogue brings together world leaders, policymakers, industry experts, and scholars to engage in discussions shaping the international order.

The **10th edition of the Raisina Dialogue** is set to take place from **March 17 to March 19, 2025**. This milestone event will once again serve as a critical platform for fostering dialogue and cooperation among nations, highlighting India's pivotal role in global affairs.

Inauguration and Keynote Address

Prime Minister **Shri Narendra Modi** will inaugurate the dialogue on **March 17, 2025**. The **Prime Minister of New Zealand, The Right Honourable Christopher Luxon**, will be the **Chief Guest** and will deliver the **keynote address**. His presence underscores the strengthening of bilateral ties between India and New Zealand and the broader commitment to international dialogue on pressing global issues.

Global Participation: 125 Countries Unite

The Raisina Dialogue 2025 will witness an impressive gathering of participants from around **125 countries**, including:

- **Ministers and Diplomats**
- **Former Heads of State and Government Leaders**
- **Military Commanders**
- **Business and Industry Leaders**
- **Technology Pioneers**
- **Academics and Researchers**
- **Journalists and Strategic Affairs Experts**
- **Representatives from Think Tanks and Civil Society**
- **Youth Delegates from Across the World**

With such a diverse and dynamic mix of attendees, the dialogue will be instrumental in shaping conversations around contemporary geopolitical challenges and economic transitions.

Theme for 2025: "Kālachakra – People, Peace and Planet"
 The central theme for Raisina Dialogue 2025 is "**Kālachakra – People, Peace and Planet**." This theme encapsulates the essence of global interconnectedness, emphasizing the need for sustainable solutions, inclusive development, and strategic foresight in policymaking.

Key Thematic Pillars

The discussions will be structured around **six thematic pillars**, each addressing critical issues that shape international relations and global governance:

1. Politics Interrupted: Shifting Sands and Rising Tides

This theme will delve into the evolving **geopolitical landscape**, focusing on the disruptions in global power dynamics, the rise of multipolarity, and the impact of shifting alliances on world politics.

2. Resolving the Green Trilemma: Who, Where, & How

Addressing the urgent need for **climate action**, this pillar will focus on the trade-offs between economic growth, environmental sustainability, and energy security. Experts will discuss innovative solutions for achieving carbon neutrality and fostering green investments.

3. Digital Planet: Agents, Agencies, and Absences

With the world increasingly reliant on **digital technologies**, discussions under this pillar will explore the role of **artificial intelligence, cybersecurity, digital governance, and data privacy** in shaping the global digital economy.

4. Militant Mercantilism: Trade, Supply Chains & the Exchange Rate Addiction

This segment will analyze the challenges posed by **protectionist policies, disrupted supply chains, and fluctuating exchange rates**, shedding light on how nations can navigate the complexities of global trade and economic resilience.

5. The Tiger's Tale: Rewriting Development with a New Plan

Focusing on emerging economies, this theme will explore **new development models**, strategies for economic growth, and the role of international institutions in fostering equitable progress.

6. Investing in Peace: Drivers, Institutions, & Leadership

Amid rising geopolitical tensions, this pillar will examine the mechanisms required for **conflict resolution, peacebuilding, and global security cooperation**. Discussions will also highlight the role of **multilateral organizations** in maintaining peace and stability.

Scale of Participation and Global Outreach

Over **3,500 participants** from around **125 countries** will join the Raisina Dialogue **in person**, making it one of the largest diplomatic gatherings in India. Additionally, millions of viewers across the world will be able to engage with the event through **digital platforms**, ensuring widespread reach and impact.



Significance of the Raisina Dialogue 2025

1. Strengthening India's Role in Global Affairs

As a key global player, India's leadership in hosting the Raisina Dialogue reflects its commitment to shaping **international policy discourse** and fostering diplomatic engagement.

2. Driving Strategic and Economic Partnerships

The presence of policymakers and business leaders provides an excellent opportunity for fostering **bilateral and multilateral partnerships**, particularly in areas like trade, defense, climate action, and digital governance.

3. A Platform for Young Leaders and Think Tanks

The event also serves as a knowledge-sharing platform for **academics, researchers, and young leaders**, fostering innovation and thought leadership in global governance.

India – New Zealand Announce Launch of FTA Negotiations

India and New Zealand have officially **launched negotiations for a "comprehensive and mutually beneficial" Free Trade Agreement (FTA)**, marking a significant step in their bilateral relations. This will be India's second FTA in the Oceania region, after the India-Australia Economic Cooperation and Trade Agreement (ECTA), signed in April 2022. The FTA aims to enhance supply chain integration, expand market access, and foster economic resilience and prosperity for both nations.

Key Highlights

Official Announcement

- The FTA negotiations were announced during a meeting between Indian Commerce Minister Piyush Goyal and New Zealand Trade Minister Todd McClay on March 16, 2025, in New Delhi.

Strategic Timing

- The announcement came ahead of the bilateral meeting between Indian PM Narendra Modi and New Zealand PM Christopher Luxon, who arrived in India for his first official visit.

Current Trade Scenario

- Bilateral trade crossed \$1 billion between April 2024 and January 2025.
- India's exports to New Zealand in 2023-24 were \$538 million, while imports stood at \$335 million, with a \$203 million trade surplus in India's favor.
- In 2024-25 (up to December 31), exports grew by 21.49% to \$496 million, while imports surged by 78.72% to \$463 million, narrowing the trade gap to \$33 million.

Key Imports & Exports

- India imports from New Zealand: Wool, iron & steel, fruits & nuts, aluminum.
- India exports to New Zealand: Pharmaceuticals, machinery, textiles, pearls, precious stones, and metals.

Indian Business Presence in New Zealand

- IT giants like HCL, Infosys, and Tech Mahindra have established operations.
- Bank of India, Bank of Baroda, and New India Assurance also operate in the country.

Objective of FTA

- Achieve balanced trade outcomes.
- Strengthen supply chain integration.
- Expand market access for businesses and consumers.
- Foster economic resilience and prosperity.

Hockey India Awards 2024: Check Complete List of Winners

The **Hockey India Annual Awards 2024** was a grand event that recognized and honoured the finest talents in Indian hockey. Held in **New Delhi**, the prestigious awards ceremony was a momentous occasion as it coincided with the **centenary of Indian hockey** and the **golden jubilee of India's 1975 Men's Hockey World Cup victory**.

The event was marked by the celebration of outstanding performances from Indian players, acknowledging their dedication and contribution to the sport. The top honors at the event were claimed by **Harmanpreet Singh** and **Savita Punia**, both of whom were awarded the **Balbir Singh Sr Award for Player of the Year** in the men's and women's categories, respectively.

Complete List of Hockey India Awards 2024 Winners

- Hockey India Baljit Singh Award for Goalkeeper of the Year: **Savita Punia**
- Hockey India Pargat Singh Award for Defender of the Year: **Amit Rohidas**
- Hockey India Ajit Pal Singh Award for Midfielder of the Year: **Hardik Singh**
- Hockey India Dhanraj Pillay Award for Forward of the Year: **Abhishek**
- Hockey India Asunta Lakra Award for Upcoming Player of the Year (Women – Under 21): **Deepika**
- Hockey India Jugraj Singh Award for Upcoming Player of the Year (Men – Under 21): **Arajeet Singh Hundal**
- Hockey India Balbir Singh Sr Award for Player of The Year (Women): **Savita Punia**
- Hockey India Balbir Singh Sr Award for Player of The Year (Men): **Harmanpreet Singh**
- Hockey India Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award: **1975 World Cup Winning Team**

Honoring the Legacy: The 1975 World Cup Winning Team

This year's Hockey India Awards held special significance as it marked the **50th anniversary of India's historic 1975 Men's Hockey World Cup win**. In a heartfelt tribute, the members of the victorious squad were conferred the **Major Dhyan Chand Lifetime Achievement Award**.



The event saw the presence of legendary players from the 1975 team, including **Leslie Fernandez, Onkar Singh, Ashok Diwan, BP Govinda, Kaliah PE, Brigadier HJS Chimni, VJ Phillips, Ashok Kumar, Aslam Sher Khan, and Brigadier Harcharan Singh**. Their contribution to Indian hockey remains unparalleled, and the award was a fitting tribute to their glorious victory.

India-New Zealand Bilateral Relations: Key Outcomes of PM Christopher Luxon's Visit

Prime Minister of New Zealand, Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, visited India from March 16-20, 2025, at the invitation of Prime Minister Narendra Modi. This was his first official visit to India in his current capacity. During his visit, he engaged in bilateral talks with PM Modi, participated in the 10th edition of the Raisina Dialogue as the Chief Guest, and met with President Droupadi Murmu. **The visit aimed to strengthen bilateral ties across multiple sectors, including trade, investment, defence, education, and multilateral cooperation.** Both leaders reiterated their commitment to enhancing people-to-people ties, maritime security, climate action, and regional stability in the Indo-Pacific.

Key Highlights of the Visit

Diplomatic and Strategic Engagements

- PM Luxon received a warm and traditional welcome in New Delhi.
- He laid a wreath at Raj Ghat in honor of Mahatma Gandhi.
- PM Modi and PM Luxon held bilateral talks, reaffirming shared democratic values and strengthening cooperation in trade, security, education, and technology.
- PM Luxon was the Chief Guest at the 10th Raisina Dialogue, delivering the Inaugural Keynote Address.
- Both leaders emphasized strengthening multilateral cooperation and ensuring a stable Indo-Pacific region.

Economic & Trade Cooperation

- Both sides welcomed sustained trade and investment flows and encouraged business collaborations.
- The launch of Free Trade Agreement (FTA) negotiations was announced to enhance economic ties.
- Discussions initiated on digital payments cooperation within the FTA framework.
- The Authorized Economic Operators Mutual Recognition Arrangement (AEO-MRA) was signed to facilitate trade.
- New cooperation on horticulture and forestry was established through MOUs and Letters of Intent.
- Tourism and aviation ties were strengthened, with an update to the Air Services Agreement and plans for direct flight operations.

Defence and Security Cooperation

- Defence cooperation was expanded with the signing of the India-New Zealand MoU on Defence Cooperation.
- Increased participation in military exercises, officer exchanges, and naval port calls.
- New Zealand welcomed India's participation in the Combined Maritime Forces (CMF).
- Both sides agreed on regular dialogue for maritime safety and security.
- New Zealand expressed interest in joining India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative (IPOI).
- Cooperation on the National Maritime Heritage Complex (NMHC) in Gujarat was discussed.

Science, Technology & Disaster Management

- Strengthened partnerships in research, technology, and innovation.
- Focus on low-emission climate-resilient economies and India's leadership in the International Solar Alliance (ISA).
- New Zealand joined the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI).
- Progress towards a Memorandum of Cooperation on earthquake mitigation.

Education, Mobility & Cultural Exchange

- Expansion of education partnerships and opportunities for Indian students in New Zealand.
- Discussions on mobility arrangements for professionals and skilled workers.
- Signing of a refreshed Education Cooperation Arrangement.
- Signing of a Memorandum of Cooperation on Sports, marking 100 years of sporting ties.
- Promotion of traditional medicine and increased cooperation in yoga, music, dance, and festivals.

Regional & Multilateral Cooperation

- Both sides emphasized an open, inclusive, and stable Indo-Pacific region.
- New Zealand endorsed India's bid for permanent membership in the United Nations Security Council (UNSC).
- Joint commitment to counterterrorism and disrupting terrorist financing networks.
- Support for a two-state solution for Israel-Palestine peace and a negotiated settlement for the Ukraine war.

Ramnath Goenka Awards for Excellence in Journalism 2025

The Ramnath Goenka Excellence in Journalism Awards were presented by President Droupadi Murmu to honor outstanding contributions to Indian journalism. The awards recognize journalists who uphold the values of truth, integrity, and fearless reporting. In her speech, President Murmu highlighted the importance of journalism in sustaining democracy and acknowledged Ramnath Goenka's legacy in defending press freedom, particularly during the Emergency. She emphasized the need for ground reporting, research-based journalism, and the role of human values in combating challenges posed by AI and misinformation.



Summary Table of Award Winners

Category	Winner & Publication
Hindi (Print/Digital)	Mridulika Jha (Aaj Tak) – Reported on the Dunki route migration crisis.
Regional Languages (Print/Digital)	Jisha Elizabeth (Madhyamam) – Exposed human trafficking of Indian youth to Myanmar.
Environment, Science & Tech	Sibu Kumar Tripathi (India Today) – Covered the Joshimath sinking crisis.
Uncovering India Invisible	Satyasundar Barik (The Hindu) – Reports on migration and missing daughters in Odisha.
Business & Economic Journalism	Twesh Mishra (Economic Times) – Investigated subsidy fraud in India's EV manufacturing sector.
Politics & Government	Maitri Porecha (The Hindu) – Covered Balasore train tragedy and its aftermath.
Sports Journalism	Shahab Ali & Amarnath Kashyap (Hindustan) – Exposed poor conditions in gold medallist Asha Kiran Barla's village.
Investigative Reporting	Nihal AP Koshie, Mahender Singh Manral & Mihir Vasavda (Indian Express) – Exposed sexual harassment in India's wrestling federation.
Feature Writing	Shubhajit Roy (Indian Express) – Ground reports from Israel-Palestine conflict zones.
Foreign Correspondent (India)	Nilesh Christopher (Rest of World) – Covered the impact of AI and manufacturing shifts in India.
Civic Journalism	Jeet Mashru & Somita Pal (Hindustan Times) – Investigated BMC hospital shortages, leading to a policy change.
Photo Journalism	P. Ravikumar (New Indian Express) – Captured oil spill devastation in Chennai.
Books (Non-Fiction)	A.R. Venkatachalapathy (Penguin) – Wrote about V.O. Chidambaram Pillai's fight against British rule.
Hindi (Broadcast/Digital)	Siddhant Mohan (Lallantop) – Investigated the real Kerala story, countering film narratives.
Regional Languages (Broadcast)	Mandar Gonjari (ABP Majha) – Exposed an underworld running a synthetic drug racket from Pune hospital.
Environment, Science & Tech (Broadcast/Digital)	Joel Michael & Rohini Krishnamurthy (Down To Earth) – Covered Ludhiana's industrial gas leak deaths.

Category	Winner & Publication
Uncovering India Invisible (Broadcast/Digital)	Vishnukant Tiwari & Athar Rather (The Quint) – Investigated witch-hunting violence in Jharkhand.
Politics & Government (Broadcast)	Ashutosh Mishra (India Today TV) – Ground reports on ethnic violence in Manipur.
Sports Journalism (Broadcast/Digital)	Tejas Vaidya & Enakshi Rajvanshi (BBC Hindi) – Covered disabled women cricketers in Gujarat.
Investigative Reporting (Broadcast)	Anurag Dwary (NDTV) – Exposed medical college scams in Madhya Pradesh.

Government Notifies Revisions to MSME Investment and Turnover Criteria: Effective April 1, 2025

The Government of India has announced a major revision in the investment and turnover criteria for the classification of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs). The changes, which will take effect from April 1, 2025, are aimed at enhancing business opportunities and providing greater financial flexibility to MSMEs. Under the revised criteria, investment limits have been increased by 2.5 times, and turnover limits have been doubled, as per the announcement made by Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman during the Union Budget 2025. These revisions will allow larger businesses to qualify as MSMEs, facilitating better access to credit, government incentives, and support schemes.

Key Highlights
Revised MSME Classification

- Effective Date:** April 1, 2025.
- Purpose:** To facilitate greater ease of doing business, expand eligibility for MSME benefits, and enhance the growth potential of enterprises.
- Increased Investment and Turnover Limits:** The government has raised investment and turnover limits for micro, small, and medium enterprises, allowing more businesses to qualify as MSMEs.

Revised MSME Classification Criteria
1. Micro Enterprises

- Previous Investment Limit:** ₹1 crore → Revised Limit: ₹2.5 crore.
- Previous Turnover Limit:** ₹5 crore → Revised Limit: ₹10 crore.

2. Small Enterprises

- Previous Investment Limit:** ₹10 crore → Revised Limit: ₹25 crore.
- Previous Turnover Limit:** ₹50 crore → Revised Limit: ₹100 crore.



3. Medium Enterprises

- **Previous Investment Limit:** ₹50 crore → Revised Limit: ₹125 crore.
- **Previous Turnover Limit:** ₹250 crore → Revised Limit: ₹500 crore.

Implications of the Revised Criteria

- **Broader MSME Coverage:** More businesses will qualify as MSMEs, increasing access to credit facilities and government incentives.
- **Enhanced Growth Opportunities:** Enterprises can now scale up operations without losing MSME status, promoting higher investment and innovation.
- **Increased Global Competitiveness:** Higher turnover limits allow MSMEs to expand their market reach and compete internationally.
- **Boost to Employment and Economic Growth:** The expansion of MSME criteria is expected to generate new jobs and contribute to India's GDP growth.

Delhi Budget 2025-26: Rekha Gupta Unveils Rs 1 Lakh Crore Budget with Focus on Infrastructure, Welfare & Economic Growth

Delhi Chief Minister and Finance Minister **Rekha Gupta** presented the **Delhi Budget 2025-26**, with a record allocation of **Rs 1 lakh crore**. The budget emphasizes **infrastructure development, social welfare, healthcare, education, and economic growth**. It marks a **31.5% increase** from the previous year's budget and aims to bring **transparency, efficiency, and rapid development** to the capital.

Introduction: A Historic Budget for Delhi
Rekha Gupta described this as a "**historic Budget**", aiming to accelerate Delhi's transformation through **increased capital expenditure and public welfare schemes**. She criticized the past administration for **corruption and mismanagement** and vowed to implement projects with efficiency.

The budget sees a **major boost in capital expenditure**, with an allocation of **Rs 28,000 crore**, double the previous year's spending, focusing on roads, water supply, and sewer systems.

Key Focus Areas of Delhi Budget 2025-26**1. Infrastructure Development & Urban Planning**

- **Rs 28,000 crore** for infrastructure projects, **doubling** last year's investment.
- Roads, **sewer systems**, and **clean water supply** to be prioritized.
- **Rs 500 crore** for the repair and **upgradation of sewage treatment plants (STPs)**.
- **Rs 250 crore** for replacing old **sewer lines**.
- **Rs 100 crore** for a pilot project to **remove overhead electrical lines** and shift **high-tension power lines underground**.

2. Transport Connectivity & Public Services

- **Rs 12,952 crore** allocated for **transport development**.
- **Rs 1,000 crore** to enhance **Delhi-NCR transport connectivity**.
- Replacement of **pink tickets** for free bus rides for women with **smart cards** to prevent misuse.

3. Social Welfare Initiatives

- **Rs 5,100 crore** allocated for **monthly financial aid** of **Rs 2,500** to eligible women.
- **Free laptops** for **1,200 Class X students**, with an allocation of **Rs 750 crore**.
- Establishment of **modern cow shelters** in **Ghummanhera** at a cost of **Rs 40 crore**.

4. Healthcare & Sanitation

- **Rs 2,144 crore** for **Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana (PMJAY)** to improve **medical services**.
- **Rs 9,000 crore** for **clean drinking water and sanitation services**.

5. Education & Skill Development

- Launch of new **CM Shri Schools** with **Rs 100 crore** allocated.
- **Free laptops** for meritorious students passing Class X.

6. Economic Growth & Business Support

- Formation of a "**Traders' Welfare Board**" to support businesses and traders.
- '**Global Investment Summit**' to be held **every two years** to attract investors.

7. Environmental & Pollution Control Measures

- **Rs 300 crore** to tackle **pollution control**.
- **Rs 506 crore** for the **environment and forest department**.

8. Municipal Corporation Support

- **Rs 6,897 crore** allocated to the **Municipal Corporation of Delhi (MCD)** for urban development.

9. Cultural & Tourism Promotion

- Hosting of '**International Film Festival**' with **Rs 30 crore** allocated.

RBI Revise Priority Sector Lending (PSL) Norms Effective April 1, 2025

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has issued revised **Priority Sector Lending (PSL)** guidelines, which will come into effect from April 1, 2025. The new norms aim to enhance credit accessibility to priority sectors, including **agriculture, MSMEs, renewable energy, housing, education, and social infrastructure**. These revisions introduce higher loan limits, expand the 'Weaker Sections' category, and revise the PSL targets for urban cooperative banks (UCBs). The changes are designed to boost financial inclusion and promote economic growth in critical areas.



Key Highlights of RBI's Revised PSL Guidelines

1. Enhancement of Loan Limits

- Education Loans:** Increased limit to ₹25 lakh per individual (including vocational courses).
- Social Infrastructure:** Up to ₹8 crore per borrower for setting up schools, drinking water facilities, etc.
- Housing Loans (Priority sector classification based on population size):
 - ₹50 lakh – Centers with a population of 50 lakh and above.
 - ₹45 lakh – Centers with a population between 10 lakh and 50 lakh.
 - ₹35 lakh – Centers with a population below 10 lakh.

2. Focus on Renewable Energy

- Loans up to ₹35 crore for renewable energy-based power generators and public utilities (e.g., street lighting systems, remote village electrification).
- Loan limit for individual households: ₹10 lakh per borrower.

3. Revised PSL Targets for Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs)

- Total PSL target:** 60% of Adjusted Net Bank Credit (ANBC) or Credit Equivalent of Off-Balance Sheet Exposures (CEOBS).
- Micro Enterprises:** 7.5% of ANBC.
- Advances to Weaker Sections:** 12% of ANBC.

4. Expansion of the 'Weaker Sections' Category

The revised definition now includes transgenders, in addition to,

- Small & Marginal Farmers.
- Distressed farmers indebted to non-institutional lenders.
- Artisans.
- Individual members of SHGs (Self-Help Groups) or Joint Liability Groups (JLGs).
- Scheduled Castes (SC) & Scheduled Tribes (ST).
- Persons with disabilities.
- Minority communities notified by the Government of India.
- Individual women beneficiaries up to ₹2 lakh (The limit is not applicable to UCBs).



Lok Sabha Passes Finance Bill 2025: Key Highlights and Implications

On Tuesday, March 25, 2025, the Lok Sabha passed the Finance Bill 2025 along with 35 government amendments. One of the key amendments includes the abolition of the six per cent digital tax on online advertisements. The passage of the Finance Bill 2025 marks the completion of the Budgetary approval process in the Lower House. Now, the bill moves to the Rajya Sabha for further consideration, after which the Budget process for FY 2025-26 will be formally concluded.

Finance Bill 2025 and Budgetary Overview

The Union Budget 2025-26 outlines a total expenditure of ₹50.65 lakh crore, reflecting a 7.4 per cent increase over FY 2024-25. The government has proposed a capital expenditure of ₹11.22 lakh crore, with an effective capital expenditure of ₹15.48 lakh crore. The projected gross tax revenue collection stands at ₹42.70 lakh crore, while the estimated gross borrowing is ₹14.01 lakh crore.

Key Announcements in Finance Bill 2025

Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman highlighted that the Finance Bill 2025 aligns with India's vision for **Viksit Bharat by 2047** and ensures **tax certainty**. She emphasized the following objectives:

- Rationalization of tax provisions to enhance ease of doing business.
- Unprecedented tax relief measures for individuals and businesses.
- A strong focus on increasing tax mobilization from individuals with foreign assets.

According to budget documents, the allocation for Centrally Sponsored Schemes for FY 2025-26 is ₹5,41,850.21 crore, a substantial increase from ₹4,15,356.25 crore in FY 2024-25. Similarly, Central Sector Schemes will receive ₹16.29 lakh crore compared to ₹15.13 lakh crore in the previous fiscal year.

Budget Estimates for FY 2025-26

The budget estimates have been revised upwards due to several economic and strategic factors:

- Rise in interest payments on market loans, treasury bills, external loans, and provident funds.
- Increased capital expenditure for the Armed Forces.
- Provisions for employment generation schemes.

State Allocations and Fiscal Deficit

The total resource transfer to states in Budget 2025-26, including state share devolution, grants/loans, and Centrally Sponsored Schemes, stands at ₹25,01,284 crore. This marks an increase of ₹4,91,668 crore compared to the actuals of 2023-24.

The fiscal deficit for FY 2025-26 is projected at 4.4 per cent of GDP, down from 4.8 per cent in the current fiscal. Additionally, the GDP for FY 2025-26 is estimated at ₹3,56,97,923 crore, a 10.1 per cent increase over the Revised Estimates for FY 2024-25 (₹3,24,11,406 crore) released by the National Statistical Office (NSO).



5 Years of National Technical Textiles Mission

India's textile industry plays a crucial role in the national economy and has evolved into a hub of innovation. The country ranks as the **6th largest textile exporter globally, holding a 3.9% share in world textile exports.** Contributing nearly 2% to the GDP, the sector is projected to expand to \$350 billion by 2030, generating approximately 3.5 crore jobs. While traditional textiles remain fundamental, the rise of technical textiles is transforming the industry. These specialized fabrics prioritize functionality over aesthetics and are categorized into 12 types, serving diverse industries such as agriculture, healthcare, construction, and safety.

To accelerate this sector's growth, the **National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM) was launched in 2020**, with a budget of Rs. 1,480 crore for 2020-2026. The mission aims to strengthen research, boost exports, foster skill development, and position India as a global leader in technical textiles.

Framework for the National Technical Textiles Mission (NTTM)

Four key components of NTTM

Component I – Research, Innovation, and Development

- Focuses on research and innovation in technical textiles.
- Supports R&D projects to develop new materials and technologies.
- 168 research projects worth Rs. 509 crore have been approved.

Component II – Promotion and Market Development

- Encourages the adoption of technical textiles in various industries.
- Strengthens market linkages through trade shows, exhibitions, and global collaborations.

Component III – Export Promotion

- Aims to enhance India's exports of technical textiles.
- Works through a dedicated Export Promotion Council to boost international trade.

Component IV – Education, Training, and Skill Development

- Develops skill-training programs to create a skilled workforce.
- 50,000 individuals are being trained in technical textiles.
- Promotes specialized courses in technical textiles across educational institutes.
- Since its launch, Rs. 517 crore has been allocated, with Rs. 393.39 crore utilized for research, market development, exports, and skill development.

NTTM Initiatives Strengthening the Textile Industry

1. Grant for Internship Support for Technical Textiles (GIST 2.0)

- Provides hands-on learning opportunities for students and professionals.

- Enhances industry-academia collaboration to foster innovation.
- Supports the 'Make in India' initiative by promoting indigenous production.
- Grant for Research & Entrepreneurship across Aspiring Innovators in Technical Textiles (GREAT) Scheme
- Launched in August 2023 to support commercialization of new textile technologies.
- 8 startups have received Rs. 50 lakh each for innovations in medical, industrial, and protective textiles.
- IIT Indore and NIT Patna have received Rs. 6.5 crore to introduce specialized courses.
- Skill Development Programs
- Targets training of 50,000 individuals in the field of technical textiles.
- Offers 12 industry-focused courses in collaboration with leading textile research associations like SITRA, NITRA, and SASMIRA.
- Technotex 2024 (Bharat Tex 2024)
- Showcased India's advancements in technical textiles.
- Featured an Innovation Zone with 71 cutting-edge projects, including 48 prototypes and 23 informative posters.

Success Stories in Technical Textiles

- Mahina: India's First Leak-Proof Period Underwear**
 - Developed by Eicher Goodearth, Mahina is a bonded, leak-proof period underwear offering 12-hour protection.
 - Made from natural materials, it provides comfort and reusability for up to 100 washes, eliminating the need for pads or tampons.
- Tamil Nadu's Push for Technical Textiles**
 - The state government has prioritized the industry through the PM MITRA Park in Virudhunagar and a new textile park in Salem.
 - Increased capital subsidies for technical textile investments to 6% from 2%, promoting modernization and machinery upgrades.

5 Years of National Technical Textiles Mission

India has taken a **historic step in its clean energy transition with the launch of an ambitious Nuclear Mission**, reinforcing its commitment to sustainable energy. The initiative, announced by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** and detailed by Dr. Jitendra Singh, **aims to generate 100 GW of nuclear energy by 2047**. This move marks a major shift, as the nuclear sector—long restricted to government control—is now open to private sector participation. The mission will focus on Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) and the indigenous development of nuclear technology, making nuclear power a key component of India's journey to net-zero emissions by 2070.



Key Highlights of India's Nuclear Mission**1. Vision and Objective**

- Target:** Generate 100 GW of nuclear power by 2047, covering 10% of India's energy needs.
- Strengthen clean and stable power generation through nuclear energy.
- Establish India as a global leader in advanced nuclear technology.

2. Opening Up to Private Sector

- A historic shift allowing private sector participation in nuclear energy.
- Encourages investment and innovation in the nuclear industry.
- First major policy change to break secrecy barriers around nuclear programs.

3. Small Modular Reactors (SMRs)

- Capacity ranges from 16 MW to 300 MW.
- Designed to cater to remote areas and industrial clusters.
- SMRs provide environment-friendly, scalable, and readily available power.

4. Budgetary and Research Boost

- 170% increase in atomic energy budget since 2014.
- ₹20,000 crore allocated for developing five Bharat SMRs in 2024-25.
- National Research Foundation (funded 60-70% by non-government sources) to accelerate nuclear R&D.

5. Global and Indigenous Collaborations

- Partnerships with France and the USA for advanced nuclear technology.
- Emphasis on indigenous development, particularly in thorium-based reactors.
- Reviving delayed projects like Bhavini Reactor and Kudankulam Nuclear Plant.

6. Contribution to Climate Goals

- Nuclear energy will play a key role in achieving India's net-zero target by 2070.
- Reduces dependence on fossil fuels and promotes environment-friendly clean energy.
- Strengthens India's position in the global green energy transition.

