

THE HINDU REVIEW

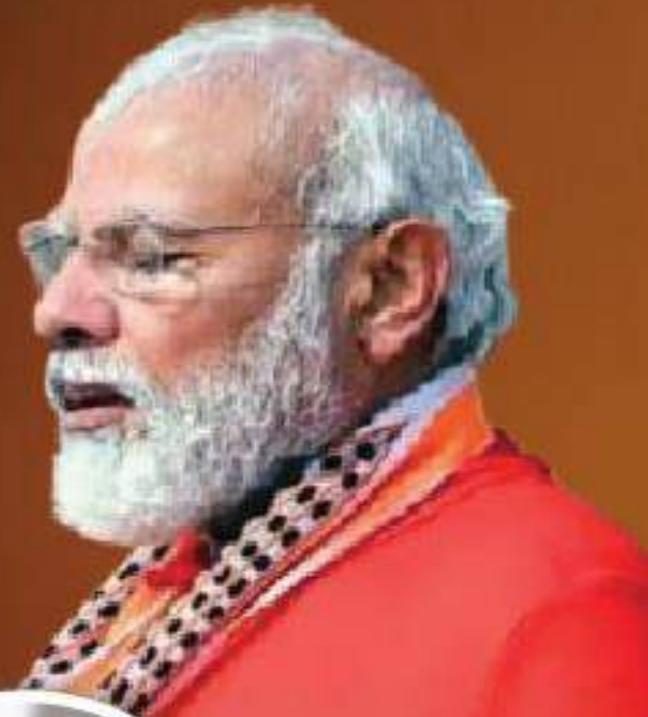


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FEBRUARY 2025

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- Mahakumbh Mela
- RBI Monetary Policy Committee 2025
- Grammy Awards 2025
- Sportstar Aces Awards 2025
- Henley Passport Index 2025
- Women Billionaires Global List 2025
- Aero India 2025
- 2025 Australian Cricket Awards



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NATIONAL NEWS

Cabinet Approvals

Cabinet Passes New Income Tax Bill 2025: A Major Overhaul of India's Tax System

The **Union Cabinet** has approved the **new Income Tax Bill**, which will **replace the six-decade-old Income Tax Act, 1961**. The primary objective of this new legislation is to **simplify, modernize, and streamline India's tax system**, making it more **comprehensible and efficient for taxpayers**.

Finance Minister **Nirmala Sitharaman** announced in the **Budget 2025-26** that the new bill will be **introduced in Parliament** in the **ongoing session**. Once tabled, it will be sent to the **Standing Committee on Finance** for further evaluation and discussion.

Why is the New Income Tax Bill Necessary?

The **current Income Tax Act, 1961**, has undergone **multiple amendments over the years**, making it **complex and difficult to interpret** for taxpayers. The government has recognized the need to:

- **Simplify the legal language** to enhance taxpayer comprehension.
- **Reduce disputes and litigations** by eliminating ambiguous provisions.
- **Ensure greater tax certainty** for businesses and individuals.
- **Remove redundant and obsolete provisions** to modernize the tax framework.

By introducing a **clear and concise tax structure**, the government aims to **increase compliance and reduce tax evasion**.

Key Features of the New Income Tax Bill

The **new direct tax legislation** is being designed to be **user-friendly** while maintaining **tax efficiency**. Some of its **key features** include:

1. No Additional Tax Burden

The new bill aims to **simplify tax laws** without introducing **any new taxes**. The focus is on **ease of compliance rather than increasing tax rates**.

2. Simplified Language & Structure

Unlike the existing Income Tax Act, which has **long sentences, explanations, and complex provisions**, the new bill will be **clear and concise**. This will ensure that even an **ordinary taxpayer** can **easily understand tax provisions** without requiring expert interpretation.

3. Reduction in Tax Litigation

One of the major concerns of the current tax regime is **prolonged disputes and legal battles**. The new bill aims to:

- **Reduce litigation by providing tax certainty**.
- **Introduce dispute resolution mechanisms** to settle tax matters more efficiently.
- **Simplify compliance requirements** for businesses and individuals.

4. Compliance Reduction

The government has actively worked towards **reducing compliance burdens** by:

- **Eliminating redundant documentation requirements**.
- **Streamlining tax return filing procedures**.
- **Reducing the number of tax forms** for individuals and businesses.

5. Public Consultation and Stakeholder Inputs

The **Central Board of Direct Taxes (CBDT)** had initiated a **comprehensive review** of the Income Tax Act and invited **public inputs** in four key areas:

- **Simplification of language**
- **Reduction in litigation**
- **Reduction in compliance burden**
- **Removal of obsolete provisions**

A total of **6,500 suggestions** were received from **taxpayers, businesses, and industry experts**, reflecting the government's commitment to a **transparent and participative approach**.

Process of Implementation**1. Cabinet Approval & Introduction in Parliament**

The **Union Cabinet** has already **approved** the bill, and it will now