Hurun Global Rich List 2025: Shanghai overtakes Mumbai as Asia's Billionaire Capital

The **Hurun Global Rich List 2025** has been released, revealing major shifts in billionaire rankings worldwide. Notably, **Shanghai has overtaken Mumbai as the billionaire capital of Asia**, and **India ranks third globally with 284 billionaires**.

India's Position in the Hurun Global Rich List 2025

India continues its strong presence among the world's wealthiest nations, ranking **third globally** with **284 billionaires**. The cumulative wealth of Indian billionaires stands at **₹98 lakh crore**, marking a **10% increase** from last year.

Key Highlights for India

- Mumbai loses its position as Asia's billionaire hub** to Shanghai, which has **92 billionaires** compared to Mumbai's **90**.
- 175 Indian billionaires** saw an increase in their wealth, while **109 experienced a decline or no change**.
- India is home to **seven billionaires under 40**, primarily from **Bengaluru and Mumbai**.
- Two Indian billionaires** are just **34 years old**.

India's Richest Individuals in 2025**Mukesh Ambani Reclaims 'Richest Person in Asia' Title**

Reliance Industries Chairman **Mukesh Ambani** has reclaimed his title as the **richest person in Asia** despite a **₹1 lakh crore decline** in his wealth.

Gautam Adani Becomes the Biggest Wealth Gainer

Industrialist **Gautam Adani** saw a **₹1 lakh crore** increase in wealth, marking a **13% rise** from last year. His net worth now stands at **₹8.4 lakh crore**, slightly behind **Ambani's ₹8.6 lakh crore**.

Global Billionaire Rankings

For the **first time in a decade**, the **United States** leads the list with **870 billionaires**, followed by **China** with **823 billionaires**.

Top 10 Billionaires in the World (2025)

The list continues to be dominated by **Silicon Valley billionaires**, with **American business magnates holding nine out of ten spots**.

Rank	Name	Company	Net Worth (in USD)
1	Elon Musk	Tesla	\$420 billion
2	Jeff Bezos	Amazon	\$266 billion
3	Mark Zuckerberg	Meta	\$242 billion
4	Larry Ellison	Oracle	\$203 billion
5	Warren Buffett	Berkshire Hathaway	\$167 billion
6	Larry Page	Alphabet (Google)	\$164 billion
7	Bernard Arnault	LVMH	\$157 billion
8	Steve Ballmer	Microsoft	\$156 billion
9	Sergey Brin	Alphabet (Google)	\$148 billion
10	Bill Gates	Microsoft	\$143 billion



NATIONAL NEWS

Cabinet Approvals

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the Revision of the Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LHDCP) with a total outlay of Rs. 3,880 crore for 2024-25 and 2025-26. The scheme comprises three components: National Animal Disease Control Programme (NADCP), LH&DC, and the newly introduced Pashu Aushadhi. LH&DC includes Critical Animal Disease Control Programme (CADCP), Establishment and Strengthening of Veterinary Hospitals and Dispensaries - Mobile Veterinary Unit (ESVHD-MVU), and Assistance to States for Control of Animal Diseases (ASCAD). Pashu Aushadhi aims to provide quality and affordable veterinary medicines with a Rs. 75 crore provision. The scheme focuses on reducing livestock productivity losses caused by diseases like Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD), Brucellosis, Peste des Petits Ruminants (PPR), Classical Swine Fever (CSF), and Lumpy Skin Disease through immunization, vaccination, and improved healthcare access. It also ensures doorstep veterinary services via Mobile Veterinary Units and enhances the availability of generic medicines through PM-Kisan Samriddhi Kendras and Cooperative Societies. By preventing and controlling livestock diseases, LHDCP will boost productivity, generate employment, encourage rural entrepreneurship, and minimize economic losses for farmers.
- The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the construction of a 12.4 km ropeway from Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji in Uttarakhand at a total capital cost of Rs. 2,730.13 crore under the Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Transfer (DBFOT) mode. Currently, the 21-km uphill trek to Hemkund Sahib Ji is challenging and covered on foot, ponies, or palanquins, but the proposed ropeway will provide all-weather last-mile connectivity, benefiting both pilgrims and tourists visiting the Valley of Flowers. Developed through a public-private partnership, the ropeway will feature Monocable Detachable Gondola (MDG) technology from Govindghat to Ghangaria (10.55 km) and Tricable Detachable Gondola (3S) technology from Ghangaria to Hemkund Sahib Ji (1.85 km), with a design capacity of 1,100 passengers per hour per direction (PPHPD), accommodating 11,000 passengers daily. This project will create employment opportunities in construction, operations, and allied tourism sectors like hospitality, travel, and food & beverages, fostering socio-economic growth in the region. Hemkund Sahib Ji, a revered pilgrimage site at 15,000 ft in Chamoli district, is open for about five months annually and attracts 1.5 to 2 lakh pilgrims. The trek also serves as a gateway to the Valley of Flowers, a UNESCO World Heritage site in the pristine Garhwal Himalayas.

The Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), chaired by Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi, has approved the construction of a 12.9 km ropeway from Sonprayag to Kedarnath in Uttarakhand at a total capital cost of Rs. 4,081.28 crore under the Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Transfer (DBFOT) mode. Developed through a public-private partnership, the ropeway will feature the advanced Tri-cable Detachable Gondola (3S) technology with a design capacity of 1,800 passengers per hour per direction (PPHPD), carrying 18,000 passengers daily. This project will significantly benefit pilgrims by offering an environment-friendly, comfortable, and fast alternative, reducing travel time from 8-9 hours to just 36 minutes. It will also create employment opportunities in construction, operations, and allied tourism sectors like hospitality, travel, and food & beverages, boosting socio-economic growth. Currently, the 16-km uphill trek from Gaurikund to Kedarnath is covered on foot, ponies, palanquins, or helicopters, but the ropeway will ensure all-weather connectivity and enhance accessibility. Kedarnath, one of the 12 sacred Jyotirlingas, is located at an altitude of 3,583 m (11,968 ft) in Rudraprayag district and remains open for about 6-7 months annually, attracting around 20 lakh pilgrims each season.

State-wise March Month Important Events**Andhra Pradesh**

- The **Government of Andhra Pradesh** will sign an **MoU** with the **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation** to integrate **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, **digital technologies**, and **data-driven governance** in sectors like **healthcare**, **education**, **agriculture**, and **employment**.
- Andhra Pradesh CM **N. Chandrababu Naidu** announced a **58-foot statue of Potti Sriramulu in Amaravati** to honor his **sacrifice for Andhra Pradesh's formation in 1953**. Along with a **memorial**, his **native house in Padamatipalli** will be converted into a **museum**, and a **modern health center** and **high school** will be established in his village. The project will be completed before his next **birth anniversary**.

Assam

- The **Assam government** has named the upcoming **Electronics City in Jagiroad as Ratan Tata Electronic City**, honoring **Ratan Tata's contributions** to the state's **industrial and economic growth**. Announced after **Advantage Assam 2.0 Summit (Feb 2025)**, the move recognizes the **Tata Group's impact in semiconductors, electronics manufacturing, and investment** in Assam.



- The **Assam** state government announced plans to launch its own satellite, **ASSAMSAT**, to enhance data access for **socio-economic initiatives** and **border security**. Announced by **Assam Finance Minister Ajanta Neog** in the **2025-26 state budget**, **ASSAMSAT** will support **agriculture, disaster management, infrastructure development, and security operations**, making Assam the first Indian state to launch its own satellite.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah** inaugurated the **Lachit Barphukan Police Academy** in **Dergaon, Assam**, on **March 15, 2025**. Named after the legendary Ahom general **Lachit Barphukan**, the academy aims to strengthen **policing** in the **Northeast** and become a premier training institution. The event was attended by **Assam CM Dr. Himanta Biswa Sarma** and **Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal**.
- The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, approved the establishment of the **Namrup-IV Brownfield Ammonia-Urea Complex** in **Assam**. The ₹10,601.40 crore project, with an annual capacity of **12.7 LMT**, will be developed under a **Joint Venture** and is expected to boost **domestic urea production**, improve fertilizer availability in **Eastern India**, and create employment. The plant will be commissioned in **48 months**.

Bihar

- The **Nitish Kumar-led NDA** government in **Bihar** presented the ₹3,16,895 crore **Budget for the financial year 2025-26 on March 3, 2025**. Deputy Chief Minister and Finance Minister Samrat Choudhary highlighted a significant increase in the state's Budget size over the years and emphasized allocations for education, health, rural development, and welfare schemes. The Budget also introduced several measures for women's empowerment and employment generation while maintaining fiscal discipline within FRBM limits.

Chhattisgarh

- The **Chhattisgarh government** has unveiled its **Budget for the financial year 2025**, prioritizing **capital expenditure, digital governance, infrastructure development, and welfare schemes**. The budget, amounting to ₹1,65,000 crore, was presented by **State Finance Minister O.P. Choudhary** in the **Chhattisgarh Legislative Assembly** on **March 4, 2025**.
- The **Chhattisgarh government**, led by **CM Vishnu Deo Sai**, plans to introduce a stricter **anti-conversion law** to prevent illegal religious conversions. The new law aims to stop conversions through **coercion, inducements, or faith healing** gatherings. While the opposition claims conversions are rising, **Home Minister Vijay Sharma** assured strict action against illegal conversions, and concerns were raised about NGOs allegedly using **foreign funds** for conversion activities.

Himachal Pradesh

- Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister **Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu** presented the **annual budget for FY 2025-26**, amounting to **Rs 58,514 crore**. The budget emphasizes **tourism, rural development, and green energy**, while also addressing financial challenges such as a **reduction in the Revenue Deficit Grant** and the **withdrawal of GST compensation**.

Karnataka

- Karnataka CM **Siddaramaiah** announced that **Bangalore City University** will be renamed as **Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru University** in honor of the late former PM **Manmohan Singh**. The government plans to develop it into a **model university**, incorporating **Government Arts College** and **Government RC College** as constituent institutions.

Kerala

- Kerala CM **Pinarayi Vijayan** inaugurated the **Advanced Cybersecurity Operations Centre (SOC)** of the **Kerala Police Cyber Division** to strengthen cybersecurity infrastructure. Developed by C-DOT, the **TRINETRA** system enhances police system security and critical infrastructure protection. This initiative highlights **India's commitment to indigenous cybersecurity solutions**.
- Kerala has become the first state in India to establish a **Senior Citizens Commission** by passing the **Kerala State Senior Citizens Commission Bill, 2025**. This statutory body, focused on safeguarding the **rights and welfare** of elderly citizens, will also serve as an advisory body for policymaking, highlighting Kerala's commitment to the **protection, rehabilitation, and empowerment** of senior citizens.

Maharashtra

- The **Maharashtra Budget 2025-26** was tabled by **Deputy Chief Minister Ajit Pawar**, who holds the **Finance portfolio**. This budget comes after the **landslide victory of the Mahayuti government** in the assembly elections and is marked by severe financial constraints. The state is facing its **highest-ever debt projection of Rs 9.3 lakh crore** and the **steepest revenue deficit**, estimated at **Rs 45,891 crore** for the fiscal year 2025-26. Due to these financial challenges, the budget does not introduce any **big-ticket schemes** and instead focuses on sustaining existing initiatives.
- Maharashtra CM **Devendra Fadnavis** inaugurated the state's first temple dedicated to **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj** in **Bhiwandi, Thane**, on his birth anniversary. The temple honors Shivaji Maharaj's **heroism, valour, and enduring legacy**, providing a sacred space for devotees to pay tribute to his contributions to **India's history**.



Madhya Pradesh

- On **March 3, 2025**, Chief Minister **Mohan Yadav** announced that **farmers in Madhya Pradesh** will receive **permanent power connections** for just **Rs 5**, aiming to provide **affordable electricity** and boost **agricultural productivity**. The initiative, implemented through the **Madhya Pradesh Central Power Distribution Company**, underscores the government's commitment to improving **rural infrastructure** and promoting **sustainable farming practices**.
- Madhav National Park** in **Madhya Pradesh** has been officially declared as **India's 58th Tiger Reserve** on **March 9, 2025**. The announcement was made by **Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav**, marking another milestone in the country's ongoing efforts to protect and conserve its rich biodiversity. With this recognition, **Madhya Pradesh** now boasts **nine tiger reserves**, further solidifying its reputation as the '**Tiger State**' of India.

Meghalaya

- Meghalaya CM Conrad K. Sangma** inaugurated the state's first scientific coal mining block, "**Saryngkham-A**", at **Byndihat, East Jaintia Hills**, marking a shift from **rat-hole mining**, which was **banned by the NGT in 2014** due to **safety and environmental concerns**. This initiative promotes **safe and sustainable coal mining** in the **coal-rich Jaintia Hills region**.

Odisha

- A **UK Skills and Chartered Bodies Mission delegation** is visiting **Odisha** to explore **partnerships in vocational education and skill development**. Discussions focused on **industry-led skilling, UK-style apprenticeships, and training in advanced manufacturing, renewable energy, digital skills, and sustainable infrastructure**. Minister **Sampad Chandra Swain** and **British Deputy High Commissioner Andrew Fleming** emphasized collaboration to build a **globally competitive workforce**.

Punjab

- Punjab's Social Security, Women, and Child Development Minister Dr. Baljit Kaur** launched '**Project Hifazat**' on **March 7, 2025**, to enhance **women and child safety**. The initiative features a **24x7 helpline (181)**, coordinated government support, and rapid response mechanisms to combat **gender-based violence**. Dr. Kaur urged women to use the helpline, emphasizing **empowerment and swift action** against crimes.

Telangana

- The **Telangana Government** has presented its most ambitious budget to date, crossing the ₹3 lakh crore mark for the first time since the state's formation. The budget, which amounts to ₹3.04 lakh crore, reflects the government's commitment to **welfare programs, economic growth, and infrastructure development**. Deputy Chief Minister **Mallu Bhatti Vikramarka**, who also holds the Finance portfolio, presented the budget in the state assembly, emphasizing inclusivity and equitable resource distribution. The financial plan outlines significant allocations for **agriculture, education, backward classes, and flagship welfare schemes**, all while balancing fiscal challenges.
- The **Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park** in Darjeeling has become **India's first zoo** to preserve **wildlife DNA** from snowy regions. In collaboration with **CCMB Hyderabad**, the project aims to support **conservation and genetic research**. **60 DNA samples**, including from **red pandas** and **snow leopards**, have been collected and cryogenically preserved. This initiative ensures long-term **genetic material preservation** for endangered species.

Tamil Nadu

- The **Tamil Nadu government's** decision to replace the **Indian Rupee symbol (₹)** with the **Tamil letter 'ஓ'** in the **state budget logo** has reignited the **language debate** in India. Led by **Chief Minister M K Stalin**, this move aligns with Tamil Nadu's stance against the imposition of **Hindi** and reflects ongoing resistance to the **National Education Policy (NEP)**, which the state views as "saffronized."
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** will inaugurate the new **Pamban rail bridge** connecting **Ramanathapuram** and **Rameswaram Island** on **April 6, 2025**, coinciding with **Ram Navami**. The bridge, costing ₹531 crore, aims to boost **connectivity and railway infrastructure** in the region. The Prime Minister will also flag off a new **train service** between **Tambaram** and **Rameswaram** and address a public gathering.

Uttarakhand

- Uttarakhand Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami** announced the development of **corridors along the Ganga and Sharda rivers** to boost **religious tourism** in the state. The initiative will enhance **infrastructure** and facilities for pilgrims while preserving **cultural and spiritual heritage**. CM Dhami also highlighted the significance of **ancient Indian scriptures** in shaping both **scientific and spiritual thought** at the **62nd All India Shastraotsav** in Haridwar.



Uttar Pradesh

- Uttar Pradesh has launched the '**Rapid Immunisation Skill Enhancement' (RISE) app** to strengthen its **immunization program**. Designed for **nurses, ANMs, and health workers**, the app enhances **vaccination tracking, training, and safety management**. It provides **real-time updates on vaccination schedules, cold chain management, and adverse effect monitoring**, replacing traditional training with **digital learning** for improved **efficiency and outreach**.

West Bengal

- The **West Bengal Police** has launched a mobile app to ensure a **transparent and corruption-free transfer process** for personnel, from **constables to sub-inspectors**. Integrated with **e-HRMS software**, the app aims to eliminate **malpractices** like bribery and favoritism. Transfer requests must be submitted digitally by **April 11**.

Union Territories of India

- On **March 18, 2025**, the **Delhi government** will sign an **MoU** with the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** to implement the **Pradhan Mantri Ayushman Bharat Health Infrastructure Mission (PM-ABHIM)**. The scheme will establish **1,139 Urban Ayushman Arogya Mandirs (U-AAMs)** in Delhi, upgrading **553 mohalla clinics** and setting up **413 new U-AAMs** to strengthen **primary healthcare services** and address future **pandemics**. This follows a **legal battle** and political changes in Delhi.
- The **Delhi Police** has launched '**Shishtachar**' squads across all districts to enhance **women's safety** in public spaces. These anti-eve-teasing squads focus on **harassment prevention** through active patrolling, surprise checks, and public outreach. Each squad consists of an **Inspector, Sub-Inspector, 4 female officers, 5 male officers**, and a **technical personnel** for surveillance support. Supervised by the **ACP of the Crime Against Women (CAW) cell**, the initiative aims to create a **secure environment** for women.
- Delhi Health Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh launched six mobile dental clinics on **World Oral Health Day** to provide **free oral healthcare**. The initiative, a collaboration between the **Delhi government** and **Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Sciences (MAIDS)**, targets underserved areas like slums. The clinics are equipped with **modern dental chairs, X-ray machines, and sterilization units**, offering **fluoride treatments and dental care** to residents.

October Month Launches & Inaugurations:

- India has inaugurated its first **World Peace Center** in **Gurugram, Haryana**, established by **Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti** under the guidance of **Jain Acharya Lokesh**. The center aims to promote **non-violence, spiritual awareness, human values, and universal brotherhood**.

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi inaugurated **Vantara**, an advanced animal rescue, conservation, and rehabilitation center in Gujarat's Jamnagar district. The event was attended by Mukesh Ambani, Nita Ambani, Anant Ambani, and Radhika Merchant. PM Modi explored the **state-of-the-art facilities**, interacted with **rehabilitated animals**, and observed medical procedures at the center's **wildlife hospital**, highlighting **wildlife conservation** and efforts to protect **endangered species** in India.
- President Smt. Droupadi Murmu inaugurated the second edition of **Vividhta Ka Amrit Mahotsav** at **Rashtrapati Bhavan** on **March 5, 2025**. The festival celebrates India's cultural heritage, with this edition highlighting the **Southern states of Karnataka, Kerala, Tamil Nadu, Telangana, Andhra Pradesh**, and the **Union Territories of Lakshadweep and Puducherry**.
- Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw launched key initiatives under the **IndiaAI Mission** to boost **AI research, innovation, and skill development**. The initiatives include **AIKosha: IndiaAI Datasets Platform**, a secured hub for **datasets, models, and AI use cases** with **sandbox capabilities, encryption, and secure APIs**. Additionally, the **IndiaAI Compute Portal** offers **AI compute, storage, and cloud services** with up to **40% subsidy** on **high-end GPUs (NVIDIA H100, AMD MI300x, AWS Tranium)** to support **AI development** in India.
- Indian Railways is contributing to **Mission Amrit Sarovar**, launched in April 2022, to address **water scarcity** and enhance **groundwater recharge**. The mission focuses on rejuvenating 75 ponds in each district with **community participation and climate resilience**. By October 2024, over 68,000 ponds were rejuvenated. In **Phase 2**, Indian Railways will assist in **desilting, excavating, and constructing new water bodies** near railway lines, using the excavated material for **railway embankments**.
- The Ministry of Panchayati Raj has launched two initiatives — **Sashakt Panchayat-Netri Abhiyan** and **Model Women-Friendly Gram Panchayats (MWFGP)** — to empower **Women Elected Representatives (WERs)** in Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs). The **Sashakt Panchayat-Netri Abhiyan** focuses on **capacity building** to enhance leadership and decision-making, aiming to eliminate the "**Mukhiya Pati**" culture. The **MWFGP** initiative seeks to establish **gender-sensitive, girl-friendly governance** in every district.
- Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman launched a mobile app for the **Prime Minister's Internship Scheme (PMIS)** in **New Delhi**. The app aims to streamline **registration, provide real-time updates, and offer an intuitive interface** for candidates. This initiative supports the government's commitment to **employment, skilling, and creating opportunities** for the **youth**.



- Indore is launching India's first green waste processing plant under the PPP model as part of the **Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban**. The plant will convert green waste into **wooden pellets**, providing an eco-friendly alternative to **coal** and promoting **sustainability**. It aims to generate revenue for **Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC)** and contribute to a **circular economy** and **innovative waste management**.
- The **Centre for Development of Telematics (C-DOT)** has launched 'Samarth', an incubation program to foster innovation in telecom and IT. It supports startups in **Telecom Software, Cybersecurity, 5G/6G, AI, IoT, and Quantum Technologies**, with **STPI** as the implementation partner. Running in **hybrid mode**, the program will have **two cohorts per year**, each with **18 startups**, offering **funding, mentorship, and infrastructure support**.
- The **Purple Fest 2025**, held at **Rashtrapati Bhavan** and organized by **DePWD, Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment**, saw **23,500 attendees** promoting **inclusivity, accessibility, and empowerment** for **Divyangjan**. The event featured literary discussions, sports, corporate collaborations, and cultural performances, fostering an **inclusive society**.
- The **Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA)** launched **Samarthyा 2025** on **March 22-23, 2025**, at its **Manesar campus**. The event offers students a platform to develop **corporate rescue strategies** for distressed businesses, focusing on **financial analysis, strategy development, and industry engagement** through case studies and expert mentorship. Winning solutions receive **industry recognition**.
- The "Baalpan ki Kavita" Initiative, launched by the **Department of School Education & Literacy** under the **Ministry of Education**, aims to preserve and promote **Indian rhymes and poems** for young children. Aligning with the **National Education Policy (NEP) 2020**, it focuses on **early childhood education, multilingualism, and cultural relevance**. The initiative encourages contributions of rhymes in various **Indian languages** and English, targeting children aged **3-8 years** across three categories: **Pre-primary, Grade 1, and Grade 2**.
- The **Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare** launched the **Digital Crop Survey (DCS) System** to collect **real-time crop data** through a mobile interface, improving **accuracy** in crop area estimation and agricultural forecasting. Integrated with **Agri Stack**, the system ensures **data privacy** through farmer consent, secure encryption, and compliance with the **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**. **State control**, regular security audits, and restricted data sharing safeguard the information.
- Chief of Defence Staff (CDS) Gen Anil Chauhan inaugurated Techkriti 2025 at IIT Kanpur, Asia's largest **tech and entrepreneurial festival**, under the theme "**Panta Rhei**" (**Everything Flows**). He emphasized the modernization of the **Indian Armed Forces** through **Cybersecurity, AI, Quantum Computing, and Cognitive Warfare**, urging young innovators to contribute to **national security**.
- Union Home and Cooperation Minister Amit Shah announced the launch of '**Sahkar**', a cooperative-based taxi service modeled on **Ola and Uber** but designed to empower **drivers as stakeholders**. Unlike corporate-owned ride-hailing platforms, '**Sahkar**' ensures **fair earnings and profit-sharing** under the **cooperative framework**. Introduced during discussions on the **Multi-State Cooperative Societies (Amendment) Bill, 2023**.

Miscellaneous National News

- India has conducted its first-ever **population estimation of riverine dolphins**, revealing a total of **6,327 dolphins** across the **Ganga, Brahmaputra, and Indus river systems**. This significant study, conducted as part of '**Project Dolphin**', provides crucial insights into the status and distribution of these **endangered freshwater species**. The findings, published in a government report on Monday, highlight the ecological importance of river dolphins and the need for conservation efforts.
- The **Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC)** and **Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC)** were granted **Navratna PSU** status by the Indian government on **March 4, 2025**, granting them greater **financial and operational autonomy**. With this, all seven listed railway PSUs have achieved **Navratna status**, reflecting the government's commitment to enhancing the efficiency and profitability of **railway-owned enterprises**.
- Union Minister for New and Renewable Energy, Shri Pralhad Joshi, emphasized India's commitment to becoming a global leader in **green hydrogen** production. Speaking at the launch of India's first fleet of **hydrogen-powered truck trials** in **New Delhi**, he highlighted the role of the **National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM)** in achieving energy independence and reducing **carbon emissions**, under Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership.
- On **March 4, 2025**, the Supreme Court of India ruled that the **right against disability-based discrimination** is a **fundamental right**, in line with the **RPwD Act, 2016**. The judgment allows **visually impaired candidates** to participate in **judicial service recruitment**, ensuring **equal opportunity** and **reasonable accommodation**. The verdict was delivered by Justices J B Pardiwala and R Mahadevan.



- The **Government of India** has approved the construction of a **12.4 km ropeway** from **Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji** in **Uttarakhand** under the **National Ropeways Development Programme – Parvatmala Pariyojana**. This project aims to provide **all-weather connectivity** to the **Hemkund Sahib** pilgrimage site, boosting **tourism** and **local employment**.
- The **Government of India** has approved the construction of a **12.9 km ropeway** from **Sonprayag to Kedarnath** under the **National Ropeways Development Programme – Parvatmala Pariyojana**. This project aims to provide **all-weather connectivity** to the **Kedarnath Temple**, reducing **travel time** and boosting **tourism** and **employment** in the region.
- Prime Minister **Narendra Modi** chaired the **seventh NBWL meeting** in **Sasan, Junagadh, Gujarat**, with **Union Minister Bhupender Yadav**. Key decisions included the **16th Asiatic Lion Population Estimation**, scheduled for **May 2024**, aimed at assessing the lion population, habitat, and conservation challenges.
- The **Ministry of Mines**, in collaboration with **Coal India Limited (CIL)**, organized the “**Celebrating Women in Mining Sector**” event ahead of **International Women’s Day** to recognize and promote **women’s contributions in mining**. Attended by key ministers, industry leaders, and organizations like IBM, TATA, GSI, ADANI, and Vedanta, the event honored **46 outstanding women professionals** and featured **panel discussions on gender inclusivity and empowerment**. This initiative highlights the government’s commitment to **breaking barriers and ensuring equal opportunities for women in mining**.
- The **Sahitya Akademi Festival of Letters 2025**, Asia’s largest literature festival, will be held at **Rabindra Bhavan, New Delhi**, from **7th to 12th March 2025**. Inaugurated by **Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**, the event will feature **Mahesh Dattani** as the chief guest at the **Sahitya Akademi Awards** ceremony and **Upamanyu Chatterjee** delivering the **Samvatsar Lecture**. With **700 writers from 50+ languages** across **100 sessions**.
- Launched on **August 26, 2021**, the **e-Shram portal** aims to create a **National Database of Unorganised Workers (NDUW)**, providing workers with a **Universal Account Number (UAN)** and linking them to **social security and welfare schemes**. By **March 3, 2025**, over **30.68 crore** workers had registered, with **53.68% women**. To enhance accessibility, features like **multilingual support**, a **mobile app**, and integration with welfare schemes were added. The **e-Shram One-Stop-Solution**, launched on **October 21, 2024**, integrates welfare programs for easier access.
- The **literacy rate** among **Muslims** in India has significantly improved, rising from **59.1%** in **Census 2001** to **68.5%** in **Census 2011**. Despite this, it was still below the national literacy rate of **73.0%** in 2011. The **PLFS 2023-24** shows further improvement, with the **Muslim literacy rate** at **79.5%**, compared to **80.9%** for all religious communities.
- The **National Archives of India (NAI)** celebrated its **135th Foundation Day** on **March 11, 2025**, with the inauguration of the “**Indian Heritage through Architecture**” exhibition by **Union Minister Shri Gajendra Singh Shekhawat**. The exhibition showcased **India's architectural heritage** through archival documents and rare records. The event also launched the ‘**Gyan Bharatam Mission**’ to expand access to India’s knowledge repository, while the world’s **largest digitization program** is underway to preserve historical documents.
- The **Oilfield (Regulatory and Development) Amendment Bill, 2024** was passed by the **Lok Sabha** on **March 12, 2025**, after **Rajya Sabha** approval in **December 2024**. The Bill reforms India’s **oil and gas** exploration and production framework to attract investments, boost production, and ensure **energy security**. Key reforms include shifting from a **Production Sharing** to a **Revenue Sharing** regime, simplifying processes, **deregulation of crude oil**, and **pricing freedom** for natural gas.
- The **Fit India Carnival**, a three-day event held from **March 16-18, 2025**, at **Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi**, was inaugurated by **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**, Union Minister for Youth Affairs and Sports. The event aimed to promote **fitness, mental well-being, and healthy lifestyle choices**. It featured stars like **Ayushmann Khurrana, Sangram Singh, Mickey Mehta, Shanky Singh, and Rohtash Chaudhary**.
- **Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw** visited the **Hyperloop testing facility** at **IIT Madras**, announcing that the **410-meter Hyperloop tube** would soon become the world’s longest high-speed tube. The **Indian Railways Ministry** is supporting the project, with **Integral Coach Factory (ICF)** Chennai handling the electronic technology. Vaishnaw also attended **Open House 2025** at IIT Madras, discussing India’s advancements in **semiconductors, AI, and data science**, and reaffirming the government’s commitment to technological leadership under **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**.
- **Dr. Jitendra Singh**, Union Minister of Science and Technology, laid the foundation stone for the **North East Centre for Technology Application and Reach (NECTAR)** permanent campus at **Mawdiangdiang, Shillong**, on **March 13, 2025**. Established in **2014** under the **Department of Science and Technology (DST)**, NECTAR focuses on **technology-driven socio-economic development** in the Northeast. The Minister highlighted NECTAR’s work in **saffron cultivation, drone technology, and STEM education**, aiming to make the region India’s next saffron hub.



- The Indian government is advancing its nuclear energy efforts with two major projects: the **Jaitapur Nuclear Power Plant** in Maharashtra and the **Gorakhpur Nuclear Power Project** in Haryana. The **Jaitapur plant** will contribute 10% to India's **100 GW nuclear energy target** by 2047, while **Gorakhpur** is the first nuclear facility in **North India**. Addressing concerns over **environmental impact, safety, and nuclear liability**, Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized the commitment to **sustainable energy** and private sector involvement in nuclear energy expansion.
- The **Ministry of Culture**, through **Lalit Kala Akademi (LKA)** and **National Gallery of Modern Arts (NGMA)**, is preserving public art installations under the **Public Art of India (PARI)** project. LKA has implemented a **preservation strategy** to ensure the **sustainability and longevity** of these installations, transforming **Delhi's public spaces** into vibrant artistic landmarks and promoting **regional art forms** globally.
- The **North Eastern Handicrafts and Handlooms Development Corporation Ltd. (NEHHDC)** has achieved a significant milestone by obtaining the **Oeko-Tex certification** for **eri silk**. This globally recognized certification ensures that **eri silk** is free from harmful substances and meets international **safety and quality standards**, boosting its **marketability and consumer confidence** in the global textile industry while supporting **eco-friendly** initiatives.
- The **Yuge Yugeen Bharat National Museum** in **New Delhi** will be housed in the **North and South Blocks** as part of the

- Central Vista Redevelopment Project.** The museum aims to showcase India's civilizational and cultural heritage, with technical cooperation from **France Museums Development**. The project offers an immersive experience into India's **past, present, and future**.
- The **Department of Financial Services** directed **Public Sector Banks (PSBs)** to redesign their e-auction platform, leading to the launch of "**e-BKray**" in 2019. On January 3, 2025, the enhanced "**BAANKNET**" portal was introduced to streamline the listing and auctioning of assets, focusing on the disposal of **Non-Performing Assets (NPAs)** and ensuring secure transactions and maximizing sale value.
 - On **March 24, 2025**, the **Central Government** notified a **24% salary increase for Members of Parliament (MPs)**, effective from **April 1, 2023**. Under the **Salary, Allowances and Pension of Members of Parliament Act**, the monthly salary for Lok Sabha and Rajya Sabha MPs has risen from **₹1 lakh** to **₹1.24 lakh**, and the **daily allowance** has been increased from **₹2,000** to **₹2,500**. This is the first revision since **April 2018**.
 - The **Supreme Court** has set up a **National Task Force (NTF)** to address **student mental health** concerns in response to rising suicides in higher education, including the tragic deaths of two **IIT Delhi** students in 2023. Chaired by **Justice S. Ravindra Bhat**, the NTF will investigate the causes, analyze existing regulations, and propose solutions to combat **academic stress, caste-based discrimination**, and other institutional issues affecting students' well-being.

GOVT SCHEMES

CENTRAL GOVT SCHEMES

Name of Initiative	Ministry	Purpose
'One Nation- One Port' Initiative	Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways	<p>1. One Nation: One Port Process (ONOP) Aimed at standardizing port operations across India to enhance efficiency, reduce costs, and boost global trade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Uniform operational procedures across all major ports Reduction in logistics costs and elimination of redundant documentation Faster clearance and improved transparency through digitization <p>2. Sagar Ankanan – Logistics Port Performance Index (LPPI) 2023-24 A benchmarking tool to assess and improve port efficiency and global competitiveness.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Highlights: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluates port performance and turnaround time Focuses on sustainability and cost-effectiveness Encourages competition among ports to enhance service quality <p>3. Bharat Global Ports Consortium Strengthening India's global maritime influence through international collaborations.</p>



Name of Initiative	Ministry	Purpose
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Key Benefits: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expanding India's trade connectivity with global ports Attracting foreign investment in port infrastructure Developing world-class smart, green, and digital ports <p>4. Future Focus Areas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Smart Ports: AI & blockchain-based automation Green Energy: Renewable sources for port functioning Maritime Security: Coastal surveillance & cybersecurity Digitalization: AI-powered tracking & electronic documentation <p>These initiatives align with Sagarmala Project's 'Port-Led Development' vision, positioning India as a leading global maritime hub.</p>
PM-YUVA 3.0	Ministry of Education	<p>The Ministry of Education, Department of Higher Education launched PM-YUVA 3.0 (Prime Minister's Scheme for Mentoring Young Authors) on March 11, 2025. This initiative aims to train young and budding authors (below 30 years of age) to promote reading, writing, and book culture in India while projecting Indian literature on the global stage. The third edition follows the success of the first two editions, which saw participation in 22 Indian languages and English.</p> <p>Introduction to PM-YUVA 3.0</p> <p>PM-YUVA 3.0 (Young, Upcoming, and Versatile Authors) aligns with the Prime Minister's vision of encouraging the youth to understand and appreciate India's rich culture, heritage, and contributions of visionaries. The scheme is designed to nurture young literary talents, enabling them to write on key themes that define India's progress and historical legacy.</p> <p>Key Highlights</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launch Date: March 11, 2025 Implementing Agency: National Book Trust (NBT), India, under the Ministry of Education Target Audience: Young and budding authors below 30 years Objective: To develop a new generation of writers focusing on India's cultural and intellectual legacy Languages: Books will be published in multiple Indian languages and English Mentorship Period: June 30, 2025 – December 30, 2025 Platform for Selection: www.mygov.in <p>Objectives of PM-YUVA 3.0</p> <p>1. Promoting Reading and Writing Culture The scheme aims to instill a habit of reading and writing among the youth, encouraging them to engage with India's history, culture, and heritage.</p> <p>2. Encouraging Young Authors By mentoring and guiding young writers, the initiative seeks to create a new literary ecosystem that represents India's diverse perspectives and rich storytelling traditions.</p> <p>3. Showcasing India's Global Influence Through this program, young authors will be able to articulate the contributions of the Indian diaspora and highlight India's historical and contemporary progress on the world stage.</p> <p>Themes of PM-YUVA 3.0 The third edition of PM-YUVA focuses on three major themes, each representing India's evolving identity and global influence:</p> <p>1) Contribution of Indian Diaspora in Nation Building</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlights the political, economic, and socio-cultural contributions of the Indian diaspora. Focuses on how Indians abroad have influenced their host countries while maintaining deep ties with India.



Name of Initiative	Ministry	Purpose
		<p>2) Indian Knowledge System</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Emphasizes India's ancient wisdom, scientific contributions, and philosophical traditions. Showcases how India's intellectual heritage has shaped global thought. <p>3) Makers of Modern India (1950-2025)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chronicles the contributions of visionaries in various fields such as education, science, economy, and social empowerment. Presents a comprehensive narrative of India's post-independence journey. <p>Role of the National Book Trust (NBT), India</p> <p>The National Book Trust (NBT), India, will execute the program phase-wise, ensuring structured mentorship and high-quality content creation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Publishing and Translation: Books developed under this scheme will be published by NBT and translated into multiple Indian languages, fostering cultural exchange and linguistic diversity. Literary Engagements: Selected young authors will have the opportunity to engage with esteemed writers, participate in literary festivals, and contribute to Indian literature. National Camp: A National Camp for PM-YUVA 3.0 authors will be held during the New Delhi World Book Fair 2026.
PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana		The PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSGMBY) reached a milestone of 10 lakh rooftop solar installations by March 10, 2025. Launched on February 13, 2024 , the initiative aims to solarize 1 crore households by 2026-27, reducing electricity costs and promoting clean energy . With ₹4,770 crore in subsidies disbursed to 6.13 lakh beneficiaries and 3 GW solar capacity installed , the scheme accelerates India's shift to renewable energy , supporting Aatmanirbhar Bharat and Make in India .
Jan Aushadhi Kendras		As of February 28, 2025 , a total of 15,057 Jan Aushadhi Kendras (JAKs) have been opened across India under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP) , ensuring the availability of affordable and quality generic medicines . Launched to provide high-quality, affordable medicines , the scheme aims to make healthcare accessible, especially for the economically weaker sections .
Gold Monetisation Scheme		The Government of India will discontinue the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) for medium- and long-term deposits from March 26, 2025 , due to evolving market conditions, though short-term deposits will continue at bank discretion . Launched in November 2015 , the GMS aimed to reduce gold imports and the current account deficit , allowing households and institutions to deposit gold with banks, with a minimum deposit requirement of 10 gm . Existing deposits remain unaffected until maturity.

STATE GOVT SCHEMES

'Rajiv Yuva Vikasam' Scheme,	Telangana CM A. Revanth Reddy launched the 'Rajiv Yuva Vikasam' Scheme, aimed at promoting self-employment and economic development. With a budget of ₹6,000 crore , the scheme provides financial assistance to unemployed youth from SC, ST, BC, and Minority communities. Its goals include creating self-employment opportunities, reducing unemployment, and promoting entrepreneurship among marginalized groups.
Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)	The Uttarakhand Cabinet, led by Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami, approved key decisions to enhance governance, pension benefits, and excise policy. Notably, the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) was introduced, aligning with the Central Government's initiative to provide stable retirement payouts for state officers and employees under the National Pension System (NPS) .



INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- On **March 1, 2025**, President Donald Trump announced English as the **official language** of the **United States**, citing it as a step towards **national unity**. The **White House** released an **executive order**, stating it was "long past time" to make this decision.
- Yamandú Orsi** was sworn in as **Uruguay's President** on **March 1, 2025**, marking the return of the **leftist Broad Front coalition** after five years of **conservative rule**. A former **history teacher** and **mayor**, Orsi aims to strengthen Uruguay's **social safety net** while tackling **economic stagnation**. His presidency will focus on balancing **leftist support** with **economic growth** and **investor confidence**, while navigating challenges like **labor disputes** and **fiscal constraints**.
- The **Trump administration** imposed significant **tariffs** on imports from **Canada, Mexico, and China** starting **March 4, 2025**, raising import duties to levels not seen in decades. While aimed at boosting **domestic manufacturing** and reducing **trade imbalances**, the move has sparked backlash from **trading partners** and **business groups** due to concerns over **higher consumer costs** and **economic instability**.
- China has announced a **7.2% increase** in its **2025 defence budget**, raising total spending to approximately \$245 billion, as revealed at the National People's Congress (NPC). The budget focuses on modernizing military technology, reinforcing territorial claims, and countering U.S. influence in Asia. Despite being the world's second-largest defence spender, analysts estimate actual expenditure could be 40% higher due to unaccounted costs in other sectors.
- On **March 4, 2025**, U.S. President Donald Trump, in his **first congressional address** of his **second term**, announced **reciprocal tariffs** on countries with **high tariffs** on U.S. goods. Effective **April 2**, the policy targets **India, China, the EU, Brazil, Mexico, and Canada**, aiming to ensure a "**level playing field**" for American businesses. Trump cited "**very unfair**" **trade practices** as the reason, potentially impacting **U.S.-India trade relations**.
- The **world's largest iceberg**, **A23a**, has run aground near **South Georgia**, a British overseas territory. Scientists are monitoring its impact, as it may **disrupt wildlife feeding routes** but also **boost ocean productivity** by releasing nutrients. **A23a** broke off from **Antarctica** in **1986** and has drifted for decades before lodging on the **continental shelf**. Its future movement remains uncertain due to **oceanic conditions**.
- Israel has appointed **Eyal Zamir** as its new **Chief of Staff** amid ongoing military operations and rising regional tensions. A former tank commander and defence ministry director, Zamir succeeds **Lieutenant General Herzi Halevi**, who resigned after the **October 7, 2023** Hamas attack. His

leadership will focus on **Gaza operations**, **Iran tensions**, and **West Bank security**. Prime Minister Netanyahu has expressed confidence in Zamir's ability to achieve "**absolute victory**" against Hamas.

- Mark Carney has been appointed as the new leader of Canada's **Liberal Party** and the country's next **Prime Minister**, replacing **Justin Trudeau** amid growing public dissatisfaction. The former **central banker** will now lead the party into the upcoming **general elections** and manage **Ottawa's response** to increasing challenges from **US President Donald Trump**.
- China has deployed a **Large Phased Array Radar (LPAR)** system in **Yunnan province**, near the **China-Myanmar border**, enhancing surveillance over India. The radar boasts a range of **5,000+ kilometers**, with **advanced tracking capabilities** to monitor ballistic missiles and aerial activities. Positioned strategically, it can track missile tests from India's **Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Island**, raising security concerns.
- In response to the global financial crisis and uncertainty, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres launched the '**UN80 Initiative**'. This initiative aims to improve **efficiency** and **cost-effectiveness** within the **United Nations** by addressing shrinking resources, streamlining operations, and enhancing the organization's ability to deliver on its mandates effectively.
- In a historic breakthrough, Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed on the text of a **peace treaty** on **March 13, 2025**, ending nearly four decades of conflict over the **Nagorno-Karabakh region**. While this marks a significant step toward **stability** in the **South Caucasus**, Azerbaijan demands changes in **Armenia's constitution** before signing the treaty, creating uncertainty about the timeline for its official signing.
- Donald Trump's social media platform, **Truth Social**, is set to begin trading on the **NASDAQ** pending a shareholder vote on its merger with **Digital World Acquisition Corp. (DWAC)**, a **SPAC**. This move could reshape the financial structure of **Trump Media & Technology Group (TMTG)**, which owns **Truth Social**.
- Stuart Young is set to be sworn in as the new **Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago** at a formal ceremony at the **President's House in St. Ann's**. He will succeed **Dr. Keith Rowley**, who has officially stepped down from his position.
- The **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** has launched the **Frontier Seed (Pacific)** program to boost local businesses, strengthen capital markets, and promote **sustainable economic growth** in the Pacific region. ADB has committed **\$200,000** in technical assistance to **SeaPAC Pte Ltd** (prawn production) and **Kahuto Pacific** (aerial mapping). Backed by international partners like the **ORCA Trust Fund**, **Nordic Development Fund**, and **FCDO**, the program aims to attract investors, create jobs, and enhance economic resilience with an initial commitment of **\$4 million**.



- In 2025, US President Donald Trump is considering a **travel ban** on citizens from 43 countries, categorized into **Red, Orange, and Yellow lists**. **Red List** countries (11 nations, including Afghanistan, Iran, and Venezuela) face **complete visa suspension**, while **Orange List** countries (10 nations, including Russia, Pakistan, and Haiti) will have **severely restricted visas**. **Yellow List** countries (22 nations, including Angola, Cambodia, and Zimbabwe) have **60 days** to address US concerns. This move expands on the travel restrictions from Trump's first term, which were later revoked by **Joe Biden** in 2021.
- Kirsty Coventry**, a legendary swimmer from **Zimbabwe**, made history by becoming the **first female and first African president of the International Olympic Committee (IOC)**. Her election marks a significant milestone for the IOC, ushering in a new era of **progress, diversity, and inclusivity** in global sports leadership.
- In **2024**, **global funding for women-led tech startups** fell to **\$29.6 billion**, an **11% decline** from **2023** and **21%** from **2022**, due to **macroeconomic challenges**. Despite the downturn, **India ranked second globally** in all-time funding for **women-led tech startups**, after the **United States**, as per **Tracxn**. Women-led startups accounted for **11.7%** of total **global funding**, with **45 funding rounds** exceeding **\$100 million**. Key sectors like **Enterprise Applications, Life Sciences, and FinTech** continued to attract significant investment.
- Indonesia** has announced its decision to join the **New Development Bank (NDB)**, a multilateral financial institution established by the **BRICS** nations. **President Prabowo**

- Subianto** made the announcement during a meeting with **NDB President Dilma Rousseff**. This move is expected to enhance Indonesia's **economic transformation** by enabling financial collaborations and investment opportunities in key sectors.
- Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah** made history as **Namibia's first female president** on **March 21, 2025**, coinciding with the country's **35th Independence Day**. A veteran of **SWAPO**, she won the **November 2024 elections** with 58% of the vote. Her administration will focus on addressing **unemployment**, especially among youth, aiming to create **500,000 jobs** through investments in **agriculture, fishing, and the creative sectors**.
 - President **Donald Trump** announced a **25% tariff** on imported **cars and auto components**, effective next week, impacting global markets including the **EU, Canada, India, and China**. While **Indian automakers** may not face immediate challenges, **auto component manufacturers** and **tyre companies** exporting to the US could be significantly affected. This move aligns with Trump's broader **trade strategy** to protect **American industries** and encourage **domestic manufacturing**.
 - On **March 28, 2025**, a **7.7-magnitude earthquake** struck near **Mandalay, Myanmar**, causing widespread damage in **Bangkok, Thailand**. The Thai government, led by **Prime Minister Paetongtarn Shinawatra**, declared a **state of emergency** as a **30-storey skyscraper** collapsed, trapping 43 workers. **Structural damage** was reported across the city, and **panic** led to evacuations, while **water overflow** was observed in pools. Rescue operations are ongoing.

BANKING & FINANCE

S. No.	Bank Name	Purpose
1.	YES BANK	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YES BANK partnered with the World Trade Center (WTC) Mumbai to host the Export Conclave 2025 at YES BANK House, focusing on empowering MSMEs, enhancing India's export ecosystem, and discussing trade trends, challenges, and global market opportunities. The event highlighted trade facilitation, financial support, and innovation in export services.
2.	Bank of Baroda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank of Baroda has received the ISO 22301:2019 Business Continuity Management System (BCMS) certification from the British Standards Institution (BSI), highlighting its commitment to operational resilience, business continuity planning, and risk management. The certification recognizes the bank's strategies to mitigate risks, minimize disruptions, and ensure swift recovery during crises.
3.	City Union Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Union Bank (CUB) has partnered with Chennai Super Kings (CSK) to launch a co-branded credit card offering exclusive rewards, special offers, and unique cricket-related experiences for CSK fans, enhancing their purchasing experience and team spirit.
4.	State Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On International Women's Day 2025, the State Bank of India (SBI) launched 'SBI Asmita', a collateral-free digital SME loan aimed at women entrepreneurs. This initiative seeks to simplify financing access for women-led MSMEs through a digital, hassle-free process. Additionally, SBI introduced the 'Nari Shakti' platinum debit card, designed for women, offering benefits across multiple categories.



S. No.	Bank Name	Purpose
5.	Bank of Baroda	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bank of Baroda (BoB) introduced the 'bob Global Women NRE & NRO Savings Account', a first among public sector banks, designed specifically for women NRIs. This account offers premium banking privileges, concessional loan rates, and insurance benefits to empower women. Additionally, BoB revamped its 'bob Premium NRE & NRO Savings Account' to enhance the customer experience with new features and benefits.
6.	ICICI Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICICI Bank has appointed Kamal Wali as the new Head of its Security Operations Center to strengthen cybersecurity and risk mitigation. With over 18 years of experience, he will lead security strategies to enhance the bank's digital infrastructure and safeguard customer data amid evolving cyber threats.
7.	City Union Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Union Bank (CUB) has partnered with Sunrisers Hyderabad (SRH) as its exclusive banking partner. The collaboration offers customised financial solutions, exclusive offers, and enhanced digital banking services to SRH fans, players, and staff, strengthening CUB's presence in the sports sector.
8.	State Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Bank of India (SBI) is setting up a specialized unit to manage project financing for emerging industries like AI, e-commerce, and fintech. This initiative aims to diversify SBI's project finance operations beyond traditional sectors. The project is expected to be completed within a year, with plans to recruit specialized professionals and appoint an external consultant.
9.	State Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Bank of India (SBI) is setting up a specialized unit to manage project financing for emerging industries like AI, e-commerce, and fintech. This initiative aims to diversify SBI's project finance operations beyond traditional sectors. The project is expected to be completed within a year, with plans to recruit specialized professionals and appoint an external consultant.
10.	Equitas Small Finance Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Equitas Small Finance Bank has renewed its partnership as the Official Banking Partner with Chennai Super Kings (CSK) for six years and Gujarat Titans (GT) for three years. This collaboration highlights Equitas' commitment to excellence and community engagement through its 'Bank Behind Champions' campaign. The Equitas brand will be featured on the lead helmet of CSK and the back of the helmet of GT throughout the season.
11.	Punjab & Sind Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Punjab & Sind Bank has been honored with the Top Improvers award in the EASE 6.0 Reforms Index for its exceptional progress in digital transformation, financial inclusion, and customer service excellence. Under the leadership of Swarup Kumar Saha (MD & CEO), the bank has enhanced banking services, operational efficiency, and modernization, reflecting its commitment to excellence in the public banking sector.

RBI News**RBI's 'Regulations at a Glance': Key Insights for Cooperative Banks**

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has released the "**Regulations at a Glance**" handbook, compiled by the Department of Regulation (DoR), to offer a broad overview of key regulatory guidelines applicable to various banking entities, including cooperative banks. The handbook summarizes major regulations in a tabular format for easy reference but does not replace official circulars, Master Circulars, or Master Directions.

This article highlights essential regulatory provisions applicable to cooperative banks as outlined in the handbook.

Key Regulations for Cooperative Banks**1. Licensing of New Institutions****Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs)**

- Minimum paid-up capital/net worth: ₹12.5 lakh – ₹4 crore (depending on location and population size).
- Note: RBI has stopped accepting fresh applications for new UCBs since 2004.

Rural Cooperative Banks (StCBs & CCBs)

- Declared as State Cooperative Banks (StCBs) or Central Cooperative Banks (CCBs) by the state government.
- RBI grants licenses based on NABARD's recommendations and internal assessment.



Promoters' Criteria

- Evaluated on educational qualifications, professional competence, financial strength, capital mobilization ability, and membership eligibility.

2. Branch Licensing**Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs)**

- Automatic Route:** UCBs classified as Financially Sound and Well Managed (FSWM) can open branches up to 10% of existing branches (min. 1, max. 5).
- Approval Route:** FSWM UCBs must submit an Annual Business Plan (ABP) to RBI's regional office by December 15.

State Cooperative Banks (StCBs)

- Require NABARD & RBI approval with conditions like:
- CRAR \geq 9%, NNPA \leq 5%, compliance record, and no penalties in last two years.

District Central Cooperative Banks (DCCBs)**Additional requirements,**

- Operational for at least 3 years and net profit in last 2 years.
- Not under RBI restrictions.

3. Governance Framework**Regulated by**

- State/Central Cooperative Society laws.
- Banking Regulation (BR) Act, 1949 (since 2020).

Key Provisions

- UCBs must form an Audit Committee of the Board.
- Fit and proper criteria for directors, MD/CEO, and WTD.
- Maximum continuous tenure limits for directors.
- Larger UCBs must appoint an independent Chief Risk Officer (CRO).
- NABARD issues governance guidelines for rural cooperative banks.

4. Credit Risk Management**Urban Cooperative Banks (UCBs)**

- Loan against shares, bonds, and debentures: Max ₹10 lakh, LTV 50%.

Rural Cooperative Banks

- Loan against shares, bonds, and debentures: Max ₹5 lakh, LTV 50%.

Securitization of Standard Assets

- Allowed for SCBs, AIFIs, and NBFCs.
- Not allowed for RRBs and Cooperative Banks.

5. Interest Rate Framework & Deposit Pricing**General Principles**

- Uniform interest rates across all branches/customers.
- No discrimination in deposit rates for similar amounts and dates.

- No negotiation of interest rates with individual depositors.
- NRE/NRO deposit rates cannot exceed domestic deposit rates.

6. Mergers & Amalgamations**Key Provisions**

- Governed by the Banking Regulation (BR) Act, 1949.
- RBI has discretionary power under Section 44A to approve voluntary amalgamations.
- Private Bank Mergers:** Must be approved by shareholders (2/3rd majority) before submission to RBI.
- UCB Mergers:** Considered only if depositors' funds are fully protected.

7. Resolution of Banking Companies & Cooperative Banks**Compulsory Amalgamation/Reconstruction**

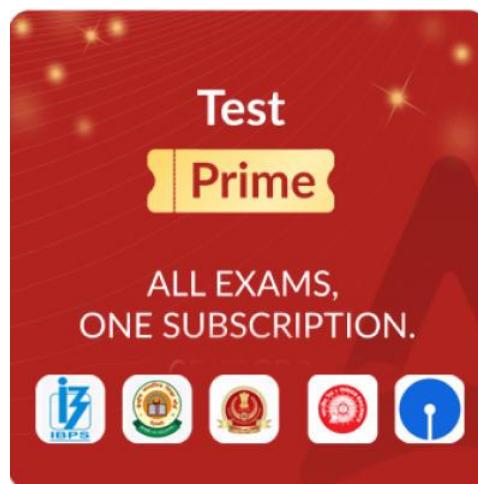
- RBI can apply to the government for restructuring under Section 45 of the BR Act.
- Section 45(4) (2020 Amendment): RBI can initiate amalgamations during a moratorium or at any other time.

Powers of RBI

- Section 10B:** Remove Chairman/MD of a banking company.
- Section 36ACA:** Supersede the board of banking companies.
- Section 35A:** Issue directives for proper banking management.
- Section 22(4):** RBI can cancel banking licenses (appeals go to the Central Government within 30 days).

Post-License Cancellation

- Banking companies:** High Court appoints liquidator.
- Uni-state cooperative banks:** Registrar of Cooperative Societies appoints liquidator.
- Multi-state cooperative banks:** Central Registrar appoints liquidator.



Current Affairs related to Regulatory authorities		
S.No.	Name	Purpose
1.	RBI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RBI imposed monetary penalties on HSBC (₹66.6 lakh) for violations related to KYC norms, foreign currency exposures, and deposit interest rate rules, and on IIFL Samasta Finance (₹33.1 lakh) for issues including interest charges before loan disbursement, NPA misclassification, and customer identification. Additionally, three cooperative banks in Maharashtra were penalized for regulatory non-compliance.
2.	Reserve Bank of India Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has kept the window open for the exchange and deposit of ₹2000 denomination notes, despite 98.18% of the total value being returned to the banking system. This ensures that individuals still holding these notes have accessible channels for deposit or exchange.
3.	Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On March 3, 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) appointed Dr. Ajit Ratnakar Joshi as its new Executive Director (ED). He will oversee the Department of Statistics and Information Management and the Financial Stability Department. With over 30 years of experience in statistics, information technology, and cyber risk management, Dr. Joshi brings extensive expertise to his new role.
4.	Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 29th Meeting of the Standing Advisory Committee (SAC), chaired by Swaminathan J, Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), focused on enhancing credit access to the Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSME) sector. Key initiatives discussed included promoting the Unified Lending Interface (ULI), expanding the Account Aggregator framework, and testing innovative solutions through the Regulatory Sandbox. Challenges like financial literacy gaps, information asymmetry, and delayed payments were addressed to ensure transparency, accessibility, and support for MSMEs' growth.
5.	Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has imposed monetary penalties totaling ₹76.6 lakh on four Non-Banking Financial Companies (NBFCs) for non-compliance with regulatory norms. The penalties were issued under Section 58G of the RBI Act, 1934, and Section 30 of the Payment and Settlement Systems Act, 2007. The violations included issues with governance, reporting requirements, fair lending practices, capital adequacy, and fraud risk management. This action underscores the RBI's commitment to financial discipline, consumer protection, and strengthening compliance in the NBFC sector.
6.	Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the National Centre for Financial Education (NCFE) have launched nationwide financial literacy campaigns under the National Strategy for Financial Education (NSFE). These initiatives aim to promote financial awareness and inclusion, targeting diverse groups, especially youth (below 18 years) and senior citizens (above 60 years), to empower them with essential financial knowledge and skills.
7.	Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced a framework to recognize a Self-Regulatory Organisation (SRO) for the Account Aggregator (AA) ecosystem, aiming to streamline financial data exchange, address operational challenges, and ensure compliance. This initiative enhances coordination, standardization, and dispute resolution within the AA framework, building on the 2016 AA framework and the recent recognition of the Fintech Association for Consumer Empowerment as an SRO in 2024.
8.	Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reported a rise in its net short position in the forward book, reaching \$77.5 billion by January 2025, up from \$67.9 billion in December 2024. This increase reflects the forex market interventions amid rupee depreciation and global trade uncertainties. The data was released in RBI's March 2025 monthly bulletin.
9.	Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Bank of Mauritius (BOM) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to enable cross-border transactions using the Indian Rupee (INR) and Mauritian Rupee (MUR). This agreement aims to reduce costs and improve efficiency for exporters and importers by settling transactions in their domestic currencies, strengthening economic and financial ties between India and Mauritius.



Current Affairs related to Regulatory authorities		
S.No.	Name	Purpose
10.	Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reports a significant shift in inward remittances, with the U.S. and U.K. surpassing Gulf countries as top contributors. According to the RBI's paper on India's Remittances Survey, remittances from the U.S. and U.K. nearly doubled, accounting for 40% of total inflows in FY24, up from 26% in FY17. This rise is linked to the increasing presence of Indian professionals and students in these countries, while contributions from traditional sources like the UAE and Saudi Arabia have declined.
11.	Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set the interest rate for the Government of India Floating Rate Bond 2033 (GOI FRB 2033) at 8.34% per annum for the period from March 22, 2024, to September 21, 2024. The bond's floating interest rate is determined based on the Weighted Average Yield (WAY) of the last three 182-Day Treasury Bill auctions, plus a fixed spread of 1.22%.
12.	Reserve Bank of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has won the Digital Transformation Award 2025 from Central Banking, London for successfully implementing its in-house digital initiatives, Pravaah and Sarthi. These advancements have improved workflow management, regulatory processes, and operational efficiency, reducing reliance on paper-based submissions.

SEBI News

S.No	Announcement	Key Details
1.	SEBI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEBI recorded a 48% YoY growth in total income, reaching ₹2,075 crore in FY 2023-24, driven by higher fees and subscriptions from stock exchanges, market participants, and companies. While investment and other income also increased, total expenditure rose to ₹1,006 crore. SEBI reported substantial funds in its General Fund, Investor Protection & Education Fund (IPEF), and Disgorgement Fund, highlighting its strong financial position.
2.	SEBI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEBI has reduced the minimum investment for Zero Coupon Zero Principal (ZCZP) instruments on the Social Stock Exchange (SSE) from ₹10,000 to ₹1,000. This decision aims to boost retail participation and increase funding for non-profit organizations (NPOs), especially in sectors like education and healthcare. The change, effective immediately, modifies SEBI's directive from September 19, 2022, to strengthen social impact investment in India.
3.	Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has partnered with DigiLocker to simplify access to investors' securities holdings and reduce unclaimed assets in the market. This initiative allows investors to store and retrieve demat holdings, mutual fund statements, and Consolidated Account Statements (CAS) through DigiLocker. SEBI also introduced a nomination facility for appointing legal heirs, ensuring smooth asset transition and improving investor protection and financial transparency.

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

GDP & GROWTH RATE as per October 2024

- Crisil has forecasted India's **GDP growth** to stay at **6.5%** in **FY26**, with the **RBI's MPC** likely to reduce the **repo rate** by **50-75 basis points** to boost growth. While lower than the previous year's **9.2%**, it aligns closely with the **pre-pandemic average** of **6.6%**, maintaining India's position as the **fastest-growing major economy**.

- Morgan Stanley projects India's **GDP** will reach **\$5.7 trillion** by fiscal **2028**, making it the **third-largest economy**, surpassing **Germany and Japan**. India, currently the fifth-largest economy, is expected to overtake Japan by **2026**. India's share in **global GDP** will rise from **3.5%** in 2023 to **4.5%** by **2029**, driven by strong policies, improved infrastructure, and a growing consumer market. In a bullish scenario, GDP could reach **\$10.3 trillion** by **2035**.



- India has achieved a historic economic milestone by doubling its **GDP** from **\$2.1 trillion** in 2015 to **\$4.3 trillion** in 2025, marking a **105% increase** and the fastest growth among major global economies. According to the **IMF**, India's inflation-adjusted GDP growth over the decade is **77%**, positioning it as one of the world's most rapidly expanding economies. India is set to surpass **Japan** in 2025 and may overtake **Germany** by 2027.
- S&P Global** has revised India's **GDP growth forecast** for **FY26** down to **6.5%** from the earlier **6.7%**. The forecast assumes a **normal monsoon** and stable **commodity prices**, including **crude oil**. Despite global trade uncertainties, **India's services-led exports** to the **US** remain strong. Additionally, **easing food inflation**, **tax benefits** from the **FY26 Budget**, and **lower borrowing costs** are expected to boost domestic consumption.
- India's **Current Account Deficit (CAD)** widened to **\$11.5 billion (1.1% of GDP)** in **Q3 FY25**, driven by a higher **merchandise trade deficit** of **\$79.2 billion**, while **CAD** moderated from **Q2 FY25**. The **Balance of Payments (BoP)** saw a **depletion of \$37.7 billion**, contrasting with a surplus a year ago. **Forex reserves surged by \$311 billion** since **Dec 2018**, marking the largest increase under any **RBI Governor**.
- India's **core sector growth** slowed to **2.9% in February 2025**, the weakest in five months, compared to **7.1% in February 2024**. The decline was due to a **high base effect and weaker output** in five of the eight industries. **Cement (10.5%)** and **fertilizers (10.2%)** were the only sectors with **annual growth**, while **coal (1.7%)**, **crude oil (-5.2%)**, and **natural gas (-6%)** performed poorly. The slowdown may impact **Industrial Production Index (IIP) growth**, which stood at **5% in January 2025**.

ECONOMY NEWS

- GST collections in February 2025** rose by **9.1% YoY**, totaling **₹1.84 lakh crore**, reflecting strong domestic economic activity and improved compliance. The breakdown includes **Central GST (CGST) ₹35,204 crore**, **State GST (SGST) ₹43,704 crore**, **Integrated GST (IGST) ₹90,870 crore** (with ₹41,702 crore from imports), and **Compensation Cess ₹13,868 crore**.
- India's **circular economy** is expected to generate over **\$2 trillion** in market value and create nearly **10 million jobs** by **2050**, as per **Union Minister Bhupender Yadav**. At the **12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum**, he highlighted the shift towards a sustainable, **reuse and recycle-based system**. India is also interested in hosting the **World Circular Economy Forum 2026**, launching key **initiatives, MoUs, and reports** to promote **sustainable waste management** and **urban circular economy practices**.

- India's **agriculture trade surplus** has been shrinking despite growth in exports like **basmati rice, spices, coffee, and tobacco**. The surge in imports of **pulses** and **edible oils** has contributed to this decline. The surplus peaked at **\$27.7 billion** in **2013-14**, and dropped to **\$16 billion** in **2023-24**. For **April-December 2024**, the surplus fell to **\$8.2 billion**, down from **\$10.6 billion** in the previous year.
- India's **retail inflation** dropped to a **seven-month low of 3.61%** in **February 2025**, driven by a decline in **food inflation** to below 4% for the first time in nearly two years. This broad-based reduction, particularly in perishable goods and protein-based food items, has raised expectations for a potential **rate cut** by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** in the upcoming April meeting.
- India's **Consumer Price Index (CPI)** for **February 2025** shows a **year-on-year inflation of 3.61%**, marking the **lowest inflation rate** since **July 2024**. This represents a **65 basis points** decline from **January 2025**. A significant drop in **food inflation**, especially in **rural areas**, contributed to this moderation.
- India's **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)** for **January 2025** showed a **5.0% growth**, up from **3.2% in December 2024**. The **manufacturing sector** led the growth at **5.5%**, followed by **mining (4.4%)** and **electricity (2.4%)**. The IIP index for January 2025 stands at **161.3**, up from **153.6** in January 2024.
- Moody's Ratings projects India's **economic growth** to exceed **6.5% in FY 2025-26**, up from **6.3% in FY 2024-25**. The growth will be fueled by increased **government capital expenditure, tax cuts, and monetary easing**. However, Moody's warns of a moderate decline in **asset quality** in the **banking sector**, particularly due to stress in **unsecured retail loans, microfinance, and small business loans**.
- Fitch Ratings has affirmed the **Long-Term Issuer Default Rating (IDR)** of **Union Bank of India** and **Punjab National Bank (PNB)** at '**BBB-**' with a stable outlook. The **Viability Rating (VR)** has been upgraded to '**bb-**' from '**b+**', reflecting improved **financial performance and asset quality**. The ratings reflect strong **government support** and a favorable **operating environment**.
- India's **net FDI** dropped significantly to **\$1.4 billion** during **April 2024–January 2025**, down from **\$11.5 billion** a year earlier. This decline was due to increased **repatriation by investors** and higher **outward FDI** by Indian firms. However, **gross FDI** grew by **12.4% YoY**, reaching **\$67.7 billion**, as per the **RBI's March 2025 bulletin**.
- India's **foreign exchange reserves** surged by **\$15.267 billion** to reach **\$653.966 billion** during the week ending **March 7, 2025**, marking the sharpest rise in over two years. This increase was driven by a **\$10 billion forex swap** by the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** on **February 28, 2025**. The previous week's reserves were **\$638.698 billion**, and the all-time high remains **\$704.885 billion** (September 2024).



- India's wholesale inflation rose to **2.38%** in **February 2024**, slightly up from **2.31%** in January. The increase was driven by higher prices in **manufactured food products, textiles, and non-food articles**, though a decline in the **Food Index** provided some relief.

BUSINESS NEWS

- Paytm** has partnered with **Perplexity**, an **AI-driven answer engine**, to integrate **AI-powered search** into the Paytm app, enabling users to ask questions, explore topics in **local languages**, and make informed **financial decisions**. Perplexity offers **real-time responses** with **in-line citations**, providing **accurate and reliable answers**, especially for **finance and market trends**.
- PhonePe** has launched the '**Insuring HEROES**' campaign ahead of **International Women's Day 2025**, aiming to **enhance financial security for women** by offering **exclusive discounts on term life and health insurance**. Available on the **PhonePe app from March 6 to March 9, 2025**, the campaign provides **up to 30% off on term life insurance and 15% off on health insurance**, making **affordable insurance more accessible for women**.
- In **February 2025**, India's **digital payments ecosystem** showed mixed trends, with **UPI transactions declining MoM**, while **FASTag and AePS saw steady growth**. Despite this, the industry continued expanding **YoY**, driven by increased adoption of **cashless transactions** across the country.
- Razorpay**, a leading **fintech company**, has launched its **payment solutions in Singapore**, marking a major expansion after its success in **India and Malaysia**. The move aligns with Singapore's **digital-first economy** and growing **real-time payments ecosystem**. Razorpay aims to simplify **cross-border transactions**, reduce **payment costs**, and introduce **AI-driven financial tools** to empower businesses in Singapore.
- SBI Life Insurance** has launched two new **child insurance products**—'**SBI Life – Smart Future Star**' and '**SBI Life – Smart Platina Young Achiever**'—to secure children's **financial future**. These products aim to provide **financial safeguards** amidst rising **education costs**, evolving **career aspirations**, and increasing **lifestyle expenses**, ensuring children can pursue their dreams without financial constraints.
- GRM Overseas Limited** has launched a new marketing campaign for its **10X Classic Chakki Fresh Atta**, with **Bollywood actor Salman Khan** as the brand ambassador. Titled "**Better Half Ki Better Choice**", the campaign highlights the product's **quality, hygiene, and nutrition**, positioning it as the preferred choice for households. With the tagline "**10 Ka Dum**", the campaign promotes **branded packaged wheat flour** over traditional unpackaged options.

- Star Health Insurance** launched the **SheTARA campaign** in **Tamil Nadu** to celebrate **International Women's Day**. The initiative promotes **preventive healthcare** among women and encourages more women to join as **insurance agents**. With **42% of India's women workforce** (6.3 lakh) based in Tamil Nadu, the state is an ideal location for this campaign.
- Credit disbursement to **priority sectors** like **agriculture, MSME, and social infrastructure** has grown by **85%**, rising from **₹23.01 lakh crore** in 2019 to **₹42.73 lakh crore** in 2024. The **RBI** and **government** have implemented measures to ensure **credit discipline, responsible lending, and technological adoption**. Public Sector Banks (PSBs) are collaborating with **FinTechs** to enhance **banking services** and facilitate **seamless lending**.
- Digital payment transactions in India surged from **8,839 crore** in FY 2021-22 to **18,737 crore** in FY 2023-24, reflecting a **46% CAGR**. This growth was led by **UPI**, which grew at **69% CAGR**, contributing to over **70%** of digital payments. The **Incentive Scheme for RuPay Debit Cards and BHIM-UPI transactions** has been pivotal in boosting **digital transactions** nationwide.
- India's **digital payment ecosystem** saw over **18,000 crore transactions** in FY 2024-25 (till January 2025), driven by **UPI adoption, fintech collaborations, and government initiatives**. To ensure security, **RBI** and **NPCI** implemented **AI-driven fraud detection** systems and awareness campaigns, while the **government** strengthened **cybercrime reporting mechanisms** to enhance **user safety** in digital transactions.
- The **MSME sector** in India has seen significant growth in **credit availability** and a reduction in **Non-Performing Assets (NPAs)**, with the **gross NPA ratio** decreasing from **11% in 2020 to 4% in 2024**. Measures by the **government** and **RBI** have strengthened **loan recovery mechanisms** and ensured financial stability, improving the health of the MSME credit sector.
- In 2024, India became the top source of **Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)** into **Dubai**, surpassing the **United States, France, and the United Kingdom**. Dubai maintained its status as the world's leading destination for **Greenfield FDI projects** for the fourth consecutive year, driven by its **business-friendly environment, tax policies, and infrastructure**, positioning it as a global investment hub.
- IIFL Finance has rebranded seven of its branches as '**Shakti branches**' to mark **Women's Day**, staffed entirely by women in the **Delhi NCR and Mumbai MMR**. This initiative aims to empower women in the **financial services sector**, promote **diversity, equity, and inclusion**, and support **women entrepreneurs** while advancing **financial literacy** in underserved communities.



- The **Finance Ministry** has approved the issuance of **Zero Coupon Bonds (ZCBs)** by **Power Finance Corporation (PFC)** to raise up to ₹10,000 crore. ZCBs are issued at a discount and redeemed at full face value upon maturity, with the return for investors being the difference between the issue price and the face value.
- In **February 2025**, **UPI** saw a 5.2% decline in transaction volume, totaling **16.11 billion** transactions. Despite this drop, **PhonePe**, **Google Pay**, and **Paytm** maintained their market dominance, with **Flipkart's Super.money** debuting in the top five UPI apps. This decline signals a possible shift in **user behavior** or market **saturation**.
- In a historic move, the **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** granted **Valueattics Reinsurance**, backed by **Prem Watsa** and **Kamesh Goyal**, the **first private reinsurance license** in India. This marks a significant step in fostering competition in the reinsurance sector, ending **GIC Re's monopoly** that has lasted since 1972. The approval was granted during **Debasish Panda's** final board meeting as IRDAI Chairperson on **March 12, 2025**.
- The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** has re-designated **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)**, **The New India Assurance Company**, and **General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re)** as **Domestic Systemically Important Insurers (D-SIIs)** for **2024-25**. These insurers are deemed critical to the stability of the Indian financial system due to their size, market importance, and interconnectedness with both the domestic and global economy.
- Adar Poonawalla, CEO of **Serum Institute of India**, sold his stake in **Magma General Insurance** to **Patanjali Ayurved** and **DS Group** for ₹4,500 crore, giving them a 98% stake. This strategic acquisition strengthens **Magma Insurance's** position, leveraging Patanjali's rural reach and DS Group's financial expertise. The company offers over **70 insurance products**, with a **gross written premium (GWP)** of ₹3,295 crore in 2024, projected to rise to ₹3,650-3,700 crore in 2025.
- The **Union Cabinet** approved a ₹1,500 crore incentive scheme for banks to promote **UPI transactions** below ₹2,000 in FY 2024-25. Banks will receive a 0.15% incentive on transactions by **small merchants**, with part of the payout based on maintaining reliable **UPI infrastructure**. The initiative aims to boost **digital payments** adoption, especially among **small businesses**, without imposing merchant fees.
- The **Union Cabinet**, led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the **Revised Rashtriya Gokul Mission (RGM)** with an allocation of ₹3,400 crore (plus ₹1,000 crore) for the 15th Finance Commission cycle (2021-26). The mission focuses on

- boosting **milk production**, **genetic improvement**, and **farmer incomes**, while preserving **indigenous bovine breeds** through scientific interventions.
- BPCL** has inaugurated a **3.2 MW AC floating solar power plant** at the **Kochi Refinery**, marking a major step toward **sustainable energy**. Chief Secretary Sarada Muraleedharan inaugurated the project on **March 22, 2025**. Built on an **8-acre rainwater harvesting pond**, the plant is part of BPCL's efforts to integrate **renewable energy**, with an investment of ₹28.93 crore.
 - The **Indian government** has formed the **Inter-Ministerial-Industry Committee on Fintech (IMICF)** to address **regulatory concerns** and create a long-term strategy for the **financial technology (fintech)** sector. Chaired by the **Secretary of the Department of Financial Services (DFS)**, the committee will evaluate fintech's impact on the **banking and financial services industry (BFSI)**, identify growth obstacles, and study **global best practices** in **governance** and **regulation**.
 - Adar Poonawalla, CEO of **Serum Institute of India**, sold his stake in **Magma General Insurance** to **Patanjali Ayurved** and **DS Group** for ₹4,500 crore, giving them a 98% stake. This strategic acquisition strengthens **Magma Insurance's** position, leveraging Patanjali's rural reach and DS Group's financial expertise. The company offers over **70 insurance products**, with a **gross written premium (GWP)** of ₹3,295 crore in 2024, projected to rise to ₹3,650-3,700 crore in 2025.
 - SBI Mutual Fund** launched two new schemes—the **SBI BSE PSU Bank Index Fund** and the **SBI BSE PSU Bank ETF**—to provide exposure to India's public sector banking sector. Both will track the **BSE PSU Bank Index** with **95% of assets** allocated to its securities. The **NFO** opens on **March 17, 2025**, and closes on **March 20, 2025**, with a minimum investment of ₹5,000. The funds are managed by **Viral Chhadva**.
 - In a significant milestone for India's **floriculture sector**, the **APEDA** facilitated the first-ever export of **Anthurium flowers** from **Mizoram** to **Singapore**, consisting of **1,024 cut flowers** (70 kg) in 50 boxes. This initiative, in collaboration with the **Department of Horticulture, Government of Mizoram**, highlights Mizoram's floriculture potential and boosts India's agricultural exports, benefiting local farmers, including women.
 - Public Sector Banks (PSBs)** in India reported significant financial improvement in **FY24**, with net profits reaching their highest-ever levels and a **33% increase in dividend payouts** to **Rs 27,830 crore**, up from **Rs 20,964 crore** in **FY23**. This growth highlights the banks' strengthened financial position and their ability to return value to **shareholders**, including the **Indian government**.



- The Finance Ministry informed the Lok Sabha that public sector banks (PSBs) have transferred over ₹45,000 crore of unclaimed deposits to the Depositor Education and Awareness (DEA) Fund between 2019-20 and 2024-25 (up to December 31, 2024). The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) manages this fund under the Depositor Education and Awareness Fund Scheme, 2014.
- Reliance Industries Ltd (RIL), led by Mukesh Ambani, has

acquired a 100% stake in Nauyaan Tradings Private Limited (NTPL) through its subsidiary Reliance Strategic Business Ventures Limited (RSBVL) for ₹1 lakh. Additionally, NTPL has signed a share purchase agreement with Welspun Corp Limited (WCL) to acquire 74% of Nauyaan Shipyard Private Limited (NSPL) for ₹382.73 crore. This acquisition, set to complete by **March 21, 2025**, is part of Reliance's strategy to expand in the shipyard, naval, defense, and energy sectors.

MoU's & AGREEMENTS

MoUs WITH COUNTRY

Country	MoU's With	Field/Purpose
India	Singapore	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> India and Singapore signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) on Green and Digital Shipping Corridor (GDSC) collaboration during Singapore Maritime Week (SMW) on March 25, 2025. The agreement focuses on maritime digitalization and decarbonization, aiming to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and integrate digital solutions. Additionally, India and the Netherlands discussed using Dutch expertise for cargo movement in rivers like the Brahmaputra and Barak. Sarbananda Sonowal highlighted the initiative's role in enhancing sustainability, efficiency, and technological advancements in the maritime sector.
Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lanka India Business Association (LIBA) has been launched in Sri Lanka to strengthen trade, investment, and business networking between India and Sri Lanka. With India set to become the world's second-largest economy by 2075, the initiative capitalizes on the shift towards Eastern economic power and Sri Lanka's strategic location and historical trade ties with India.

MoUs BETWEEN ORGANIZATION

Organization	MoU's With	Field/Purpose
Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), and Indian Overseas Bank	Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), Indian Green Building Council (IGBC), and Indian Overseas Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To offer accessible financing for IGBC-certified green buildings. This partnership aims to promote energy-efficient construction, water conservation, and the use of renewable materials, fostering sustainable development in India's real estate sector.
HDFC Bank	Indian Air Force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indian Air Force (IAF) and CSC Academy to launch Project HAKK (Hawai Anubhavi Kalyan Kendra), aimed at supporting defence pensioners, veterans, and their families with financial services and skill development. The project will initially establish 25 centres at Air Force units in New Delhi, Bengaluru, Gurgaon, Pune, Secunderabad, Guwahati, Jodhpur, Chandigarh, and other locations, promoting economic inclusiveness and welfare.
SIDBI	Federal Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SIDBI and Federal Bank have signed an MoU to enhance financial support for MSMEs, offering project finance, equipment loans, working capital support, and loans against property. The collaboration will also explore joint financing options to improve credit access for MSMEs, reinforcing their role in India's manufacturing and industrial growth.



Organization	MoU's With	Field/Purpose
DPIIT	Mercedes-Benz India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The DPIIT and Mercedes-Benz India have signed an MoU to enhance manufacturing, road safety, and sustainability in India. This partnership aims to support startups by providing infrastructure, mentorship, funding, and market linkages while fostering technological advancements and sustainable innovations. The collaboration will also strengthen industry-academia linkages, promote green solutions, and facilitate international knowledge exchange to drive impactful innovations in the automotive sector.
UIDAI	Sarvam AI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> UIDAI has partnered with Sarvam AI, a Bengaluru-based Generative AI company, to enhance Aadhaar services starting March 18, 2025. The collaboration introduces AI-powered voice interactions, real-time fraud detection, and multilingual support to improve accessibility, security, and efficiency. The GenAI stack will operate within UIDAI's secure infrastructure, ensuring data privacy. This agreement, lasting one year with a possible extension, underscores UIDAI's focus on technological advancements and user-centric innovations.
Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy	Adamas University, Kolkata	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy (CCRH) and Adamas University, Kolkata signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on March 1, 2025, to enhance academic and research collaboration in homoeopathy. The agreement aims to advance scientific research, knowledge exchange, and interdisciplinary studies in alternative medicine, contributing to the broader acceptance and integration of homoeopathy in mainstream healthcare.
Inland Waterways Authority of India	Jammu & Kashmir government	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Inland Waterways Authority of India (IWAI) signed an MoU with the Jammu & Kashmir government to develop river cruise tourism, aiming to boost tourism, employment, and economic growth. Announced during Chintan Shivir in Srinagar in the presence of Union Minister Sarbananda Sonowal, the initiative focuses on three national waterways—River Chenab (NW-26), River Jhelum (NW-49), and River Ravi (NW-84)—with infrastructure development and navigational improvements to facilitate cruise operations.
Centrico Insurance Repository	CDSL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Centrico Insurance Repository, a subsidiary of CDSL, has partnered with LIC to provide digital insurance repository services, promoting paperless policy management. This collaboration aims to enhance digital accessibility and efficiency in the insurance sector. Centrico, which has partnered with 43 insurers, including 23 life insurance companies, is strengthening its network in digital insurance services.



Organization	MoU's With	Field/Purpose
Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD)	UNICEF YuWaah	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) and UNICEF YuWaah have signed a Statement of Intent (SOI) to empower rural women and youth in India. The three-year partnership aims to strengthen livelihood opportunities, promote entrepreneurship, and improve digital infrastructure in rural areas. Key initiatives include supporting Self-Help Groups (SHG), expanding female labor force participation, and enhancing youth skilling through platforms like Youth Hub and Didi ki Dukan.
UIDAI,	IIIT-Hyderabad	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The UIDAI, in collaboration with IIIT-Hyderabad, launched a Biometric SDK Benchmarking Challenge to improve fingerprint authentication for children aged 5-10. The initiative focuses on age invariance in biometric systems, ensuring accuracy over time, with global participation open to researchers. Participants can access UIDAI's field-collected dataset for better real-world model performance.
Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances	Digital India Bhashini	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG), in collaboration with Digital India Bhashini, is launching an AI-powered, multimodal, multilingual grievance redressal system for CPGRAMS by July 2025. This initiative enables citizens to file grievances in 22 regional languages using voice and text input, enhancing accessibility, inclusivity, and efficiency.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

APPOINTMENTS NATIONAL

Person Name	Appointed As	Key Notes
Manan Kumar Mishra	Chairman of the Bar Council of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manan Kumar Mishra has been re-elected as Chairman of the Bar Council of India (BCI) for the seventh consecutive time, highlighting his strong influence in the legal community. Along with his legal expertise, Mishra is also a BJP Member of Parliament in the Rajya Sabha from Bihar.
Ajay Seth	Economic Secretary Affairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ajay Seth, the Economic Affairs Secretary, was given the additional charge of Secretary, Department of Revenue, following the appointment of Tuhin Kanta Pandey as SEBI Chairman. The Revenue Secretary position became vacant after Pandey assumed charge on March 1, 2025.
Dr. Mayank Sharma	Controller General of Defence Accounts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Mayank Sharma assumed office as the Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA). A 1989-batch officer of the Indian Defence Accounts Service (IDAS), he brings over three decades of experience in key roles within the Government of India.
Ajay Bhadoo	Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government of India appointed Ajay Bhadoo, Additional Secretary in the Department of Commerce, as the new CEO of Government e Marketplace (GeM). Bhadoo, a 1999-batch IAS officer from the Gujarat cadre, will lead GeM as it transitions into a next-generation digital marketplace powered by Tata Consultancy Services (TCS).



Person Name	Appointed As	Key Notes
Anju Rathi Rana	India's first woman Law Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anju Rathi Rana has made history as India's first woman Law Secretary, marking a significant milestone in the Ministry of Law and Justice. A distinguished Indian Legal Service (ILS) officer, she succeeds Niten Chandra, breaking a long-standing tradition of male leadership in the role. Her appointment reflects the government's commitment to gender inclusion in top administrative positions.
Vikas Kaushal	Chairman and Managing Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The government has appointed Vikas Kaushal as the Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited (HPCL) for a five-year term, replacing Rajneesh Narang, the interim CMD since September 1, 2024. Kaushal, with over three decades of experience in the energy, oil & gas, and power sectors, is known for leading strategic transformations and digital initiatives in major Indian energy companies.
Justice Joymalya Bagchi	Calcutta High Court, as a Judge of the Supreme Court of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Government of India has officially appointed Justice Joymalya Bagchi, a sitting judge of the Calcutta High Court, as a Judge of the Supreme Court of India. The announcement was made by Union Law Minister Arjun Ram Meghwal on X (formerly Twitter), confirming the appointment by the President of India after consultation with the Chief Justice of India (CJI). Justice Bagchi, who is set to become CJI in 2031, is recognized for his merit, integrity, and competence, key factors in his elevation.
Arun Mammen	Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of MRF Ltd	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association (ATMA) has elected Arun Mammen, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director of MRF Ltd., as its new Chairman. This leadership change occurs during ATMA's Golden Jubilee Year (2025), marking a significant milestone for the organization.
N Ganapathy Subramaniam	Chairman of the Board of Directors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tata Communications has appointed N Ganapathy Subramaniam (NGS) as the Chairman of the Board of Directors, effective March 14, 2025, following the recommendation of the Nomination and Remuneration Committee.
Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman	CEO of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman has been appointed as the new CEO of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), succeeding Professor Abhay Karandikar. Dr. Kalyanaraman will lead ANRF in its mission to promote research and development (R&D) initiatives across India. The handover was conducted by DST Secretary Professor Abhay Karandikar.
Lip-Bu Tan	New CEO	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intel Corporation appointed Lip-Bu Tan as its new CEO, effective March 18, 2025, marking a leadership transition from Interim Co-CEOs David Zinsner and Michelle (MJ) Johnston Holthaus. Tan will also rejoin Intel's board of directors after stepping down in August 2024.
Dr. Lakshmi Venu	Vice Chairman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited (TAFE) has appointed Dr. Lakshmi Venu as its Vice Chairman. With extensive experience in farm mechanisation and the auto component sectors, her appointment reflects TAFE's commitment to enhancing leadership and expanding its global presence. Dr. Lakshmi has played a key role in the Indian automotive and farm equipment industries.
Indranil Bhattacharyya	Executive Director (ED)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indranil Bhattacharyya has been appointed as Executive Director (ED) of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), effective March 19, 2025. He will oversee the Department of Economic and Policy Research (DEPR), responsible for shaping monetary policies and conducting economic research.



Person Name	Appointed As	Key Notes
Deena Mehta	Independent Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fino Payments Bank (FPB) has re-appointed Deena Mehta as an Independent Director for a second term from March 19, 2025, to March 18, 2028. A seasoned finance professional, Mehta has played a key role in Indian capital markets reforms, including the BOLT trading system at BSE and the establishment of Central Depository Services (CDSL).
Amitabh Kant	Chancellor (Chairperson),	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIIT University (NU) has appointed Amitabh Kant, former NITI Aayog CEO and India's G20 Sherpa, as its new Chancellor (Chairperson), effective March 10, 2025. Succeeding K Kasturirangan, his leadership will focus on economic transformation, policy-making, and technology-driven innovation, reinforcing NU's commitment to industry-aligned education and skilling.
Anuj Kumar Singh	Joint Secretary (Director level) in UPSC, Delhi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anuj Kumar Singh, a 2009-batch IRSEE officer, has been appointed as Joint Secretary (Director level) in UPSC, Delhi under the Central Staffing Scheme for five years or until further orders. Recommended by the Ministry of Railways, his technical and administrative expertise is expected to enhance UPSC's operational efficiency and strategic framework.
Justice Tandon	Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Justice Harish Tandon has been appointed as the new Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court. His appointment comes after the retirement of Justice Chakradhari Sharan Singh on January 19, 2024. Until now, Justice Arindam Sinha had been serving as the acting Chief Justice.
Mythili Balasubramanian	Interim MD & CEO of Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mythili Balasubramanian has been appointed as the Interim MD & CEO of Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company (EARC), effective immediately until September 30, 2025. With nearly five years at EARC and over 40 years of experience in banking, NPA resolution, and IBC processes, she brings significant expertise to the role.
Gopal Vittal,	Vice Chairman and Managing Director of Bharti Airtel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gopal Vittal, Vice Chairman and Managing Director of Bharti Airtel, has been elected as the Chairman of the Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA), becoming the second Indian after Sunil Mittal to hold this prestigious position. His tenure will last until the end of 2026. GSMA represents over 1,100 companies from the global telecommunications industry.
Ajay Seth	Finance Secretary	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indian government appointed Ajay Seth, the current Economic Affairs Secretary, as the new Finance Secretary. With over three decades of experience, Seth has been instrumental in shaping India's economic policies and driving financial reforms, as the government seeks to balance fiscal discipline with economic growth.
Sanjay Singh	president of the Wrestling Federation of India	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sanjay Singh, president of the Wrestling Federation of India (WFI), was elected as a Bureau Member of United World Wrestling (UWW)-Asia during the UWW-Asia General Assembly in Amman, Jordan, on March 24, 2025. He secured 22 out of 38 votes, marking a significant milestone for Indian wrestling and strengthening its international presence in Asia.
Rajiv Gauba	Full-Time Member of NITI Aayog	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rajiv Gauba, former Cabinet Secretary, has been appointed as a Full-Time Member of NITI Aayog. A 1982-batch IAS officer of the Jharkhand cadre, Gauba served as India's top bureaucrat from 2019 to August 2024. His appointment is effective immediately and will continue until further orders.



Person Name	Appointed As	Key Notes
Rahul Bhave	MD & CEO of IFCI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rahul Bhave has been appointed as the MD & CEO of IFCI for a three-year term, approved by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC). Bhave, previously Deputy Managing Director, will assume office following this decision.
Yusuf Pachmariwala	Hitachi Cash Management Services (CMS)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hitachi Cash Management Services (CMS) has appointed Yusuf Pachmariwala as its MD & CEO effective April 1, 2025, succeeding Anup Neogi. This leadership change aims to enhance Hitachi CMS's position in the cash management industry, leveraging Pachmariwala's experience in cash business operations and digital payments.
Sunil Kakkar	Maruti Suzuki India Limited (MSIL)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maruti Suzuki India Limited (MSIL) has appointed Sunil Kakkar as Director (Corporate Planning) for a three-year term (April 1, 2025 – March 31, 2028). With 35+ years of experience, he has held key leadership roles, including Senior Executive Officer – Corporate Planning and Head of Supply Chain & Gurgaon Production Operations.
Rajneet Kohli	Executive Director – Foods and Refreshment at Hindustan Unilever (HUL),	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rajneet Kohli, former CEO of Britannia Industries, has been appointed as Executive Director – Foods and Refreshment at Hindustan Unilever (HUL), effective April 7, 2025. With 30 years of experience in consumer and retail, he succeeds Shiva Krishnamurthy, reinforcing HUL's focus on expanding its foods and beverages segment as part of its leadership transformation.
Steve Waugh	Centre for Australia-India Relations (CAIR) Advisory Board	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Former Australian cricket captain Steve Waugh has been appointed to the Centre for Australia-India Relations (CAIR) Advisory Board, as announced by Australian Foreign Minister Penny Wong. His appointment underscores his contributions to Australia-India ties in sports, culture, and philanthropy. CAIR plays a crucial role in strengthening economic, cultural, and diplomatic relations, acting as a bridge between government, industry, academia, and communities. The Advisory Board guides CAIR's strategic priorities to enhance bilateral cooperation.
Challa Sreenivasalu Setty	Chairman of the Indian Banks Association	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Challa Sreenivasalu Setty, SBI Chairman, has been elected as the new Chairman of the Indian Banks Association (IBA) for the upcoming fiscal year, succeeding MV Rao (Central Bank of India CEO). The IBA also appointed A Manimekhalai (Union Bank of India), Swarup Kumar Saha (Punjab & Sind Bank), and Madhav Nair (Bank of Bahrain & Kuwait India) as Deputy Chairmen, while B Ramesh Babu (Karur Vysya Bank CEO) was named Honorary Secretary. Setty will lead IBA in advocating for banking sector policies and industry challenges.
S. K. Majumdar	Executive Director of Canara Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> S. K. Majumdar has been appointed as the Executive Director of Canara Bank, effective March 24, 2025. Previously serving as the CFO, Majumdar brings over 25 years of experience in finance and leadership, expected to enhance the bank's growth and governance.
Parminder Chopra	Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of REC Limited	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parminder Chopra has been appointed as Chairman and Managing Director (CMD) of REC Limited for a three-month tenure, while continuing her role as CMD of Power Finance Corporation Ltd. (PFC). With over 35 years of experience in the power and financial sectors, Chopra has significantly contributed to financial restructuring and renewable energy financing.



BRAND & CAMPAIGN AMBASSADORS

Person Name	Brand / Campaign	Key Notes
Diljit Dosanjh	Levi's	Levi's has appointed Diljit Dosanjh as its global ambassador , making him the first Punjabi artist to join the brand's creative community. This collaboration blends music, fashion, and culture , strengthening Levi's brand presence in India and globally.
Saina Nehwal	Naarica	Badminton legend and former World No.1 Saina Nehwal has entered the business world by partnering with Naarica , an innovative menstrual hygiene brand. As a strategic investor and brand ambassador , Nehwal aims to promote sustainable, high-quality menstrual care solutions and make them accessible to women across India .
Ayushmann Khurrana	'Fit India Icon' by Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya	Ayushmann Khurrrana has been named the ' Fit India Icon ' by Union Sports Minister Mansukh Mandaviya during the Fit India Movement inauguration in New Delhi. The 40-year-old Bollywood actor joins Prime Minister Narendra Modi's initiative to inspire citizens to focus on their health and well-being.
Takashi Nakajima	Honda Motor Company	Honda Motor Company has appointed Takashi Nakajima as the new President and CEO of its Indian subsidiary, Honda Cars India Ltd. (HCIL) , effective April 1, 2025 . He will succeed Takuya Tsumura , who will return to Honda's headquarters in Japan after his three-year tenure in India.
Jasprit Bumrah	Skechers	Jasprit Bumrah has signed with Skechers , a global Comfort Technology Company , to promote its cricket footwear and feature in marketing campaigns. Known as a top fast bowler, Bumrah joins other players like Ishan Kishan and Yastika Bhatia as part of Skechers' growing association with cricket. This move strengthens Skechers' presence in the sport, also serving as the official kit sponsor of Mumbai Indians .
Rajiv Bajaj	MD and CEO	Bajaj Auto reappointed Rajiv Bajaj as MD and CEO for another five-year term, starting April 1, 2025 . The company also invested ₹1,500 crore into its subsidiary, Bajaj Auto Credit Ltd (BACL) , to support its growth and improve regulatory compliance, capital adequacy, and financial stability for the financial year 2025-26 .
Krishnamachari Srikanth	Goodwill Ambassador of VISION 2020 India	Former Indian cricket captain Krishnamachari Srikanth has been appointed as the Goodwill Ambassador of VISION 2020 India , an initiative focused on eliminating avoidable blindness in the country. The program aims to raise awareness, offer medical assistance, and ensure accessible eye care services for preventable visual impairment . The announcement was made at Sankara Nethralaya in Chennai.
Atul Kumar Goel	Chief Executive (CE) of the Indian Banks' Association	Atul Kumar Goel has been appointed as the new Chief Executive (CE) of the Indian Banks' Association (IBA) . With over three decades of experience in the banking sector, Goel brings strong leadership during a time of rapid evolution in India's banking industry .
Vicky Kaushal	Brand ambassador	Tata Motors has appointed Bollywood actor Vicky Kaushal as the brand ambassador for its Passenger and Electric Vehicle segment, launching with the "Take the Curvv" campaign to promote the upcoming Tata Curvv SUV during IPL 2025. This partnership underscores Tata Motors' focus on innovation, excellence , and the ' Make in India ' initiative.
Jasprit Bumrah	Brand ambassador	L&T Finance Ltd. (LTF) , a leading NBFC in India, has appointed cricketer Jasprit Bumrah as its brand ambassador to enhance its brand presence . Known for its leadership in Rural Business Finance, Farm Equipment Finance, and Two-wheeler Finance , LTF serves over 2 lakh villages , with 2,028 rural branches and 185 urban branches , providing accessible financial solutions through a strong retail franchise and 12,500 distribution touch points .
Rishabh Pant	Goibibo	Goibibo has appointed Rishabh Pant as its brand ambassador , launching a campaign featuring Sunil Gavaskar that playfully twists his iconic " Stupid, Stupid, Stupid " phrase. The youth-centric campaign blends cricket nostalgia with travel deals , aiming to attract travel enthusiasts by making trip planning fun and hassle-free . Pant's energy and Gavaskar's legacy enhance its mass appeal .



AWARDS

Award Name	Award Winner	Key Notes
Icon of Excellence at the Forbes India Leadership Awards (FILA 2025)	Jay Shah	Jay Shah, Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC), was awarded the Icon of Excellence at the Forbes India Leadership Awards (FILA 2025) for his significant contributions to cricket administration, introducing new ideas, and making the game more inclusive and competitive globally.
'Lifetime Achievement in Hospitality and Education Through Technology' award at the Vibrant Bharat Global Summit 2025	Dr. Suborno Bose	Dr. Suborno Bose, Chairman of the International Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM), received the 'Lifetime Achievement in Hospitality and Education Through Technology' award at the Vibrant Bharat Global Summit 2025. Awarded by Union Tourism Minister Gajendra Shekhawat, the recognition honors Dr. Bose's work in integrating AI and technology into hospitality education. His new book, <i>Harmonizing Human Touch and AI in Tourism & Hospitality</i> , was also launched, highlighting IIHM's AI-driven initiatives like NamAste IIHM HospitalityGPT.
Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados	Prime Minister Narendra Modi	Prime Minister Narendra Modi received the prestigious 'Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados' for his strategic leadership and support during the COVID-19 pandemic. Union Minister Pabitra Margherita accepted the award on his behalf at a ceremony in Bridgetown, attended by Barbadian President Dame Sandra Mason, PM Mia Amor Mottley, and Foreign Minister Kerrie Symmonds. This honor underscores India's strong diplomatic ties with Barbados and its commitment to global cooperation and development.
Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Airport Experience Award 2024	Delhi International Airport Limited	GMR Airports Infrastructure Limited announced that its subsidiary, Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL), has won the Airport Service Quality (ASQ) Airport Experience Award 2024 for the Best Airport Over 40 Million Passengers in the Asia-Pacific region. This marks the seventh consecutive year Delhi Airport has been recognized for its excellence in customer service.
Ramsar Award for 'Wetland Wise Use'	Jayshree Vencatesan	Jayshree Vencatesan, co-founder of Care Earth Trust, became the first Indian to receive the Ramsar Award for 'Wetland Wise Use', recognizing her contributions to sustainable wetland management. The award was announced by the Ramsar Secretariat in Geneva on the eve of International Women's Day 2024.
SKOCH Awards 2025	Muthoot Microfin	Muthoot Microfin, a prominent microfinance institution focused on empowering women entrepreneurs, has won two Gold Awards at the SKOCH Awards 2025. The awards highlight its exceptional contributions to digital financial inclusion and innovative insurance solutions, solidifying its position as a key player in India's microfinance sector.
Lifetime Achievement Award	Chiranjeevi,	Chiranjeevi, the veteran Telugu cinema superstar, was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award for his contributions to Indian cinema, cultural influence, and public service. The award was presented by Bridge India at the House of Commons, UK Parliament, recognising his impact on the film industry and philanthropic efforts.
Maharashtra Bhushan award	Ram Sutar	Renowned sculptor Ram Sutar, known for designing the Statue of Unity, has been honored with the Maharashtra Bhushan award. The decision was announced by Maharashtra CM Devendra Fadnavis on March 12, 2025. At 100 years old, Sutar continues to contribute to India's artistic heritage, including sculpting a statue of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar for Chaityaboomi.



Award Name	Award Winner	Key Notes
Knight's Cross of the Order of Dannebrog by the King of Denmark	Vijay Sankar	Vijay Sankar, Honorary Consul General of Denmark for Southern India and Chairman of The Sanmar Group , has been awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Dannebrog by the King of Denmark . This honor recognizes his contributions to Indo-Danish relations . The award was presented by Rasmus Abildgaard Kristensen , Ambassador of Denmark in India, on March 18, 2025 in Chennai . The event also celebrated the Sankar family's five-decade-long association with Denmark's consular services.
2025 Stockholm Water Prize	Günter Blöschl	Günter Blöschl, a renowned hydrologist , has been awarded the 2025 Stockholm Water Prize for his pioneering research in flood hydrology . His work in understanding flood risks and water resource management under climate change has significantly improved global flood prediction models , aiding communities in preparing for extreme weather events .
59th Jnanpith Award	Vinod Kumar Shukla	Eminent Hindi writer Vinod Kumar Shukla , aged 88 , has been awarded the 59th Jnanpith Award , India's highest literary honor, for his exceptional work in short stories, poetry, and essays . He is the first from Chhattisgarh to receive this prestigious award and the 12th Hindi writer to be honored with it.
Sangita Kalanidhi award	R.K. Shriramkumar	Violinist R.K. Shriramkumar has been selected for the prestigious Sangita Kalanidhi award for 2025 by the Music Academy , to be presented during its 99th annual conference from December 15, 2025, to January 1, 2026. This recognition, marking the 250th anniversary of composer Muthuswami Dikshitar , honors his significant contributions to Carnatic music .
2025 Abel Prize	Masaki Kashiwara	Japanese mathematician Masaki Kashiwara has been awarded the 2025 Abel Prize for his groundbreaking contributions to algebraic analysis and representation theory . Honored by the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters , Kashiwara, 78, is recognized for his pioneering work on D-modules and crystal bases , which have significantly influenced modern mathematics. The Abel Prize , established in 2002 and named after Niels Henrik Abel .
2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award	Andrew G. Barto and Richard S. Sutton	The 2024 ACM A.M. Turing Award was presented to Andrew G. Barto and Richard S. Sutton for their groundbreaking work in reinforcement learning (RL) , which laid the foundation for AI advancements. Their key contributions include temporal difference learning, policy-gradient methods, and neural network-based function representations . Their influential publication, " <i>Reinforcement Learning: An Introduction</i> " (1998), has been cited over 75,000 times . The award, often called the "Nobel Prize in Computing," carries a \$1 million prize, sponsored by Google .

SUMMITS, EVENTS & CONFERENCE

Category	Event	Venue	Key Points
Summits	World Sustainable Development Summit	New Delhi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Union Minister Bhupender Yadav inaugurated the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) 2025 in New Delhi, organized by TERI, to promote global partnerships for sustainable development and climate solutions. He highlighted India's leadership in climate action through initiatives like the International Solar Alliance (ISA), Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), and Mission LiFE. The summit saw participation from global leaders, including Guyana's PM Brigadier Mark Phillip and Brazil's Minister Marina Silva, reinforcing international cooperation on environmental sustainability.



Category	Event	Venue	Key Points
Summits	WAVEX 2025	Mumbai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WAVEX 2025, launched by the Union Ministry of Information & Broadcasting and IAMAI, aims to empower startups in the media and entertainment sector. • Held at the Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai, from May 1-4, it offers funding, networking, and exposure opportunities. • Startups can pitch to venture capitalists and celebrity investors, with a focus on gaming, animation, XR, metaverse, generative AI, and next-gen content platforms.
Events	WAVES India: A Bird's Eye View Challenge		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The WAVES India: A Bird's Eye View Challenge is a Create in India initiative organized by BECIL in collaboration with the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting. • The competition invites drone pilots and filmmakers to create 2-3 minute videos showcasing India's landscapes, heritage, and vibrant life through aerial cinematography, capturing the country's beauty from a bird's-eye view.
Events	Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2025	Barcelona, Spain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union Minister Shri Jyotiraditya M. Scindia represented India at the Mobile World Congress (MWC) 2025 in Barcelona, Spain. • He highlighted India's 5G expansion, lowest data tariffs, indigenous telecom infrastructure, and cybersecurity framework. Scindia emphasized tech governance, innovation, and global partnerships while unveiling the India Mobile Congress 2025 and inaugurating the Bharat Pavilion to showcase India's telecom capabilities.
Events	GRIDCON 2025	New Delhi.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GRIDCON 2025, an International Conference cum Exhibition, was inaugurated by Union Minister of Power and Housing & Urban Affairs, Shri Manohar Lal, on March 9, 2025, at IICC, Yashobhoomi, Dwarka, New Delhi. • The event, which runs from March 9 to March 11, 2025, is organized by the Power Grid Corporation of India Limited (POWERGRID) under the patronage of the Ministry of Power and in association with CIGRE India. • It aims to strengthen India's power grid and promote innovations in renewable energy integration, with the Union Minister of State for Power & New & Renewable Energy, Shri Shripad Yesso Naik, also in attendance.
Events	69th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW)	New York	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India, led by Union Minister for Women and Child Development, Smt. Annpurna Devi, participated in the 69th Session of the United Nations Commission on the Status of Women (UNCSW) from March 10-21, 2025 in New York. • The session focused on gender equality and women's empowerment, with India reaffirming its commitment to holistic development, inclusive policies, and international cooperation for women's rights.
Events	353rd ILO Governing Body Meeting	Genev	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India participated in the 353rd ILO Governing Body Meeting in Geneva (March 10-20, 2025), led by Ms. Sumita Dawra, Secretary of the Ministry of Labour and Employment. • India highlighted its achievements in social protection, living wages, and fair migration, with initiatives like EPFO, ESIC, and e-Shram Portal. • India supported ILO's Global Coalition for Social Justice, the Second World Summit for Social Development, and ILO's Fair Migration Agenda. The country also emphasized its Factories Act, 1948 and Occupational Safety Code, 2020 for worker safety.



Category	Event	Venue	Key Points
Events	Sourcex India 2025	New Delhi	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sourcex India 2025, organized by the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) with the Ministry of Commerce & Industry, was inaugurated on March 26, 2025, at the Yashobhoomi Convention Centre, New Delhi. Launched by Shri Santosh Kumar Sarangi, Director General of Foreign Trade, the event connects Indian exporters with 150+ global buyers from over 45 countries. It supports India's initiatives like Make in India, Startup India, and the PLI Scheme, enhancing India's manufacturing competitiveness and global trade.
Events	Ramayana Conclave	Colombo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The International Ramayana and Vedic Research Institute organized a Ramayana Conclave in Colombo, with scholars and religious leaders from India and Sri Lanka discussing the global impact of Lord Rama's personality and the historical significance of Ramayana-related sites in Sri Lanka. The event highlighted the epic's cultural and spiritual influence, particularly in relation to Ravana's kingdom.
Conference	Water Sustainability Conference 2025		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Water Sustainability Conference 2025, organized by BWUE and TERI, focused on enhancing Industrial Water Use Efficiency. Inaugurated by Union Minister C. R. Patil, the conference emphasized the 4R approach (Reduce, Reuse, Recycle & Recharge), with Respect added as the 5th principle for sustainable water management in industries.
Conference	4th 'No Money for Terror' (NMFT) Conference		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At the 4th 'No Money for Terror' (NMFT) Conference in Munich, India emphasized the need for international cooperation to combat terror financing, particularly concerning cross-border fund flows and digital transactions. India highlighted the evolving methods terrorists use for financial transfers and called for unified global action to tackle the growing threat.

INDEX

RANKING

India Ranks 4th in Global Wealth Rankings: Knight Frank's Wealth Report 2025

In March 2025, the London-based global property consultancy firm, **Knight Frank**, released the 19th edition of '**The Wealth Report 2025**', providing a comprehensive analysis of the global distribution of wealth. The report highlights the growing number of **High Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs)** worldwide, with India securing the **4th position globally**, boasting an estimated **85,698 HNWIs in 2024**, marking a **6% increase** from the previous year. With **3.7% of the world's wealthy population**, India continues to strengthen its presence among the top wealth-generating nations. The **United States of America (USA)** remains the leader with **905,413 HNWIs**, followed by **China (471,634 HNWIs)** and **Japan (122,119 HNWIs)**.

Key Global Findings from The Wealth Report 2025

The Growth of High Net-Worth Individuals Worldwide

The report defines **HNWIs** as individuals possessing at least **USD 1 million** in investable assets. According to the findings, the number of **HNWIs increased by 4.4% globally**, reaching **2,341,378 in 2024**, up from **2,243,300 in 2023**.

The top three regions that experienced the highest percentage growth in their HNWI populations are:

- **United States – 5.2% growth**
- **Asia – 5% growth**
- **Africa – 4.7% growth**

Other notable regional HNWI population growth rates:

- **Australasia – 3.9%** (owing to strong ties with Asian and North American markets)
- **Middle East – 2.7%**
- **Latin America – 1.5%**
- **Europe – 1.4%**



Top 5 Countries with the Highest Number of HNWIs in 2024

Rank	Country	Number of HNWIs	Percentage of Global HNWIs
1	United States	905,413	38.7%
2	China (Mainland)	471,634	20.1%
3	Japan	122,119	5.2%
4	India	85,698	3.7%
5	Germany	69,798	3.0%

Glass-Ceiling Index 2025: Best Countries for Working Women

International Women's Day (IWD), celebrated annually on **March 8**, serves as a global platform to recognize the achievements of women in **cultural, political, and socio-economic spheres**. It is also a moment to assess progress in gender equality and the challenges that remain in workplaces worldwide. The **Glass-Ceiling Index (GCI)**, compiled by **The Economist**, provides a comparative analysis of the best and worst countries for working women.

The **2025 Glass-Ceiling Index** reveals that while significant improvements have been made globally, disparities still persist. This year, **Sweden** has reclaimed its position as the best country for working women, surpassing **Iceland**, which held the top spot for the past two years. Meanwhile, countries like **Japan, Turkey, and South Korea** continue to struggle due to entrenched societal norms and wage gaps.

Global Trends in Women's Workforce Representation

Political Landscape: A Historic Year for Elections

The year **2024** was remarkable for women's participation in politics. According to the **OECD**, the average **women's parliamentary representation** rose to **34%**, a testament to global efforts toward gender inclusivity.

- **Japan** saw a substantial increase in representation, jumping from **10% to 16%**.
- **Britain** experienced notable growth, with representation rising from **35% to 41%**.
- **The United States**, however, witnessed a slight decline, with female parliamentary representation falling to **28.7%**.

This data highlights the evolving role of women in governance, though many nations still lag behind in achieving gender parity in politics.

Economic Indicators: Progress and Challenges

On the economic front, the **percentage of women on corporate boards** reached **33%**, reflecting a growing acceptance of gender diversity in leadership roles. Additionally, the **labour-force participation rate** for women increased to **66.6%**, up from **65.8%** in the previous year. However, this figure remains significantly lower compared to the **81% male participation rate**.

Despite these advancements, women continue to face obstacles such as **wage disparities, unequal career advancement opportunities, and underrepresentation in top managerial positions**.

Top 10 Best Countries for Working Women in 2025

According to **The Economist's 2025 Glass-Ceiling Index**, the following countries ranked highest in fostering **gender equality, workplace inclusion, and career growth** for women:

Rank	Country	Region
1	France	Europe
2	Spain	Europe
3	Australia	Oceania
4	Sweden	Europe
5	Portugal	Europe
6	Norway	Europe
7	Finland	Europe
8	Denmark	Europe
9	New Zealand	Oceania
10	Iceland	Europe

LIC Ranked World's 3rd Strongest Insurance Brand

Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) has been ranked the third strongest insurance brand globally, with a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 88 out of 100, according to the Brand Finance Insurance 100 (2025) report. Poland-based PZU topped the rankings with a BSI score of 94.4, followed by China Life Insurance in second place with 93.5. LIC also holds the 12th position in brand value among global insurers, while SBI Life ranks 76th, making them the only two Indian insurers in the top 100.

Key Highlights

LIC's Global Ranking

- Ranked 3rd strongest insurance brand globally.
- Achieved a BSI score of 88/100.
- Holds the 12th position in brand value worldwide.
- SBI Life is the only other Indian insurer in the top 100, ranking 76th.

Global Insurance Market Trends

- The top 100 insurance brands grew by 9% in brand value in 2025.
- Growth driven by higher investment income, rising interest rates, and increased profitability.
- Market capitalization rose due to increasing demand for insurance products.
- Economic recovery, strategic mergers, acquisitions, and tech advancements accelerated industry growth.



LIC's Financial Performance

- Standalone net profit rose 17% YoY in the December quarter to ₹11,056.47 crore (from ₹9,444.42 crore).
- Consolidated net profit increased 16% YoY to ₹11,000 crore.
- Management expenses decreased, with employee compensation and welfare costs dropping 30%.
- Expense ratio reduced by 231 basis points (bps) to 12.97% from 15.28%.

India ranks **11th globally** in pharmaceutical exports, accounting for **3%** of total pharmaceutical exports in 2023. The **Central Drugs Standard Control Organisation (CDSCO)** and the **Ministry of Health and Family Welfare** have implemented measures to ensure **drug quality, safety, and efficacy**, including **risk-based inspections, regulatory amendments, stricter penalties** for non-compliance, and **training programs** to improve manufacturing standards. These initiatives aim to strengthen the **pharmaceutical sector** in India.

Amul, India's leading **dairy cooperative**, secured **3rd position** in the **YouGov India Value Rankings 2025**, making it the only **FMCG brand** in the top three. It stands alongside **Amazon** (1st) and **Flipkart** (2nd), reflecting its strong **consumer trust** and **value-for-money proposition**. This achievement underscores the strength of Amul's **cooperative model**, ensuring fair pricing for **farmers** and delivering **high-quality, affordable dairy products** to Indian households.

The **Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDAI)** released the '**Handbook on Indian Insurance Statistics 2023-24**' in March 2025, providing insights into the **Claim Settlement Ratio (CSR)** of various insurers. CSR is a key metric that reflects an insurer's reliability, representing the percentage of claims settled within a specified time, helping stakeholders make informed decisions about insurance companies.

BANK MAHAPACK
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Selection Ka Saathi

India's Free Speech Ranking in Global Index

Summary/Static	Details
Why in the news?	India's Free Speech Ranking in Global Index
Survey Conducted By	The Future of Free Speech (U.S.-based think tank)
Survey Date	October 2024
India's Rank	24th out of 33 countries
India's Score	62.6
Comparison with Other Countries	India ranked between South Africa (66.9) and Lebanon (61.8)
Highest Ranked Nations	Norway (87.9), Denmark (87.0)
Most Improved Countries	Indonesia (56.8), Malaysia (55.4), Pakistan (57.0)
Global Free Speech	Trend Declined in many democratic nations, including U.S., Israel, and Japan
Public Perception in India	Indians believe free speech has improved, despite global rankings showing decline
Support for Government	Criticism in India 37% support restricting criticism (highest among surveyed nations)
Lowest Support for Restricting Criticism	U.K. (5%) and Denmark (3%)
India's Free Speech Exception	Despite public support, actual protection remains low (similar to Hungary, Venezuela)
Key Expert Opinion	Free speech needs public commitment beyond legal protections (Jacob Mchangama)

Finland Tops the World Happiness Rankings for the Eighth Consecutive Year

Finland has once again secured its position as the world's happiest country for the eighth consecutive year, according to the latest global happiness rankings. The study, conducted by the **Wellbeing Research Centre at the University of Oxford** in collaboration with **Gallup** and the **UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network**, revealed that the United States has dropped to its lowest-ever ranking at 24th place. The rankings are based on people's self-assessment of their quality of life, highlighting factors such as social trust, economic stability, and life expectancy.

Global Happiness Rankings: Finland Remains on the Top

The 2024 World Happiness Report has reaffirmed Finland's position as the happiest country in the world. Other Nordic nations, including Denmark, Iceland, Sweden, and the Netherlands, rounded out the top five.



The rankings are derived from individuals' responses to survey questions about their overall life satisfaction. Despite Finland's geographical proximity to Russia and increasing geopolitical tensions, its citizens continue to report high levels of happiness.

Factors Influencing Happiness Rankings

The happiness rankings are based on a three-year average of a population's self-assessment of life quality. The factors considered in the ranking include:

- **Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita** – Economic stability contributes significantly to life satisfaction.
- **Healthy life expectancy** – Access to quality healthcare and a longer lifespan improve well-being.
- **Social support** – Having a reliable network of family and friends enhances happiness.
- **Freedom to make life choices** – A sense of autonomy and personal control is linked to higher life satisfaction.
- **Generosity** – Acts of kindness and donations contribute positively to societal happiness.
- **Perceptions of corruption** – Lower levels of corruption improve trust in government institutions and social systems.

The Role of Social Trust in Happiness

One of the key findings of the 2024 report is the strong correlation between happiness and **belief in the kindness of others**. The report highlights that people who believe in social trust—such as the likelihood of someone returning a lost wallet—tend to experience greater happiness.

Nordic countries, which consistently rank at the top in happiness indices, also excel in social trust metrics. This suggests that interpersonal trust and societal stability play an essential role in overall well-being.

United States Sees a Decline in Happiness

The United States, which ranked 13th in 2016, has now dropped to **24th place**, marking its lowest position ever in the global rankings. Experts attribute this decline to increasing **income inequality, political divisions, and social unrest**.

Similarly, the United Kingdom also fell to its lowest ranking since 2017. Researchers have observed that while happiness disparities between countries have remained stable, **happiness inequality within countries has increased by about 25% over the past two decades**.

Geopolitical Challenges and Their Impact on Happiness

Despite facing increased geopolitical tensions due to its **proximity to Russia**, Finland has continued to rank as the happiest nation. Over recent years, Finland and other European countries have experienced a rise in cyberattacks, GPS jamming, and suspected sabotage of critical infrastructure in the Baltic Sea. However, these external challenges have not significantly impacted the Finnish people's reported happiness levels.

India's **happiness ranking** has improved steadily, reaching **118th** in the **World Happiness Report 2025**, up from **126th in 2023** and **139th in 2020**. Key factors include **economic growth, better**

corruption perception (rank improved from 71 in 2022 to 56 in 2024), and rising personal freedom (ranked 23rd in 2024, highest in five years). India's **GDP per capita rank** also improved to **93rd in 2024**. However, it still lags behind **Pakistan (109th)** and **Nepal (92nd)** due to **lower social support and economic inequality**.

Roshni Nadar Becomes First Indian Woman in World's Top 10 Richest Women

Roshni Nadar, Chairperson of **HCL Technologies**, has achieved a historic milestone by becoming the **first Indian woman** to enter the **world's top 10 richest women** list. According to the **Hurun Global Rich List 2025**, she ranks **5th among the world's wealthiest women**, with a net worth of **₹3.5 lakh crore (US\$40 billion)**. This achievement follows the transfer of a **47% stake** in **HCL Technologies** from her father, **Shiv Nadar**, further cementing her position as one of India's most influential billionaires. She remains **India's richest woman** and is now the **third-richest person** in the country in 2025.

Hurun Global Rich List 2025: Top 10 Wealthiest Women

The **Hurun Global Rich List 2025** features **561 women**, with **224 of them being self-made**, showcasing the growing influence of women in business worldwide. Here are the **top 10 wealthiest women**:

1. Alice Walton (USA) – US\$102 Billion

Background: Daughter of **Walmart** founder **Sam Walton**. Her wealth surged by **46%** due to a rise in **Walmart's share price**.

2. Francoise Bettencourt Meyers (France) – US\$67 Billion

Background: Heiress to **L'Oréal**. Despite a **26% decline in net worth**, she remains one of the wealthiest women.

3. Julia Koch & Family (USA) – US\$60 Billion

Background: Widow of **David Koch**, her family's stake in **Koch Industries** continues to generate wealth.

4. Jacqueline Mars (USA) – US\$53 Billion

Background: Heiress to **Mars Inc.**, her wealth grew by **33%**, largely due to the **global pet food industry boom**.

5. Roshni Nadar (India) – US\$40 Billion

Background: First **Indian woman** to enter the world's top 10 wealthiest women list. Chairperson of **HCL Technologies**.

6. Abigail Johnson (USA) – US\$32 Billion

Background: CEO of **Fidelity Investments**, her wealth increased by **14%** due to **growth in assets under management**.

7. Marilyn Simons & Family (USA) – US\$31 Billion

Background: Widow of **James Simons**, founder of **Renaissance Technologies**, known for **strategic investments and philanthropy**.

8. Linda Stephens & Family (USA) – US\$30 Billion

Background: Widow of **Autry Stephens**, founder of **Endeavor Energy Resources**, marking her debut in the **top 10**.



REPORT

Report Name	Submitted By	Key Notes
The Lancet	The Lancet	A study published in The Lancet predicts that by 2050, 44.9 crore Indians will be overweight or obese , with 21.8 crore men and 23.1 crore women affected. This accounts for nearly one-third of India's projected population. India also had the highest number of overweight or obese young adults in 2021 , surpassing China and the U.S.
Knight Frank's 'The Wealth Report 2025'		Knight Frank's 'The Wealth Report 2025' highlights the global distribution of High Net-Worth Individuals (HNWIs) , with India ranking 4th worldwide. The report estimates 85,698 HNWIs in India in 2024 , reflecting a 6% year-on-year growth and 3.7% of the world's wealthy population .
OAG report		IndiGo Airlines is the world's second fastest-growing airline in seat capacity , with a 10.1% YoY increase to 134.9 million seats in 2024 , as per the OAG report . It follows Qatar Airways (10.4% growth). The report highlights IndiGo's flight frequency growth, expanding international operations, strong financial performance, and future plans .
Global Glacier Loss Accelerates: Hindu Kush Himalayas Hit Hardest		A UN report on the World Day for Glaciers reveals that glaciers in the Hindu Kush Himalaya (HKH) region are melting at an alarming rate, with a 65% acceleration in glacier loss during 2011-2020 compared to the previous decade. If global temperatures rise by 1.5°C to 2°C , HKH glaciers may lose 30-50% of their volume by 2100 , and up to 45% if warming exceeds 2°C . The HKH spans eight countries : Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, China, India, Myanmar, Nepal, and Pakistan .

DEFENCEEXERCISE

EXERCISE NAME	VENUE / PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES	KEY NOTES
Sea Dragon 2025	India, Japan (JMSDF), Australia (RAAF), and South Korea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sea Dragon 2025, a multilateral anti-submarine warfare (ASW) exercise, has begun off the Guam coast from March 4 to March 19, 2025. Hosted by the U.S. Navy's 7th Fleet, it includes India, Japan (JMSDF), Australia (RAAF), and South Korea (ROKN). The drill aims to enhance maritime security coordination and strengthen tactical interoperability among allies.
KHANJAR-XII	India-Kyrgyzstan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 12th edition of the India-Kyrgyzstan Joint Special Forces Exercise KHANJAR-XII will be held in Kyrgyzstan from 10 March to 23 March 2025. Since its inception in 2011, the exercise has become a key annual event to strengthen military cooperation between the two countries. KHANJAR-XII underscores the growing strategic partnership between India and Kyrgyzstan, emphasizing their shared commitment to regional peace, stability, and security.
Theatre Level Operational Exercise (TROPEX) 2025	Indian Ocean Region (IOR), including the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Theatre Level Operational Exercise (TROPEX) 2025, India's premier large-scale combat drill, was held from January to March 2025. The exercise aimed to validate operational concepts, test combat readiness, and enhance joint-force coordination. Conducted in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), including the Arabian Sea and Bay of Bengal, it saw extensive participation from the Indian Army, Indian Air Force (IAF), and Indian Coast Guard (ICG).



EXERCISE NAME	VENUE / PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES	KEY NOTES
6th edition of CORPAT and the 4th edition of 'BONGOSAGAR'	Indian Navy and Bangladesh Navy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 6th edition of CORPAT and the 4th edition of 'BONGOSAGAR' between the Indian Navy and Bangladesh Navy began on March 10, 2025, and will run until March 12, 2025, in the Bay of Bengal. These exercises aim to enhance maritime security, strengthen cooperation, and combat criminal activities at sea, under the supervision of Commander Flotilla West.
VARUNA	India and France	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 23rd edition of VARUNA, a bilateral naval exercise between India and France, will be held from March 19-22, 2025. Established in 2001, the exercise focuses on enhancing naval interoperability and operational synergy. This year's drill features aircraft carriers Vikrant and Charles de Gaulle, along with fighter aircraft, destroyers, frigates, and a Scorpene-class submarine. The exercise aims to strengthen air defence, anti-submarine warfare, and surface combat capabilities.
'Prachand Prahaar'	Tri-Service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Indian Army conducted 'Prachand Prahaar', a Tri-Service integrated multi-domain warfare exercise, in Arunachal Pradesh from March 25-27, 2025, under the Eastern Command. The exercise focused on jointness, technological superiority, and operational preparedness, integrating Surveillance, Command & Control, and Precision Firepower across the Army, Navy, and Air Force.

TESTING

- The Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully tested an indigenous Integrated Life Support System (ILSS) for the Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas. This Oxygen Generating System-based (OBOGS) ILSS eliminates the need for conventional liquid oxygen cylinders, generating breathable oxygen for aircrew during flight. Conducted by the Defence Bio-Engineering & Electro Medical Laboratory (DEBEL) in Bengaluru, the trial proved the system's effectiveness under extreme conditions, paving the way for its use in other aircraft like the MiG 29K.
- India's Aeronautical Development Agency (ADA) successfully tested the Astra BVRAAM (Beyond Visual Range Air-to-Air Missile) from the LCA Tejas AF MK1 prototype off the Chandipur coast, Odisha. Developed by DRDO, the missile hit a flying target accurately, demonstrating a range of over 100 kilometers and enhancing India's air defense capabilities with advanced, indigenous missile technology.
- The DRDO and Indian Navy successfully tested the Vertically-Launched Short-Range Surface-to-Air Missile (VLSRSAM) on March 26, 2025, at the Integrated Test Range (ITR) in Chandipur, Odisha. The missile successfully engaged and destroyed a high-speed aerial target at low altitude, demonstrating its Near-Boundary-Low Altitude capability, agility, reliability, and accuracy in combat configuration.
- The tenth ACTCM Barge, LSAM 24 (Yard 134), was launched on March 26, 2025, at M/s Suryadipta Projects Pvt Ltd, Thane. This vessel is part of a contract for eleven such

barges awarded on March 5, 2021, to the MSME shipyard. The barges are indigenously designed and built, strengthening the Indian Navy's logistics and operational capabilities.

DEAL & MoU's

- India has signed a \$248 million agreement with Russia's Rosoboronexport to procure 1,000 horsepower engines for its T-72 battle tanks, aiming to boost battlefield mobility and offensive capability of the Indian Army. The deal also includes technology transfer to Armoured Vehicles Nigam Ltd for the licensed production of these engines, strengthening India's defense manufacturing sector.
- Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL) signed a ₹2,906 crore contract with the Ministry of Defence (MoD) for the procurement of the Low-Level Transportable Radar (LLTR) Ashwini. Developed by DRDO's LRDE, this solid-state technology radar can track drones, helicopters, and fighter jets. The deal supports Aatmanirbhar Bharat, boosting indigenous defence production.
- The Indian Navy launched its second Project 1135.6 follow-on frigate, 'Tavasya', at Goa Shipyard Limited (GSL). This multi-role combat warship is designed for air, surface, and sub-surface warfare, measuring 124.8m in length and displacing over 3,800 tonnes. Equipped with stealth technology, advanced weapons like the BrahMos missile, and indigenous sensors, it reflects India's progress in self-reliance under the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.



ARMY, NAVY & AIR FORCE NEWS

- Raksha Mantri Shri Rajnath Singh made history by becoming the first Defence Minister of India to visit the Institute of Aerospace Medicine (IAM) in Bengaluru, Karnataka, on March 09, 2025. His visit highlighted the significance of aerospace medicine in India's defence and aviation sectors. Singh was briefed on IAM's role in pilot training, aeromedical research, and medical evaluation of Air Force personnel. He also inaugurated a key research project and emphasized the growing importance of space medicine as India advances in both air and space domains.
- HDFC Bank, in partnership with the Indian Army and CSC Academy, has renewed its Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to expand Project NAMAN, which supports Army veterans, their families, and next of kin. The agreement will establish Common Service Centres (CSCs) at 26 Directorate of Indian Army Veterans (DIAV) locations, offering pension services, Government-to-Citizen (G2C) services, and Business-to-Consumer (B2C) services at defense establishments. This initiative is part of HDFC Bank's Parivartan programme, aimed at promoting economic inclusiveness for veterans and their families.
- The First Training Squadron (1TS) of the Indian Navy, including INS Sujata, INS Shardul, and ICGS Veera, successfully completed its visit to Phuket Deep Sea Port, Thailand. The visit involved coordinated tactical maneuvers, professional exchanges, and joint exercises with the Royal Thai Navy (RTN), strengthening the maritime

partnership between India and Thailand.

- India is set to enhance maritime security cooperation with Mauritius through a white shipping agreement. The deal, expected to be signed during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit, will enable the exchange of commercial shipping information between the Indian and Mauritian navies and coast guards, strengthening ties in the Western Indian Ocean amid rising Chinese presence and shifting geopolitical dynamics.
- The keel-laying ceremony for the second Fleet Support Ship (FSS) was held on March 12, 2025, at L&T Shipyard, Kattupalli. The event, attended by Vice Admiral Rajaram Swaminathan and senior officials, marks a significant milestone in India's maritime capabilities. The project is part of a contract signed in August 2023 between the Indian Navy and Hindustan Shipyard Limited (HSL) for five FSS vessels, with deliveries starting by mid-2027. The initiative showcases the success of the public-private partnership (PPP) model, with L&T constructing two ships to boost India's shipbuilding capacity.
- India and Australia have agreed to strengthen defence cooperation and interoperability across maritime, land, and air domains. This was discussed during the 9th India-Australia Defence Policy Talks in New Delhi on March 17, 2025. Key areas include enhancing maritime domain awareness, information sharing, and science & technology collaboration, with a focus on the upcoming 2+2 Ministerial Dialogue in Australia.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

SATELLITES LAUNCHES

- NASA's IM-2 mission, launched on February 26, 2025, targets the lunar south pole's Mons Mouton to explore water ice and rare minerals for future lunar bases. The mission also aims to deploy Nokia's 4G/LTE network, enabling high-speed communication on the Moon. These objectives could support sustained lunar habitation and future Mars missions.
- India's Aditya-L1 mission, the first dedicated solar observatory, has captured the first-ever image of a solar flare 'kernel' in the photosphere and chromosphere. This groundbreaking discovery will enhance understanding of the Sun's energy bursts and solar dynamics.
- On March 3, 2025, Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost spacecraft successfully landed on the Moon, marking a major milestone in private space exploration. As part of NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS) program, it is the third private moon mission and the first with an almost flawless landing. The year 2025 is expected to see more lunar missions focused on scientific research, exploration, and technology demonstration.

- SpaceX's Starlink is set to launch its satellite-based broadband services in India, partnering with telecom giants Reliance Jio and Bharti Airtel to offer high-speed internet, especially in rural and remote areas. However, regulatory approvals from the Indian government are still pending. The impact of Starlink on India's broadband market in terms of speed, pricing, and availability remains to be seen.
- NASA is set to launch two groundbreaking missions, SPHEREx and PUNCH, aboard a SpaceX Falcon rocket. SPHEREx will map cosmic light from the earliest galaxies using infrared detectors, providing insights into the Big Bang and cosmic history. PUNCH will study the Sun's corona and solar wind using polarimetric imaging, enhancing our understanding of solar storms and space weather.
- Bellatrix Aerospace, a Bengaluru-based space mobility company, has signed an MoU with Astroscale Japan to collaborate on active debris removal, satellite servicing, and sustainable in-orbit mobility. This partnership aims to improve space sustainability and ensure a cleaner orbital environment. Bellatrix is known for its innovative propulsion technologies, while Astroscale is a leader in space debris mitigation.



NATIONAL

- Union IT Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw launched the **IndiaAI Compute Portal** and **AIKosha Dataset Platform** under the **IndiaAI Mission** to accelerate AI innovation in India. The Compute Portal provides access to **18,000+ GPUs, cloud storage, and AI-related services**, supporting students, startups, researchers, and government departments. It aims to offer **affordable, high-performance AI computing** and facilitate the development of **India's own foundational AI model**.
- Bharti Airtel and Reliance Jio have signed agreements with **SpaceX** to bring **Starlink** satellite internet to **India**, aiming to bridge the digital divide, especially in **remote and underserved areas**. Starlink, a satellite-based internet service, uses a network of **low Earth orbit (LEO) satellites** to provide high-speed internet without traditional infrastructure. With **7,000 satellites in operation** and **4.6 million users** globally, the service aims to serve India's **670 million people** lacking internet access. The deal is pending **security clearance** from the Indian **Home Ministry**.
- India has become a global space leader, generating **USD 143 million** in foreign exchange by launching **393 foreign satellites** from **34 countries** between **2015 and 2024**. The ISRO used **PSLV, LVM3, and SSLV** vehicles for these launches. This success strengthens India's position in the **global space economy** and sets the stage for future missions like **Gaganyaan** and the **Bharatiya Antariksha Station** by **2035**.
- India's **Chandrayaan-5 mission** was approved on **March 13, 2025**, and announced by **ISRO Chairman V Narayanan**. In collaboration with **Japan (JAXA)**, the mission aims for an advanced study of the **Moon's surface**. Unlike **Chandrayaan-3**, it will deploy a **250 kg rover**, ten times heavier than the '**Pragyan**' rover. The mission will focus on **mineralogical and geological analysis** of the Moon.
- ISRO launched the **Shri S Ramakrishnan Centre of Excellence in Fluid and Thermal Science Research** at IIT Madras, inaugurated by **ISRO Chairman V Narayanan**. The facility will focus on **thermal challenges** in space applications, including **heat dissipation in satellites and launch vehicles**, and develop **cooling solutions**. This initiative aims to enhance **India's self-reliance** in space technologies and strengthen research for **future deep-space missions**.
- ISRO, in collaboration with **Semiconductor Laboratory (SCL)**, developed two **32-bit microprocessors** for space applications: **Vikram 3201** and **Kalpana 3201**. **Vikram 3201** is India's first indigenous microprocessor qualified for space missions, supporting **floating-point arithmetic** and compatible with previous models. **Kalpana 3201**, a **SPARC V8 RISC processor**, is efficient for high-speed processing and

compatible with open-source software. Both processors support India's **self-reliance** in **high-performance computing** for **space missions**.

- Tata Communications launched **Vayu**, an AI-powered cloud solution offering **cost-effective, flexible, and intelligent enterprise cloud services**. Vayu integrates **IaaS, PaaS, AI capabilities, security, cloud connectivity, and professional services**. It provides **15-25% cost savings**, eliminates **data egress charges**, and reduces **multi-cloud complexities**, positioning itself as a next-gen cloud fabric to optimize performance and **cost efficiency**.
- A **human coronavirus HKU1** case was reported in **Kolkata**, raising concerns. Medical experts clarified that **HKU1**, identified in **2005**, causes **mild respiratory illnesses** and does not pose a pandemic threat like **Covid-19**. The patient is stable, and the virus spreads through **respiratory droplets** and **surface contact**. Vulnerable individuals, including the **elderly, children, pregnant women**, and those with weakened immune systems, should take precautions.

INTERNATIONAL

- Researchers from **China and Japan** have provided evidence that **niobium diselenide (NbSe₂)** could exhibit a **Bose metal state**, where **Cooper pairs** form but fail to condense into a **superconducting state**. This discovery challenges traditional theories about metals and is a significant advancement in **condensed matter physics**, as reported in **Physical Review Letters** on **February 13, 2025**.
- On **March 3, 2025**, **Firefly Aerospace's Blue Ghost spacecraft** successfully landed on the **Moon**, marking a major milestone in **private space exploration**. As part of **NASA's Commercial Lunar Payload Services (CLPS)** program, it is the **third private moon mission** and the first with an almost flawless landing. The year 2025 is expected to see more **lunar missions** focused on **scientific research, exploration, and technology demonstration**.
- Mycelium bricks, made from the fibrous network of fungi, are an innovative **eco-friendly** material being explored in the construction industry to reduce **carbon footprint**. These **biodegradable** and **fire-resistant** bricks offer good **insulation** and can help reduce **CO₂ emissions** from traditional fired clay bricks. However, they face challenges such as **structural limitations, moisture vulnerability**, and **higher production costs**, particularly in India's **tropical climate**.
- Google** has launched **Gemma 3**, a lightweight **AI model** designed for efficient performance on devices like **smartphones, laptops**, and other platforms. Built on the technology of **Gemini 2.0**, Gemma 3 offers **low-latency processing** on a single **GPU or TPU host**, enhancing user experience with its efficient capabilities.



SPORTS

CRICKET

- Virat Kohli played his historic **300th ODI** on **March 2, 2025**, against **New Zealand** in **Dubai**, becoming the **7th Indian** and **22nd player** globally to reach this milestone. Kohli joins cricket legends like **Sachin Tendulkar** (463 ODIs) and **MS Dhoni** (347 ODIs) in this exclusive club.
- Vidarbha** won their **third Ranji Trophy** title in seven seasons, defeating **Kerala** in the **2024-25 final** in **Nagpur**. Led by **Akshay Wadkar**, Vidarbha secured the victory on **March 2** after the final ended in a draw, thanks to their **first-innings lead** at the **Vidarbha Cricket Association Stadium**.
- Steve Smith**, the Australian cricketer, announced his retirement from **One-Day Internationals (ODIs)**, ending a remarkable career in the 50-over format. With **170 matches**, **5800 runs**, and **two World Cup victories**, Smith leaves a lasting legacy in **Australian cricket**. Known for his unorthodox yet effective batting, he will continue playing **Test and T20 cricket** in future international assignments.
- Mushfiqur Rahim** has announced his **retirement from ODIs** after **Bangladesh's Champions Trophy campaign**, ending his **19-year ODI career**. The **37-year-old wicketkeeper-batsman** shared his decision on **Instagram**, citing recent challenges but reaffirming his **dedication and honesty** toward Bangladesh cricket.
- In **December 2024**, **Jay Shah** stepped down as **ACC president** after three terms and was elected **ICC chairman**, assuming office on **December 1, 2024**. Following his departure, **Shammi Silva** became the new **ACC president**, while **Rajeev Shukla** and **Ashish Shelar** took on key roles in the **ACC Board**. This transition comes ahead of major cricket events like the **2025 Asia Cup** in the **UAE** and the **ICC Champions Trophy**.
- Harry Brook**, the **England batter**, has withdrawn from the **Indian Premier League (IPL) 2025** for the second consecutive year, despite being signed by **Delhi Capitals (DC)** for **₹6.25 crores** in the previous year's auction. His decision could lead to a **two-year ban** from future IPL editions, in accordance with new rules introduced by the **Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI)**.
- A **one-off day-night Test match** between **Australia** and **England** will be held at the **Melbourne Cricket Ground (MCG)** from **March 11 to March 15, 2027**, to celebrate the **150th anniversary** of the first-ever Test match. This landmark **pink-ball Test** marks a significant moment in the evolution of **Test cricket**, blending tradition with modernity and drawing global attention to the game's longest format.
- India's **Shubman Gill** won the **ICC Men's Player of the Month** for February 2025, while **Australia's Alana King** claimed the **ICC Women's Player of the Month** title, both recognized for their **outstanding performances**.

- Delhi Capitals (DC)** has appointed **Axar Patel** as the team's **captain** for the **2025 IPL season**. The **31-year-old all-rounder**, with the franchise since 2019, takes over after serving as **vice-captain** for two seasons. Known for his consistency with both bat and ball, Axar Patel is set to lead DC towards success with a well-balanced squad.
- Ajinkya Rahane** made history by becoming the first **Indian player** to captain **three different IPL teams**. In **IPL 2025**, he led **Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR)** in their opening match against **Royal Challengers Bengaluru** at **Eden Gardens**, marking his 26th game as an IPL captain. Rahane previously captained **Rising Pune Supergiant** in 2017 and **Rajasthan Royals** in 2018-2019.

BADMINTON & TENNIS

- Achanta Sharath Kamal**, India's legendary **table tennis player**, announced his retirement, with his farewell tournament being the **WTT Star Contender** in **Chennai** from **March 25-30, 2025**. A **10-time National Champion** and **five-time Olympian**, Sharath has earned recognition at the **Commonwealth Games, Asian Games, and Olympics**.

ATHLETIC & FOOTBALL

- Indian football legend **Sunil Chhetri** has made a remarkable comeback to the national team at the age of **40**, reversing his retirement decision from **June 2024**. The former captain and **India's all-time leading goal scorer**, who had retired after a World Cup qualifier against **Kuwait**, was recalled by **head coach Manolo Marquez** for India's pursuit of **2027 AFC Asian Cup** qualification.
- Japan** secured its spot in the **2026 FIFA World Cup** as the first team to qualify after the host nations. A **2-0 win** over **Bahrain** at **Saitama Stadium** on **March 20, 2025** confirmed their place. **Daichi Kamada** and **Takefusa Kubo** scored in the second half, marking Japan's **eighth consecutive World Cup appearance**.

OTHER SPORTS NEWS

- Gulmarg**, the famous ski resort in **Jammu and Kashmir**, will host the **Khelo India Winter Games (KIWG) 2025** from **March 9 to 12**. Originally scheduled for **February 22-25**, the event was postponed due to a lack of snow but has been rescheduled following **moderate to heavy snowfall** in the region.
- Brandon Holt** of the **United States** won the **2025 Bengaluru Open ATP 125 Challenger**, defeating **Shintaro Mochizuki** of **Japan** in the final on **March 2, 2025** at the **KSLTA Tennis Stadium**. The tournament, part of the **ATP Challenger Tour**, had a **\$200,000 prize pool** and was played on **hard courts**.



- The **Khelo India Para Games (KIPG) 2025** will be held in **New Delhi** from **March 20-27**, featuring **1,230 para athletes**, including top performers from the **2024 Paris Paralympics** and **2022 Asian Para Games**. Announced by **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**, the event aims to promote **para sports** in India and will include six major disciplines, hosted at **premier sports venues** across the city.
- The **Commonwealth Games Federation (CGF)** has rebranded itself as **Commonwealth Sport**, a move unveiled on **March 10, 2025**, during **Commonwealth Day**. The rebranding reflects the organization's transformation from a **sports federation** to a **global sports movement**, focusing on **unity, development, and inclusion** through sports.
- The **Khelo India Winter Games 2025** (KIWG 2025) was held in two phases from **January 23 to March 12, 2025**, with over **400 athletes** from **19 teams** participating. The event took place in **Leh, Ladakh and Jammu & Kashmir**, and the **Indian Army** emerged as the overall champion, winning the most **gold medals**.
- India had a remarkable showing at the **Special Olympics World Winter Games 2025** in **Turin, Italy**, securing **33 medals**: **8 gold, 18 silver, and 7 bronze**. **Snowshoeing** was a strong area, with 10 medals, including **silver** for Vasu Tiwari, Shalini Chauhan, and Tanya, and a **bronze** for Jahangir. In **Alpine Skiing**, India won 10 medals, including **silver** for Radha Devi, Nirmala Devi, and Abhishek Kumar in various categories.
- India Masters** won the inaugural **International Masters League (IML) 2025**, defeating **West Indies Masters** by six **wickets** in a thrilling final at the **SVNS International Stadium**. Led by **Sachin Tendulkar**, India Masters triumphed in front of nearly **50,000 fans**. The match, featuring **Brian Lara** and a star-studded lineup, celebrated cricket's golden era. India Masters also earned a **₹1 crore** prize for their victory.
- The **Kabaddi World Cup 2025** begins in **England**, marking the first time the tournament is hosted outside Asia. **India's men's team** will face **Italy** in **Wolverhampton**. The event spans **seven days**, with **60+ matches** across venues like **Birmingham, Coventry, Walsall, and Wolverhampton**.
- The **Khelo India Para Games 2025** will be held from **March 20 to 27, 2025** in **New Delhi**. **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya**, Minister of Youth Affairs and Sports, launched the official anthem at **Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium**. The **mascot 'Ujjwala'**, inspired by the house sparrow, symbolizes **resilience and determination**. The **Games logo**, featuring Delhi landmarks, was unveiled by **Devendra Jhajharia** and **Sminu Jindal**.
- Hockey Jharkhand** won their first-ever **15th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship 2025** title, defeating **defending champions Hockey Haryana** in a thrilling final at **Tau Devi Lal Complex, Panchkula**. The match ended in a **1-1 draw**, and **Hockey Jharkhand** triumphed in the **penalty shootout**, making history in Indian women's hockey.
- In the **Chinese Grand Prix**, **Oscar Piastri** triumphed over his **McLaren teammate Lando Norris**, delivering a standout performance for the team in **Formula 1 2024**. Meanwhile, **Ferrari** faced a post-race setback as **Charles Leclerc** and **Lewis Hamilton** were **disqualified** for technical infringements.
- Indian wrestler **Sunil Kumar** won a **bronze medal** in the **87kg Greco-Roman** category at the **Asian Wrestling Championships 2025** in **Amman, Jordan**. After losing to Iran's **Yasin Yazdi** in the semifinals, Sunil bounced back to defeat China's **Jiaxin Huang** for bronze. Sunil, a former **silver medallist** (2019), began his campaign with a dominant **10-1 victory** over Tajikistan's **Sukhrob Abdulkhaev** in the quarterfinals.
- The **Khelo India Para Games (KIPG) 2025** concluded in New Delhi with nearly **1,300 para-athletes** showcasing remarkable talent. **Haryana** topped the medal tally with **34 golds**, followed by **Tamil Nadu (28)** and **Uttar Pradesh (23)**. The event set **18 national records**, highlighting the growing competitiveness and excellence of para-athletes in India.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

Book Name	Author	Key Notes
'March of Glory'	K. Arumugam and Errol D'Cruz,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To celebrate the Golden Jubilee of India's first Hockey World Cup victory in 1975, the book 'March of Glory' was launched on March 18, 2025 at Shivaji Stadium, New Delhi. Co-authored by K. Arumugam and Errol D'Cruz, the book chronicles India's journey to World Cup glory in Kuala Lumpur on March 15, 1975.
To the Seventh Generation: The Journey of CMC Vellore	V.I. Mathan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> V.I. Mathan, former director of Christian Medical College (CMC) Vellore, launched the book "To the Seventh Generation: The Journey of CMC Vellore" in Chennai. The first copy was presented to Dr. Vikram Mathew, the current director, and the second to Dr. V.V. Bashi. The book details CMC Vellore's history, including insights from its founder, Ida Scudder.



Book Name	Author	Key Notes
Stumped	Syed Kirmani, Debashish Sengupta, and Dakshesh Pathak	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The autobiography Stumped, co-authored by Syed Kirmani, Debashish Sengupta, and Dakshesh Pathak, offers a humorous and insightful account of Kirmani's career and India's 1983 World Cup victory. It highlights key moments, including Kapil Dev's iconic 175 against Zimbabwe, a game-changing innings in Indian cricket history.
'Leo: The Untold Story of Chennai Super Kings'	P.S. Raman	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> MS Dhoni and members of the Chennai Super Kings (CSK) made a surprise appearance at the book launch of 'Leo: The Untold Story of Chennai Super Kings' by P.S. Raman. Their unannounced visit thrilled fans and added excitement to the event, attended by notable figures from cricket and entertainment industries, making it a memorable occasion.

OBITUARY

NATIONAL

S.No	PERSON NAME	FIELD	KEY NOTES
1.	Himmat Shah	sculptures modern art	Himmat Shah, renowned Indian artist known for his sculptures and modern art, passed away at 92 on Sunday due to a heart attack at Jaipur's Shalby Hospital. Known for his belief that every material has life, he creatively transformed objects like old bottles, wires, and ropes into unique artworks.
2.	Padmakar Shivalkar	left-arm spinners	Padmakar Shivalkar, one of India's finest left-arm spinners, passed away at 84 in Mumbai. A legendary figure in Mumbai cricket, Shivalkar was never able to represent India internationally due to the presence of Bishan Singh Bedi. His death follows the recent passing of former Mumbai captain Milind Rege, leaving the cricket fraternity in mourning.
3.	Ananta Das	former Minister of Higher Education and Industries	Ananta Das, former Minister of Higher Education and Industries and senior Biju Janata Dal (BJD) leader from Balasore district, passed away at the age of 85 in Bhubaneswar due to age-related ailments. Born on August 28, 1940, in Kuruthia village under Balim Panchayat, he had a strong academic background, completing his post-graduation in Arts and earning a law degree.
4.	Garimella Balakrishna Prasad	Renowned classical singer and former Asthana Vidwan (court musician)	Garimella Balakrishna Prasad, the renowned classical singer and former Asthana Vidwan (court musician) of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), passed away at the age of 76 due to a heart attack in Tirupati. His demise marks the end of an era in Indian classical and devotional music, particularly in the popularization of Annamacharya's compositions.
5.	Syed Abid Ali	former Indian all-rounder	The cricket world mourns the loss of Syed Abid Ali, a former Indian all-rounder, who passed away at 83 in the United States. Renowned for his agility and all-round performances, Abid Ali made significant contributions to Indian cricket and played a key role in shaping memorable moments in the sport's history.
6.	Arvind Singh Mewar	chairman of the HRH Group of Hotels	Arvind Singh Mewar, chairman of the HRH Group of Hotels and descendant of Maharana Pratap, passed away at 81 on March 16, 2025, in Udaipur after a prolonged illness. He was known for preserving Rajput heritage and promoting tourism in Udaipur. His family includes wife Vijayraj Kumari, son Lakshyaraj Singh Mewar, and daughters Bhargavi Kumari Mewar and Padmaja Kumari Parmar.



S.No	PERSON NAME	FIELD	KEY NOTES
7.	Bindu Ghosh	Tamil film comedian	Bindu Ghosh, a beloved Tamil film comedian, passed away at 76 on March 16, 2025, in Chennai after a prolonged illness. Known for her exceptional comic timing and vibrant presence, her death has left a deep void in the hearts of fans and colleagues in the Tamil cinema industry.
8.	Ramakanta Rath	Renowned Odia poet and former IAS officer	Ramakanta Rath, renowned Odia poet and former IAS officer, passed away at 90. Born in Puri on December 30, 1934, Rath was known for works like Saptama Ritu, Sri Radha, and Sandigha Mrigaya, which redefined Odia poetry with deep philosophical reflections. He received prestigious awards, including Padma Bhushan, Saraswati Samman, and Atibadi Jagannath Das Award.
9.	Dr. Debendra Pradhan	Veteran BJP leader and former Union Minister	Veteran BJP leader and former Union Minister Dr. Debendra Pradhan passed away at 84 in New Delhi after a brief illness. He is survived by his wife and two sons, with his last moments spent at the residence of his son, Union Education Minister Dharmendra Pradhan.
10.	George Foreman	American boxing legend	American boxing legend George Foreman passed away on March 21, 2025, at age 76. A two-time heavyweight champion, Olympian, and successful businessman, Foreman was celebrated for his remarkable comeback in boxing. His family announced his demise, remembering him as a humanitarian and sporting icon.
11.	Manoj Bharathiraja	Tamil actor and director	Tamil actor and director Manoj Bharathiraja, son of legendary filmmaker Bharathiraja, passed away at 48 due to a heart attack at his residence in Chetpet, Chennai on March 25, 2025. He had recently undergone bypass surgery before suffering a fatal cardiac arrest. Manoj is survived by his wife Ashwathi (Nandana) and two daughters, Arshitha and Mathivathani. Prominent figures like Tamil Nadu CM MK Stalin, Ilaiyaraaja, and Sarathkumar have expressed their condolences.
12.	Dr. Senkalong (Senka) Yaden,	Naga scientist and academician	Dr. Senkalong (Senka) Yaden, a distinguished Naga scientist and academician, passed away at 89 in Tyler, Texas, on March 14, 2025. Known as the "Man of Science of the USA," he made significant contributions to science and education. Despite living abroad, he remained connected to his Naga roots. In honor of his achievements, Ao Senden declared March 17, 2025, a day of mourning.

INTERNATIONAL

S.No	PERSON NAME	FIELD	KEY NOTES
12.	Ron Draper	Test cricketer	Ron Draper, the oldest living Test cricketer, passed away at 98 years and 63 days in Gqeberha on February 25, 2025. A top-order batsman and occasional wicketkeeper, Draper played two Test matches for South Africa against Australia in 1950. His death was confirmed by his son-in-law, Neil Thomson, on February 28, 2025.
13.	Fred Stolle	Australian tennis player and commentator	Fred Stolle, the legendary Australian tennis player and commentator, has passed away at the age of 86. Tennis Australia confirmed the news, honoring his extraordinary skill and contributions to the sport. Stolle was a key figure in Australia's golden era of tennis in the 1960s, leaving a lasting legacy both on and off the court.



IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description
March 3	World Wildlife Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Wildlife Day, observed annually on March 3, promotes wildlife conservation through education, advocacy, and action. • In 2025, the day will focus on the theme "Wildlife Conservation Finance: Investing in People and Planet" and marks the adoption of the CITES in 1973.
March 3rd	National Defence Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Defence Day is observed on March 3rd annually in India to honor the sacrifices and bravery of the armed forces. • The 2025 observance marked its 87th anniversary, paying tribute to the Indian Army, Navy, and Air Force for their role in safeguarding the country's sovereignty and territorial integrity.
March 3	World Hearing Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Hearing Day is observed on March 3 to raise awareness about hearing loss and promote ear and hearing care. • Organized by the WHO, the 2025 theme is "Changing mindsets: Empower yourself to make ear and hearing care a reality for all!" encouraging individuals to take charge of their hearing health.
March 5	International Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Disarmament and Non-Proliferation Awareness Day is observed on March 5 every year to raise global awareness about disarmament issues, especially among the youth. • The day highlights the threats posed by weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and underscores the importance of collective efforts for global peace and security.
March 6th	National Dentist's Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Dentist's Day, observed annually on March 6th, highlights the importance of oral hygiene and recognizes the dedication of dentists in maintaining dental health. • This day serves as a reminder to prioritize regular dental checkups, brushing, and flossing, which are essential for strong teeth and gums. It also aims to raise awareness about oral health issues and encourage better dental care habits while expressing gratitude to dental professionals.
March 7	Jan Aushadhi Diwas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jan Aushadhi Diwas is celebrated annually on March 7 to promote generic medicines under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana (PMBJP). • A week-long awareness campaign from March 1 to March 7 highlights the benefits of affordable, high-quality medicines.
March 10	International Day of Women Judges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The International Day of Women Judges, observed on March 10, celebrates the vital contributions of female judges in promoting fairness, representation, and equality in judicial systems. • This day highlights their role in upholding justice, democracy, and human rights, while also inspiring future generations of women to pursue careers in law and the judiciary.
March 10	CISF Raising Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CISF Raising Day is observed annually on March 10 to honor the contributions of the Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) in safeguarding critical infrastructure in India. • In 2025, the country celebrates the 56th CISF Raising Day, with a grand event held in Thakkolam, Tamil Nadu. The event was attended by Union Home Minister Amit Shah, Union Minister Dr. L. Murugan, and CISF Director General Shri Rajvinder Singh Bhatti.



Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description
March 4 to March 10, 2025	54th National Safety Week	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 54th National Safety Week is being observed across India from March 4 to March 10, 2025, to raise awareness about safety measures in industries and workplaces, promoting accident prevention and employee well-being. Organized by the National Safety Council (NSC) of India, the event highlights the importance of safety in achieving a developed and progressive India. This year's theme, 'Safety & Well-being Crucial for Viksit Bharat', emphasizes safety's essential role in building a Viksit Bharat.
March 12, 2025	No Smoking Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No Smoking Day, observed on the second Wednesday of March, aims to encourage smokers to quit and raise awareness about the health risks of tobacco use. This year, it falls on March 12, 2025. Smoking leads to severe complications such as premature aging, skin discoloration, dental issues, and respiratory problems, with the day promoting a smoke-free life.
March 14	The International Day of Action for Rivers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The International Day of Action for Rivers on March 14 raises awareness about the threats to rivers, including degradation, climate change, and human impacts like dam construction and pollution. With over 60% of rivers disrupted by barriers, this day emphasizes the urgent need for collective action to protect and restore these vital ecosystems.
March 14	Pi Day,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pi Day, celebrated on March 14 (3/14), honors the mathematical constant π (Pi), approximately 3.14159. This day is significant for mathematicians, scientists, and enthusiasts as Pi is essential in geometry, physics, and engineering, and holds a special place in both academia and popular culture.
March 15	World Consumer Rights Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Consumer Rights Day, observed on March 15, advocates for consumer rights, fair practices, and ethical business. The theme for 2025, 'A Just Transition to Sustainable Lifestyles', emphasizes the importance of making sustainable and healthy lifestyle choices accessible and affordable for all, promoting consumer protection and sustainable consumption globally.
March 16	National Vaccination Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Vaccination Day, observed on March 16 annually, celebrates India's commitment to immunisation and public health. It marks the historic moment in 1995 when the first dose of the oral polio vaccine was given under the Pulse Polio Immunisation Programme. The day highlights the progress in eliminating vaccine-preventable diseases and the importance of universal vaccination coverage.
March 18	Ordnance Factory Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ordnance Factory Day is celebrated on March 18 to mark the establishment of India's first Ordnance Factory in 1801 near Kolkata. The day emphasizes the research, development, and production capabilities of Indian Ordnance Factories, crucial to India's defence sector. The oldest factory in Cossipore, Kolkata, started operations on March 18, 1802. In 2021, the Ordnance Factory Board (OFB) was restructured into seven Defence Public Sector Undertakings (DPSUs) for greater efficiency and self-reliance in defence manufacturing.
March 20th	World Sparrow Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Sparrow Day, celebrated on March 20th, raises awareness about the declining population of house sparrows and promotes conservation efforts. Initiated in 2010 by the Nature Forever Society, the event has gained global recognition, with over 50 countries participating. The once-common sparrows, known for their cheerful chirps, have become rare due to significant population decline.



Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description
March 20	International Day of Happiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Day of Happiness is celebrated on March 20 to promote happiness as a fundamental human goal. Recognized by the United Nations (UN), the day emphasizes well-being, sustainable development, and the need for inclusive, equitable economic growth. • It encourages governments, organizations, and individuals to prioritize happiness in policies and daily life. The UN declared this day in 2012 to promote poverty eradication and overall well-being.
March 20	French Language Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • French Language Day will be celebrated by the United Nations (UN) on March 20, 2025, highlighting multilingualism, cultural diversity, and education. • The theme for 2025, chosen by the International Organization of La Francophonie (OIF), is "I educate myself, therefore I act," focusing on education's role in sustainable development and global peace. • The UN Language Days, introduced in 2010, aim to promote the six official languages of the UN: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish.
March 20 or 21	Nowruz Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nowruz, the ancient Persian New Year festival, will be celebrated on March 20 or 21, coinciding with the vernal equinox. • Recognized by UNESCO as part of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, it celebrates renewal, unity, and the triumph of light over darkness, bringing together communities across Iran, Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Balkans.
March 21	International Day of Forests	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Day of Forests is celebrated on March 21, 2025, with the theme "Forests and Food". • This day highlights forests' vital role in food security, nutrition, and livelihoods. Forests provide resources like fruits, seeds, roots, and wild meat for indigenous and rural communities, emphasizing their connection to global food supply and sustainability. • The UN established this day to raise awareness about forest conservation.
March 21	World Day for Glaciers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Day for Glaciers is observed on March 21, as declared by the United Nations under resolution A/RES/77/158. • This initiative, alongside the International Year of Glaciers' Preservation 2025, aims to raise awareness about the critical role of glaciers and the urgent need for their conservation amid climate change threats.
March 21	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 2025 marks the 60th anniversary of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD), adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1965. • The International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, observed on March 21 annually, celebrates progress in combating racial discrimination while recognizing ongoing challenges.
March 21	World Poetry Day 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Poetry Day 2025 is celebrated on March 21 to emphasize poetry's significance as a universal medium of expression. • Established by UNESCO in 1999, the day promotes poetry reading, writing, publishing, and education, recognizing its role in cultural preservation and fostering peace.
March 22	World Water Day 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Water Day 2025, observed on March 22, focuses on "Glacier Preservation", highlighting glaciers' role in water security, climate regulation, and sustaining life. • The United Nations urges global efforts to protect glaciers to combat climate change and water scarcity, emphasizing their critical importance for the planet's future.



Date	Day/Observance	Theme/Description
March 23	World Meteorological Day 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Meteorological Day 2025, observed on March 23, marks the 75th anniversary of the WMO with the theme "Closing the Early Warning Gap Together." • It highlights the importance of early warning systems in mitigating climate change impacts and extreme weather events, reinforcing global efforts for disaster preparedness and resilience.
March 24	World Tuberculosis (TB) Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Tuberculosis (TB) Day is observed annually on March 24 to raise awareness about TB, a major global health concern. • The 2025 theme is "Yes! We Can End TB: Commit, Invest, Deliver", focusing on government commitment, increased investment, and effective delivery of TB control strategies. The day commemorates Dr. Robert Koch's 1882 discovery of the TB bacteria.
March 24	International Day for the Right to the Truth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Day for the Right to the Truth is observed on March 24 to honor the right to truth for victims of gross human rights violations. • The day commemorates Monsignor Óscar Arnulfo Romero, assassinated on this day in 1980 for speaking out against human rights abuses in El Salvador. It emphasizes the importance of knowing the truth about crimes like summary executions, enforced disappearances, and torture.
March 25	International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery is observed annually on March 25 to honor the millions of men, women, and children affected by the transatlantic slave trade. • The day aims to educate future generations about the atrocities of slavery and address its lingering effects in modern societies.
March 25	International Unborn Child Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • International Unborn Child Day is celebrated annually on March 25 to raise awareness about the rights and protection of unborn children. • Established by Pope John Paul II, the day symbolizes hope and new beginnings, advocating for the protection of life from its earliest stages.
March 27th	World Theatre Day	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Theatre Day, celebrated on March 27th, was initiated by the International Theatre Institute (ITI) in 1961 to honor the importance of theatre. • The theme for 2025 is "Theatre and a Culture of Peace," emphasizing theatre's role in promoting peace, understanding, and storytelling.
30 March	International Day of Zero Waste	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The UN General Assembly declared 30 March as the International Day of Zero Waste on 14 December 2022 to address unsustainable production and consumption. • This year, the focus is on reducing waste in the fashion and textile industry, promoting circular solutions under the theme "Towards Zero Waste in Fashion and Textiles."

MISCELLANEOUS

- The **Cheetah Reintroduction Project** in India is expanding beyond Kuno National Park to **Banni Grasslands** in Gujarat and **Gandhisagar Sanctuary** in Madhya Pradesh. Announced by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** at the **National Board of Wildlife (NBWL)** meeting, the expansion aims to restore the **cheetah population** and enhance **biodiversity conservation** in India.
- India has added **six new properties** to its **UNESCO Tentative List**, bringing the total to **62 sites**. These include **Kanger Valley National Park**, **Mudumal Megalithic Menhirs**, **Ashokan Edict Sites**, **Chausath Yogini Temples**, **Gupta Temples of North India**, and **Palace-Fortresses of the Bundelas**. Being on the Tentative List is a crucial step towards **UNESCO World Heritage status**, showcasing India's commitment to preserving its **cultural and natural heritage**.
- The '**Watan Ko Jano**' programme, funded by the **Ministry of Home Affairs**, aims to promote **national integration** by exposing children under 18 from government-run homes to the **culture, history, and technological advancements** of other parts of India. The initiative has successfully fostered unity among **India's youth** and contributed to a more **inclusive and harmonious society**.



- East Coast Railway (ECoR)** has become the **first railway zone** in India to achieve **250 million tons (MT)** of originating freight in FY 2024-25, reaching the milestone on **March 21, 2024, 11 days ahead of schedule**. This marks the **second consecutive year** of surpassing 250 MT, reinforcing ECoR's position as **India's highest freight-loading railway zone** and a key contributor to **logistics and economic growth**.
- The **Archaeological Survey of India (ASI)** has made significant discoveries at two locations: over **110 megalithic burial sites** near **Malampuzha Dam** in **Palakkad, Kerala**, shedding light on early **Iron Age** society, and a collection of **Buddhist antiquities** in **Ratnagiri, Odisha**, offering insights into the spread of **Vajrayana Buddhism** and its links with **Southeast Asia**.

STATIC TAKEAWAYS

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
Banking Organizations		
1	HDFC Bank	Chairman - Atanu Chakraborty Head office - Mumbai
2	Federal Bank	Chairman - Abhaya Prasad Hota Head office - Aluva, Kerala
3	Yes Bank	Chairman - R. Gandhi Head office - Mumbai
4	Bank of India	Chairman - M.R. Kumar Head office - Mumbai
5	City Union Bank	Chairman - M. Narayanan Head office - Mumbai
6	SEBI	Chief - Tuhin Kanta Pandey Head office - Mumbai
7	RBI	Governor - Sanjay Malhotra Head office - Mumbai
Space Organizations		
8	NASA	Acting Administrator - Janet Petro HQ - Washington D.C.
9	ISRO	Chairman - V. Narayanan HQ - Bengaluru, India
Countries of World		
10	USA	President - Donald Trump Capital - Washington D.C. Currency - American Dollar Facts - USA and Canada share the world's largest border with each other.
11	China	President - Xi Jinping Capital - Beijing Currency - Chinese Yuan Neighbouring Countries - India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, North Korea, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Vietnam, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan
12	Mexico	President - Claudia Sheinbaum Capital - Mexico City Currency - Mexican Peso Neighbouring Countries - USA, Guatemala, Belize
13	Uruguay	President - Yamandu Orsi Capital - Montevideo Currency - Peso Uruguayo Neighbouring Countries - Argentina, Brazil, Atlantic ocean to South



Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
14	Israel	PM - Benjamin Netanyahu Capital - Jerusalem Currency - Israeli New Shekel Neighbouring Countries - Syria, Jordan, Egypt, Lebanon
Indian States		
15	Madhya Pradesh	Governor - Mangubhai Patel CM - Mohan Yadav Capital - Bhopal State Bird - Paradise Flycatcher State Animal - Swamp Deer (Barasingha) State Tree - Banyan Tree State Flower - Madonna Lilly State Fish - Mahasheer
16	Punjab	Governor - Gulab Chand Kataria CM - Bhagwat Man Capital - Chandigarh State Bird - Northern Goshawk State Animal - The Blackbuck State Tree - Shisham Tree
17	Haryana	Governor - Bandaru Dattatreya CM - Nayab Singh Saini Capital - Chandigarh State boundary - Punjab, Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Uttar Pradesh, Delhi, Rajasthan State Animal - Black Buck State Bird - Black Francolin
18	Gujarat	Governor - Acharya Devvrat CM - Bhupendra Patel Capital - Gandhinagar Largest city - Ahmedabad State Boundaries - Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, UT of Daman & Diu, Dadar & Nagar Haveli International boundary - Pakistan Sea borders Arabian Sea State Animal - Asiatic Lion State Bird - Greater Flamingo State Tree - Mango State Flower - Golgotha
19	Kerala	Governor - V. Arlekar CM - Pinarayi Vijayan Capital - Thiruvananthapuram State Boundaries - Tamil Nadu, Karnataka, Puducherry (Mahe) Number of Districts - 14 State Animal - Elephant State Bird - Great Indian Hornbill State Flower - Kanikonna or Indian laburnum or amaltus
20	Karnataka	Governor - Thawar Chand Gehlot CM - Siddaramaiya Capital - Bengaluru State Boundaries - Maharashtra, Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Goa, Tamil Nadu Principal Language - Kannada Other Language - Tulu, Hindi, Bengali, Mahi State Animal - Asian Elephant State Bird - Indian Roller



Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
21	Assam	Governor - Lakshaman Prasad Acharya CM - Hemanta Biswa Sarma Capital - Dispur Silk - Muga, Eri, Pat silk Oil Industry - Digboi Refinery – birth place of the Oil Industry in India.
22	Uttarakhand	Governor - Gurmit Singh CM - Pushkar Singh Dhami Capital - Dehradun State Borders - Himachal Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh Char-Dhams - Badrinath, Kedarnath, Gangotri, Yamunotri State Animal - Himalayan Musk deer State Flower - Brahm Kamal State Tree - Burans

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
Space and Business Org.		
1	NASA	Acting Administrator - Janet Petro HQ - Washington D.C.
2	SPACE X	CEO - Elon Musk HQ - California
3	Google	CEO - Sundar Pichai HQ - California
4	Bharti Airtel	CEO - Shashwat Sharma
5	Jio	CEO - Akash Ambani
6	Tata Motors	CEO - Marc Llistosella Head office - Mumbai
7	Tata Power	CEO - Praveer Sinha Head office - Mumbai
Banking Org.		
8	RBI	Governor - Sanjay Malhotra Head office - Mumbai
9	ICICI Bank	MD - Sandeep Bakhshi Head Office - Mumbai
10	BOB Bank	MD - Debadatta Chand Head Office - Vadodara
11	HDFC Bank	Chairman - Atanu Chakraborty Head office - Mumbai
12	Star Health Insurance	MD - Anand Roy
13	IIFL Finance	MD - Nirmal Jain
14	SBI Life Insurance	MD - Amit Jhingran
Countries		
15	Canada	President - Mark Carney Capital - Ottawa Currency - Canadian Dollar Neighbouring Countries - US, Green Land
16	China	President - Xi Jinping Capital - Beijing Currency - Chinese Yuan Neighbouring Countries - India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, North Korea, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Vietnam, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan



Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
Indian State		
17	Assam	Governor - Lakshaman Prasad Acharya CM - Hemanta Biswa Sarma Capital - Dispur Silk - Muga, Eri, Pat silk Oil Industry - Digboi Refinery – birth place of the Oil Industry in India.
18	Tamil Nadu	Governor - R. N. Ravi CM - M. K. Stalin Capital - Chennai State Bird - Emerald Dove State Animal - Nilgiri Tahr State Tree - Palmyra Palm
19	Madhya Pradesh	Governor - Mangubhai Patel CM - Mohan Yadav Capital - Bhopal State Bird - Paradise Flycatcher State Animal - Swamp Deer (Barasingha) State Tree - Banyan Tree State Flower - Madonna Lilly State Fish - Mahasheer

Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
Business Organizations		
1	Bharti Airtel	Chairman - Sunil Bharti Airtel
2	Reliance Industries	Chairman - Mukesh D. Ambani
3	Maruti Suzuki India Limited	Chairman - R.C. Bhargava
4	Hindustan Unilever Limited	Chairman - Ashok Sekhar Ganguly
5	HCL Technologies	Chairman - Roshni Nadar Malhotra
6	Bellatrix Aerospace	Co-Founder - Rohan M Ganapathy
Banking Organizations		
7	Punjab & Sind Bank	MD/CEO - Swarup Kumar Saha
8	L & T Finance Ltd.	MD/CEO - Mr. Sudipta Roy
9	Equitas Small Finance Bank	MD/CEO - P. N. Vasudevan
10	RBI	Governor - Sanjay Malhotra
11	Edelweiss Asset Reconstruction Company	MD/CEO - Mythili Balasubramanian
12	Canara Bank	MD/CEO - K. Satyanarayana Raju
Defense		
13	DRDO	DG - Dr. Manu Korulla
14	Indian Navy	Chief of Naval Staff - Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi
Countries		
15	Indonesia	President - Prabowo Subianto Capital - Jakarta Currency - Indonesian Rupiah
16	Singapore	PM - Lawrence Wong Capital - Singapore Currency - Singapore Dollar



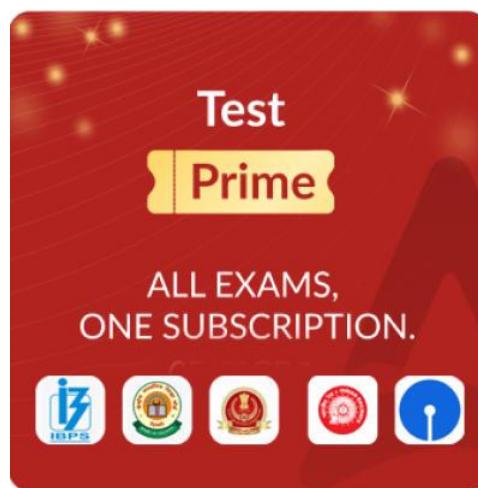
Sr. No	Static Name	Static Details
17	USA	President - Donald Trump Capital - Washington D.C. Currency - USD
18	Namibia	President - Netumbo Nandi Capital - Windhoek Currency - Namibian Dollar
19	Thailand	PM - Paetongtarn Shinawatra Capital - Bangkok Currency - Thai Baht
Indian States		
20	Uttarakhand	Governor - Gurmit Singh CM - Pushkar Dhami Capital - Dehradun
21	Kerala	Governor - Rajendra Arlekar CM - Pinarayi Vijayan Capital - Thiruvananthapuram
22	Tamil Nadu	Governor - R. N. Ravi CM - Stalin M. K. Capital - Chennai
23	West Bengal	Governor - Ananda Bose CM - Mamata Banerjee Capital - Kolkata
24	Delhi	L. Governor - Vinai Saxena CM - Rekha Gupta Capital - New Delhi
25	Telangana	Governor - Jishnu Dev Varma CM - Revanth Reddy Capital - Hyderabad

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- Q1.** Which initiative was unveiled by Sarbananda Sonowal to standardize port operations?
Ans: 'One Nation-One Port' initiative
- Q2.** How many riverine dolphins were recorded under Project Dolphin across three river systems?
Ans: 6,327 riverine dolphins
- Q3.** What is the cost of the Govindghat-Hemkund Sahib Ji Ropeway approved under Parvatomala Pariyojana?
Ans: ₹2,730.13 crore
- Q4.** How much will the travel time be reduced from 9 hours to by the Sonprayag-Kedarnath Ropeway?
Ans: 36 minutes
- Q5.** Which census was announced by PM Modi during the NBWL meeting to be conducted in May 2024?
Ans: 16th Asiatic Lion Census
- Q6.** Who inaugurated the 'Vividhta Ka Amrit Mahotsav' showcasing Southern India's cultural heritage?
Ans: President Murmu
- Q7.** What is the name of the IndiaAI Datasets Platform launched by Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw?
Ans: AIKosha
- Q8.** What is the maximum subsidy percentage offered on high-end GPUs under the IndiaAI Compute Portal?
Ans: Up to 40%
- Q9.** How many outstanding women professionals in mining were recognized under the Women in Mining Initiative?
Ans: 46 outstanding women professionals
- Q10.** Where was India's first World Peace Center inaugurated to promote non-violence and universal brotherhood?
Ans: Gurugram
- Q11.** When will Uttarakhand's Unified Pension Scheme (UPS) for NPS employees become effective?
Ans: April 1, 2025
- Q12.** Which cybersecurity facility was inaugurated by Kerala CM Pinarayi Vijayan?
Ans: Advanced Cybersecurity Operations Centre (SOC)



Q13. What is the total budget allocation for Bihar in 2025-26? Ans: ₹3,16,895 crore	Q29. Which handbook did RBI release for cooperative banks summarizing key regulatory guidelines? Ans: "Regulations at a Glance"
Q14. At what price will Madhya Pradesh government provide permanent power connections to farmers? Ans: Rs 5	Q30. Which AI company did Paytm partner with to enhance search and financial decision-making? Ans: Perplexity AI
Q15. To what has Bangalore City University been renamed? Ans: Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru University	Q31. What was the percentage decline in UPI transactions in February 2025? Ans: 5% MoM decline
Q16. What is the helpline number for Punjab's 'Project Hifazat' women & child safety initiative? Ans: 181	Q32. What was the YoY growth in GST collections in February 2025? Ans: 9.1%
Q17. What is the name of Assam's electronic city announced post Advantage Assam 2.0 Summit? Ans: Ratan Tata Electronic City	Q33. What is the maximum discount offered on term life insurance under PhonePe's 'Insuring HEROES' Campaign? Ans: 30%
Q18. What does RISE app in Uttar Pradesh stand for? Ans: Rapid Immunisation Skill Enhancement	Q34. What is India's GDP growth forecast by Crisil for FY26? Ans: 6.5%
Q19. By what percentage did China increase its 2025 defence budget? Ans: 7.2%	Q35. Which film won Best Picture at the Oscars 2025? Ans: Anora
Q20. Who was sworn in as Uruguay's President on March 1, 2025? Ans: Yamandú Orsi	Q36. Who received the 'Lifetime Achievement in Hospitality Education' award at Vibrant Bharat Global Summit 2025? Ans: Dr. Suborno Bose
Q21. Which countries faced sweeping tariffs from the Trump administration effective March 4, 2025? Ans: Canada, Mexico, and China	Q37. What honorary order did PM Modi receive from Barbados? Ans: Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados
Q22. Which is the world's largest iceberg that ran aground near South Georgia Island? Ans: Iceberg A23a	Q38. Which rivers are the focus of the MoU between IWAI & J&K Govt. for River Cruise Tourism? Ans: Chenab (NW-26), Jhelum (NW-49), Ravi (NW-84)
Q23. Who replaced Herzl Halevi as Israeli Military Chief? Ans: Eyal Zamir	Q39. What is the name of HDFC Bank's project launched in partnership with IAF & CSC Academy? Ans: Project HAKK
Q24. Which certification did Bank of Baroda receive from BSI for Business Continuity Management? Ans: ISO 22301:2019	
Q25. Which bank partnered with Chennai Super Kings to launch a co-branded credit card? Ans: City Union Bank	
Q26. Who was appointed as RBI Executive Director to manage key financial and risk management sectors? Ans: Dr. Ajit Ratnakar Joshi	
Q27. By what percentage did SEBI's total income rise YoY in FY 2023-24? Ans: 48%	
Q28. What was the fine imposed by RBI on HSBC for compliance lapses? Ans: ₹66.6 lakh	



Q40. Where was the Australia-India Sports Excellence Forum launched? Ans: GIFT City, Gujarat	Q55. Which cricket milestone did Virat Kohli achieve recently? Ans: 300th ODI
Q41. Who was re-elected as Chairman of Bar Council of India for the seventh consecutive term? Ans: Manan Kumar Mishra	Q56. Who announced retirement from table tennis at WTT Star Contender Chennai? Ans: Sharath Kamal
Q42. Who was appointed as CEO of Government e-Marketplace (GeM)? Ans: Ajay Bhadoo	Q57. When are the Khelo India Para Games 2025 scheduled to be held? Ans: March 20-27, 2025
Q43. Who became the first woman Law Secretary in India? Ans: Anju Rathi Rana	Q58. Which Bangladesh cricketer announced retirement from ODIs post Champions Trophy 2025? Ans: Mushfiqur Rahim
Q44. Which Punjabi artist was appointed as Levi's first global ambassador? Ans: Diljit Dosanjh	Q59. Which team clinched their third Ranji Trophy title in seven seasons? Ans: Vidarbha
Q45. Who took additional charge as Revenue Secretary? Ans: Ajay Seth	Q60. When is Khelo India Winter Games 2025 scheduled in Gulmarg? Ans: March 9-12
Q46. What was tested at 50,000 feet in DRDO's High-Altitude Trial for Tejas? Ans: Indigenous On-Board Oxygen Generating System (OBOGS)	Q61. Who clinched the Bengaluru Open ATP 125 Challenger title? Ans: Brandon Holt (USA)
Q47. Which countries are participating in the Sea Dragon 2025 Naval Exercise? Ans: India, U.S., Japan, Australia, S. Korea	Q62. Who took over as ACC President after Jay Shah became ICC Chairman? Ans: Shammi Silva
Q48. What is India's rank in Global Wealth Rankings according to Knight Frank's Wealth Report 2025? Ans: 4th	Q63. How many GPUs are available under the IndiaAI Mission Compute Portal? Ans: 18,000+
Q49. How many HNWIs does India have according to Knight Frank's Wealth Report 2025? Ans: 85,698	Q64. What was the theme of World Wildlife Day 2025? Ans: "Wildlife Conservation Finance: Investing in People and Planet"
Q50. Which company was honored as Emerging Innovator at Forbes India Leadership Awards 2025? Ans: BugWorks Research	Q65. When is National Dentist's Day observed? Ans: March 6
Q51. Which country ranks No.1 in the Glass-Ceiling Index 2025 for working women? Ans: Sweden	Q66. When is Jan Aushadhi Diwas celebrated? Ans: March 7
Q52. What is LIC's rank in the strongest insurance brand index? Ans: 3rd	Q67. What was the theme of World Hearing Day 2025? Ans: "Changing mindsets: Empower yourself to make ear and hearing care a reality for all!"
Q53. What is IndiGo's seat capacity growth percentage, making it the 2nd fastest-growing airline? Ans: 10.1%	Q68. At what age did Australian tennis legend Fred Stolle pass away? Ans: 86
Q54. Where was the World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) 2025 held? Ans: Not specified in the document	Q69. Who is now the oldest living Test cricketer after Ron Draper's passing? Ans: Neil Harvey (Australia, 96)



Q70. Which legendary left-arm spinner for Mumbai cricket passed away at 84? Ans: Padmakar Shivalkar	Q85. Which city is recognized as India's first solar city? Ans: Sanchi, Madhya Pradesh
Q71. Which new habitats were identified for cheetah reintroduction in India? Ans: Banni Grasslands (Gujarat) & Gandhisagar Sanctuary (MP)	Q86. Under the 'PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana,' how many units of free electricity are provided? Ans: 300 units
Q72. What will be the cost of the Sonprayag-Kedarnath Ropeway project? Ans: ₹4,081.28 crore	Q87. Which city hosts India's first underwater metro? Ans: Kolkata
Q73. Which festival was described as Asia's largest literature festival from March 7-12 in New Delhi? Ans: Sahitya Akademi's Festival of Letters 2025	Q88. Which state was the first to implement a climate risk atlas? Ans: Odisha
Q74. Which two railway PSUs were upgraded to Navratna status on March 4, 2025? Ans: IRCTC and IRFC	Q89. Which was the first state to provide menstrual leave for women employees? Ans: Bihar
Q75. Who was the new RBI Executive Director appointed to oversee Statistics & Information Management? Ans: Dr. Ajit Ratnakar Joshi	Q90. The world's tallest railway bridge is built over which river? Ans: Chenab River
Q76. What is the total defence budget of China for 2025? Ans: \$245 billion	Q91. Which country launched the "Bharat Mart" in Dubai? Ans: UAE
Q77. When will Trump's reciprocal tariffs on India be effective? Ans: April 2	Q92. With which South American country did India sign a trade agreement in 2025? Ans: Brazil
Q78. Which sector received the highest allocation in Bihar's 2025-26 budget? Ans: Education (₹60,954 crore)	Q93. Which country was the first to land on the far side of the Moon? Ans: China
Q79. Who won the Best Director award at Oscars 2025? Ans: Sean Baker	Q94. In which country is India's first overseas rail project located? Ans: Mauritius
Q80. How many disciplines will feature in the Khelo India Para Games 2025? Ans: Six	Q95. Which country hosted the 2025 SCO Summit? Ans: Kazakhstan
Q81. What is India's 58th Tiger Reserve? Ans: Madhav National Park	Q96. To which country did India gift a Dornier aircraft? Ans: Sri Lanka
Q82. Which is the first state in India to use AI in vehicle fitness testing? Ans: Uttar Pradesh	Q97. Which is the first AI-driven city in the world? Ans: Neom, Saudi Arabia
Q83. How many kilometers does India's longest expressway, the Delhi-Mumbai Expressway, span? Ans: 1,386 km	Q98. Which new sport was introduced in the Paris 2024 Olympics? Ans: Breaking (Breakdancing)
Q84. What is the purpose of the "Mera Yuva Bharat" (MY Bharat) platform? Ans: Youth empowerment	Q99. Which country became the 31st NATO member? Ans: Sweden
	Q100. In which country was the world's largest electric ferry launched? Ans: Norway
	Q101. What is India's GDP growth projection for FY 2025 by RBI? Ans: 6.5%



- Q102.** Who was appointed as the new RBI governor in December 2024?
Ans: Sanjay Malhotra
- Q103.** Which bank launched the “Smart Hub Vyapar” app for merchants?
Ans: HDFC Bank
- Q104.** Which is India’s largest public sector bank?
Ans: State Bank of India (SBI)
- Q105.** Where is the headquarters of the BRICS New Development Bank?
Ans: Shanghai, China
- Q106.** What is the name of the first digital currency introduced by RBI?
Ans: e-Rupee (CBDC)
- Q107.** India’s forex reserves recently crossed which amount?
Ans: \$650 billion
- Q108.** Which bank launched the ‘Green Deposit’ scheme?
Ans: ICICI Bank
- Q109.** Which was the first Indian stock exchange to launch AI-powered trading?
Ans: NSE (National Stock Exchange)
- Q110.** Which was the first bank in India to introduce a UPI credit card facility?
Ans: Axis Bank
- Q111.** In which city was India’s first quantum computing-based telecom network set up?
Ans: Delhi
- Q112.** What is the name of ISRO’s reusable launch vehicle?
Ans: RLV-TD
- Q113.** Which company launched the world’s first 3D-printed rocket?
Ans: Relativity Space (USA)
- Q114.** What is the name of India’s first AI-powered robot lawyer?
Ans: Lexi
- Q115.** Chandrayaan-3 successfully landed near which lunar region?
Ans: South Pole
- Q116.** What is the name of the world’s first malaria vaccine approved by WHO?
Ans: RTS,S (Mosquirix)
- Q117.** In which city was India’s first indigenously developed hydrogen fuel cell ferry launched?
Ans: Kochi

- Q118.** What is the name of India’s AI chatbot for healthcare services?
Ans: Aarogya AI
- Q119.** Which was the first Indian private rocket company to reach orbit?
Ans: Skyroot Aerospace
- Q120.** How many astronauts is the Gaganyaan mission aiming to send into space?
Ans: Three
- Q121.** What is the name of India’s first indigenous aircraft carrier?
Ans: INS Vikrant
- Q122.** What is the range of the Agni-5 missile?
Ans: 5,000 km
- Q123.** Who is India’s first woman Rafale fighter pilot?
Ans: Shivangi Singh
- Q124.** Exercise ‘Yudh Abhyas’ is conducted between India and which country?
Ans: USA
- Q125.** What is the name of the first Indian submarine made under Project-75I?
Ans: INS Kalvari
- Q126.** The BrahMos missile is developed by India in collaboration with which country?
Ans: Russia
- Q127.** What is the name of the Indian Army’s first AI-based combat drone system?
Ans: SkyStriker
- Q128.** Who is the current Chief of Defense Staff (CDS) of India?
Ans: General Anil Chauhan
- Q129.** The ‘Varunastra’ torpedo was developed by which organization?
Ans: DRDO
- Q130.** What is the name of India’s first indigenously built attack helicopter?
Ans: HAL Prachand
- Q131.** How many gold medals did India win in the 2024 Paris Olympics?
Ans: 7
- Q132.** Who was the first Indian to win an ATP Masters 1000 title?
Ans: Rohan Bopanna
- Q133.** Which country will host the Champions Trophy 2025?
Ans: Pakistan



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| <p>Q134. Who won the Orange Cap in IPL 2024?
 Ans: Shubman Gill</p> <p>Q135. Which country will host the 2028 Olympics?
 Ans: USA (Los Angeles)</p> <p>Q136. Who became the first Indian woman to win a Formula 3 race?
 Ans: Sneha Sharma</p> <p>Q137. Where was India's first football AI referee system launched?
 Ans: ISL (Indian Super League)</p> <p>Q138. Who was the first Indian para-athlete to win six medals at the Paralympics?
 Ans: Sumit Antil</p> <p>Q139. Which country will host the Asian Games 2026?
 Ans: Japan</p> <p>Q140. Who won the 2024 Ballon d'Or?
 Ans: Lionel Messi</p> <p>Q141. Who was awarded the Bharat Ratna in 2024?
 Ans: Chaudhary Charan Singh</p> <p>Q142. Who was the first Indian woman to receive the Nobel Prize in Literature?
 Ans: Arundhati Roy</p> <p>Q143. Which film won the Oscar for Best Picture in 2024?
 Ans: Oppenheimer</p> <p>Q144. Who received the Padma Vibhushan in Sports in 2024?
 Ans: Sachin Tendulkar</p> <p>Q145. Who was the first Indian scientist to win the Abel Prize?
 Ans: Manjul Bhargava</p> <p>Q146. Who won the Miss World 2024 title?
 Ans: Krystyna Pyszková (Czech Republic)</p> <p>Q147. Who was awarded the Jnanpith Award in 2024?
 Ans: Damodar Mauzo</p> | <p>Q148. Who was India's first female Grandmaster in chess?
 Ans: Koneru Humpy</p> <p>Q149. Who won the Booker Prize 2024?
 Ans: Chetna Maroo</p> <p>Q150. Who was the first Indian to win the Fields Medal in Mathematics?
 Ans: Akshay Venkatesh</p> <p>Q151. What was the theme of World Environment Day 2024?
 Ans: Land Restoration, Desertification, and Drought Resilience</p> <p>Q152. Which was the first solar-powered village in India?
 Ans: Modhera, Gujarat</p> <p>Q153. In which state was India's first hydrogen-powered train launched?
 Ans: Haryana</p> <p>Q154. Where is the world's largest renewable energy park located?
 Ans: Gujarat</p> <p>Q155. Which was the first city in India to achieve net-zero carbon status?
 Ans: Indore</p> <p>Q156. Which is the world's first carbon-neutral country?
 Ans: Bhutan</p> <p>Q157. Which was the first Indian state to mandate EV-only government vehicles?
 Ans: Kerala</p> <p>Q158. Where is the world's largest floating solar plant located?
 Ans: Madhya Pradesh</p> <p>Q159. What is the name of India's first deep-sea mining exploration project?
 Ans: Samudrayaan</p> <p>Q160. Which was the first river in India to be declared a living entity?
 Ans: Ganga</p> <p>Q161. Who laid the foundation stone for NECTAR's permanent campus in Shillong?
 Ans: Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh.</p> <p>Q162. Where was the first-ever Fit India Carnival 2025 inaugurated?
 Ans: Jawaharlal Nehru Stadium, New Delhi.</p> <p>Q163. Which Union Minister visited the IIT Madras Hyperloop testing facility?
 Ans: Ashwini Vaishnaw.</p> |
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<p>Q164. What is the purpose of the PM Internship Scheme App launched by FM Nirmala Sitharaman? Ans: To streamline internship applications and enhance youth employment.</p> <p>Q165. Where will India's first PPP green waste processing plant be established? Ans: Bicholi Hapsi, Indore.</p> <p>Q166. What is the outlay for the Revised Rashtriya Gokul Mission? Ans: ₹3,400 crore.</p> <p>Q167. Which state will host the Jaitapur nuclear energy project? Ans: Maharashtra.</p> <p>Q168. What is the theme of Purple Fest 2025? Ans: Promoting inclusivity for Divyangjan.</p> <p>Q169. What is the focus of C-DOT's 'Samarth' incubation program? Ans: Supporting startups in Telecom, Cybersecurity, 5G/6G, AI, and Quantum Technologies.</p> <p>Q170. Which state government is implementing PM-ABHIM with 1,139 Urban Ayushman Arogya Mandirs? Ans: Delhi.</p> <p>Q171. Who inaugurated the Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Temple in Bhiwandi? Ans: Maharashtra CM Fadnavis.</p> <p>Q172. Which state is planning stricter anti-conversion laws? Ans: Chhattisgarh.</p> <p>Q173. Who inaugurated the Lachit Barphukan Police Academy in Assam? Ans: Amit Shah.</p> <p>Q174. What is the budget allocation for Himachal Pradesh in 2025-26? Ans: ₹58,514 crore.</p> <p>Q175. What is the purpose of Delhi Police's 'Shishtachar' squads? Ans: To combat eve-teasing.</p> <p>Q176. What is the budget outlay for Telangana in 2025-26? Ans: ₹3.04 lakh crore.</p> <p>Q177. Which state will host the Namrup-IV Fertilizer Plant? Ans: Assam.</p> <p>Q178. Who launched six mobile dental clinics in Delhi? Ans: Delhi Health Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh.</p> <p>Q179. Which state is exploring skill development partnerships with the UK? Ans: Odisha.</p>	<p>Q180. Who inaugurated Meghalaya's first scientific coal mining block? Ans: Meghalaya CM.</p> <p>Q181. Which state will install a 58-foot statue of Potti Sriramulu? Ans: Andhra Pradesh.</p> <p>Q182. Which countries finalized a peace treaty for Nagorno-Karabakh? Ans: Armenia and Azerbaijan.</p> <p>Q183. Which platform is merging with DWAC to go public? Ans: Truth Social.</p> <p>Q184. What is the focus of ADB's "Frontier Seed" Initiative? Ans: Boosting Pacific businesses.</p> <p>Q185. Which country joined India's Indo-Pacific Oceans Initiative? Ans: New Zealand.</p> <p>Q186. Which country tops the World Happiness Report 2025? Ans: Finland.</p> <p>Q187. Who became the first female IOC President? Ans: Kirsty Coventry.</p> <p>Q188. Which country ranks second in funding for women-led startups? Ans: India.</p> <p>Q189. What is SBI's new project finance unit focusing on? Ans: AI, fintech, and e-commerce startups.</p> <p>Q190. Which bank partnered with Sunrisers Hyderabad? Ans: City Union Bank.</p> <p>Q191. What is SEBI's new minimum investment limit for SSE? Ans: ₹1,000.</p> <p>Q192. Which country is India's largest source of remittances? Ans: USA.</p> <p>Q193. Who sold Magma General Insurance to Patanjali Ayurved and DS Group? Ans: Adar Poonawalla.</p> <p>Q194. Which company acquired an additional 10% stake in Tata Play? Ans: Tata Sons.</p> <p>Q195. Where did BPCL inaugurate a 3.2 MW floating solar power plant? Ans: Kochi Refinery.</p> <p>Q196. What was India's wholesale inflation rate in February 2024? Ans: 2.38%.</p>
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<p>Q197. What is India's forex reserve as of March 2025? Ans: \$653.966 billion.</p> <p>Q198. Which country is negotiating a Comprehensive FTA with India? Ans: New Zealand.</p> <p>Q199. What is India's projected GDP by 2028? Ans: \$5.7 trillion.</p> <p>Q200. Who chairs the Inter-Ministerial-Industry Committee on Fintech? Ans: DFS Secretary.</p> <p>Q201. Which state signed an MoU with the Gates Foundation for AI integration? Ans: Andhra Pradesh.</p> <p>Q202. Which organization partnered with Sarvam AI for Aadhaar services? Ans: UIDAI.</p> <p>Q203. Which countries signed an MoU to promote trade in local currencies? Ans: India and Mauritius.</p> <p>Q204. Who was appointed TAFE Vice Chairman? Ans: Dr. Lakshmi Venu.</p> <p>Q205. Who became the CEO of ANRF? Ans: Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman.</p> <p>Q206. Who was appointed as Intel's new CEO? Ans: Lip-Bu Tan.</p> <p>Q207. Who was named 'Fit India Icon'? Ans: Ayushmann Khurrana.</p> <p>Q208. Who joined Skechers as a brand ambassador? Ans: Jasprit Bumrah.</p> <p>Q209. Who was appointed Goodwill Ambassador of VISION 2020 India? Ans: Krishnamachari Srikkanth.</p> <p>Q210. Who was re-appointed as Independent Director of Fino Payments Bank? Ans: Deena Mehta.</p> <p>Q211. Who was appointed RBI's Executive Director? Ans: Indranil Bhattacharyya.</p> <p>Q212. Who was appointed as NIIT University Chancellor? Ans: Amitabh Kant.</p> <p>Q213. Which book celebrates India's 1975 Hockey World Cup victory? Ans: "March of Glory."</p>	<p>Q214. What is the focus of the book "To the Seventh Generation"? Ans: CMC Vellore.</p> <p>Q215. Which organization signed a ₹2,906 crore deal with the Ministry of Defence? Ans: BEL.</p> <p>Q216. Which countries participated in VARUNA 2025? Ans: India and France.</p> <p>Q217. Who won the 2025 Stockholm Water Prize? Ans: Günter Blöschl.</p> <p>Q218. Who was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the UK Parliament? Ans: Chiranjeevi.</p> <p>Q219. Who was conferred with the Maharashtra Bhushan Award? Ans: Ram Sutar.</p> <p>Q220. Who was awarded the Knight's Cross of the Order of Dannebrog? Ans: Vijay Sankar.</p> <p>Q221. What is India's rank in the Free Speech Index? Ans: 24th.</p> <p>Q222. What is India's rank in the World Happiness Report 2025? Ans: 118th.</p> <p>Q223. What is the outlay for Telangana's 'Rajiv Yuva Vikasam' Scheme? Ans: ₹6,000 crore.</p> <p>Q224. Which country participated in the 353rd ILO Governing Body Meeting? Ans: India.</p> <p>Q225. Who won the Balbir Singh Sr Award for Player of the Year? Ans: Harmanpreet Singh and Savita Punia.</p> <p>Q226. How many medals did India win at the Special Olympics World Winter Games 2025? Ans: 33 medals.</p> <p>Q227. Who won the IML 2025 title? Ans: India Masters.</p> <p>Q228. Who won the Australian GP opener in 2025? Ans: Lando Norris.</p> <p>Q229. Who was banned for doping in 2025? Ans: Archana Jadhav.</p>
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- Q230.** Where is the Kabaddi World Cup 2025 being held?
Ans: England.
- Q231.** Who qualified for the 2026 FIFA World Cup first after hosts?
Ans: Japan.
- Q232.** What is the mascot of Khelo India Para Games 2025?
Ans: Ujjwala.
- Q233.** Which mission will deploy a 250 kg rover in collaboration with JAXA?
Ans: Chandrayaan-5.
- Q234.** How much revenue did India generate by launching foreign satellites?
Ans: \$143 million.
- Q235.** Where did ISRO launch a Thermal Research Centre?
Ans: IIT Madras.
- Q236.** What virus was detected in Kolkata but is not a pandemic threat?
Ans: HKU1 Coronavirus.
- Q237.** Who returned to Earth after a nine-month extended stay in space?
Ans: Butch Wilmore and Sunita Williams.
- Q238.** What is the name of Tata Communications' AI-powered cloud solution?
Ans: Vayu.
- Q239.** What was created by researchers combining superfluid and solid properties?
Ans: Supersolid.
- Q240.** What is the theme of World Water Day 2025?
Ans: "Glacier Preservation."
- Q241.** Which ministry launched Project PARI to transform Delhi's public spaces into artistic landmarks?
Ans: Ministry of Culture
- Q242.** Which organization secured Oeko-Tex certification for eri silk?
Ans: NEHHD
- Q243.** On which date is Ram Manohar Lohia Jayanti observed?
Ans: March 23
- Q244.** What is the name of IICA's national competition on corporate rescue strategies?
Ans: Samarthya 2025
- Q245.** Which state established India's first Senior Citizens Commission?
Ans: Kerala

- Q246.** What is the name of the national museum planned in New Delhi with French cooperation?
Ans: Yuge Yugeen Bharat
- Q247.** Which portal was launched to enhance PSU bank e-auctions and asset sales?
Ans: BAANKNET
- Q248.** Who chairs the National Task Force on student mental health established by the Supreme Court?
Ans: Justice S. Ravindra Bhat
- Q249.** What is India's current milk production in million metric tons?
Ans: 239 MMT
- Q250.** For whom was a commemorative postage stamp issued on her 1009th birth anniversary?
Ans: Mata Karma
- Q251.** What is India's nuclear power target by 2047?
Ans: 100 GW
- Q252.** Which country did India surpass to become the 2nd largest tea exporter?
Ans: Sri Lanka
- Q253.** What is the full form of DCS launched for real-time crop data collection?
Ans: Digital Crop Survey
- Q254.** Which two river corridors are being planned by Uttarakhand to boost religious tourism?
Ans: Ganga and Sharda
- Q255.** What is the name of the mobile app launched by West Bengal Police for transparent transfers?
Ans: West Bengal Police Mobile App
- Q256.** What is the name of Haryana's AI chatbot for citizen services?
Ans: Sarathi
- Q257.** Which zoo launched India's first DNA preservation project using cryogenic storage?
Ans: Darjeeling Zoo
- Q258.** Which country recently joined the BRICS New Development Bank?
Ans: Indonesia
- Q259.** Who became Namibia's first female president in March 2025?
Ans: Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah
- Q260.** What percentage tariff did the US impose on imported cars and auto parts?
Ans: 25%



Q261. What was the magnitude of the earthquake that hit near Mandalay, Myanmar? Ans: 7.7	Q276. When will the revised MSME classification become effective? Ans: April 1, 2025
Q262. Which two funds did SBI Mutual Fund launch tracking the BSE PSU Bank Index? Ans: PSU Bank Index Fund & PSU Bank ETF	Q277. Which flower did Mizoram export to Singapore for the first time? Ans: Anthurium
Q263. How many years has RBI granted RRBs to amortize additional pension liabilities? Ans: Five years	Q278. On how many Chinese products did India impose anti-dumping duties? Ans: Five
Q264. By what percentage did public sector banks' dividend payouts surge in FY24? Ans: 33%	Q279. What is India's current GDP in trillion dollars? Ans: \$4.3 trillion
Q265. What interest rate did RBI set for GOI Floating Rate Bond 2033? Ans: 8.34%	Q280. Which country is India projected to surpass economically in 2025? Ans: Japan
Q266. Which IPL teams has Equitas Small Finance Bank partnered with? Ans: Chennai Super Kings and Gujarat Titans	Q281. What is the total expenditure in the Finance Bill 2025 passed by Lok Sabha? Ans: ₹50.65 lakh crore
Q267. What type of fixed deposit did HDFC Bank launch for diplomatic missions in India? Ans: Embassy Fixed Deposit	Q282. What is S&P's growth forecast for India in FY26? Ans: 6.5%
Q268. What will be the ATM cash withdrawal fee from May 1, 2025? Ans: ₹19	Q283. How much does the government plan to raise via bonds in H1 FY26? Ans: ₹8 lakh crore
Q269. What is the new education loan limit under revised Priority Sector Lending norms? Ans: ₹25 lakh	Q284. Which country did India sign a Green and Digital Shipping Corridor Letter of Intent with? Ans: Singapore
Q270. What penalty did RBI impose on HDFC Bank for regulatory non-compliance? Ans: ₹75 lakh	Q285. Which organization partnered with LIC for digital insurance services? Ans: CDSL Centrico
Q271. What is the value of unclaimed bank deposits transferred to RBI's DEA Fund? Ans: ₹45,000+ crore	Q286. What is the focus of the UIDAI-IIIT Hyderabad Biometric Challenge? Ans: Age-invariant fingerprint authentication
Q272. Who was appointed as brand ambassador for Tata Motors' Passenger and Electric Vehicle segment? Ans: Vicky Kaushal	Q287. What organization was launched to strengthen India-Sri Lanka economic ties? Ans: India-Sri Lanka Business Association
Q273. Which company did Reliance Industries acquire to expand its shipyard operations? Ans: Nauyan Tradings	Q288. Whose autobiography "Stumped" revisits India's 1983 Cricket World Cup triumph? Ans: Not specified
Q274. Which company became the world's most valuable steelmaker with a market cap over \$30 billion? Ans: JSW Steel	Q289. Who is the subject of the book 'Leo: The Untold Story of Chennai Super Kings'? Ans: Chennai Super Kings
Q275. Which countries replaced Gulf nations as top remittance sources to India? Ans: U.S. & U.K.	Q290. Who received the Sangita Kalanidhi Award 2025 for Carnatic music? Ans: R.K. Shriramkumar



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| <p>Q291. Who was appointed as Interim MD & CEO of Edelweiss ARC?
Ans: Mythili Balasubramanian</p> <p>Q292. Who was appointed as Chief Justice of Orissa High Court?
Ans: Justice Harish Tandon</p> <p>Q293. Who was elected as GSMA Chairman?
Ans: Gopal Vittal</p> <p>Q294. Who was appointed as the new Finance Secretary?
Ans: Ajay Seth</p> <p>Q295. Who was appointed as Full-Time Member of NITI Aayog?
Ans: Rajiv Gauba</p> <p>Q296. Who was elected as INTACH chairman?
Ans: Ashok Singh Thakur</p> <p>Q297. Who was appointed as MD & CEO of IFCI?
Ans: Rahul Bhave</p> <p>Q298. Who was appointed as MD & CEO of Hitachi CMS?
Ans: Yusuf Pachmariwala</p> <p>Q299. What is the name of the frigate launched by the Indian Navy?
Ans: Tavasya</p> <p>Q300. What missile was successfully test-fired by DRDO and Indian Navy?
Ans: VLSRSAM</p> <p>Q301. What barge was launched by the Indian Navy to transport ammunition, torpedoes, and missiles?
Ans: ACTCM Barge (LSAM 24)</p> <p>Q302. Which region's glaciers are facing accelerated loss according to a UN report?
Ans: Hindu Kush Himalayas</p> <p>Q303. What rank did Roshni Nadar achieve in the Hurun Global Rich List 2025?
Ans: 5th</p> <p>Q304. How many Jan Aushadhi Kendras have been opened under PMBJP?
Ans: 15,057</p> <p>Q305. What initiative was launched to promote Indian rhymes under NEP 2020?
Ans: Baalpan ki Kavita</p> <p>Q306. Which scheme's medium and long-term deposits did the government discontinue?
Ans: Gold Monetisation Scheme</p> <p>Q307. How many buyers from how many countries participated in Sourcex India 2025?
Ans: 150+ buyers from 45+ countries</p> | <p>Q308. Who won the Chinese Grand Prix 2025?
Ans: Oscar Piastri</p> <p>Q309. Who made IPL history by captaining three different teams?
Ans: Ajinkya Rahane</p> <p>Q310. Who won bronze at the Asian Wrestling Championships 2025?
Ans: Sunil Kumar</p> <p>Q311. Which badminton player retired to focus on coaching?
Ans: B Sumeeth Reddy</p> <p>Q312. Which state topped the medal tally at Khelo India Para Games with 34 gold medals?
Ans: Haryana</p> <p>Q313. Which company partnered with Astroscale Japan for space debris removal?
Ans: Bellatrix Aerospace</p> <p>Q314. What is the theme of World TB Day 2025?
Ans: "Yes! We Can End TB: Commit, Invest, Deliver"</p> <p>Q315. Whose memory does the International Day for the Right to the Truth honor?
Ans: Monsignor Óscar Romero</p> <p>Q316. On which date is International Unborn Child Day observed?
Ans: March 25</p> <p>Q317. What was the theme of World Theatre Day 2025?
Ans: "Theatre and a Culture of Peace"</p> <p>Q318. Which Tamil actor-director passed away at 48 due to a heart attack?
Ans: Manoj Bharathiraja</p> <p>Q319. What is the size of Delhi Budget 2025-26?
Ans: Rs 1 lakh crore</p> <p>Q320. What archaeological discoveries did ASI make in Kerala?
Ans: Megaliths</p> |
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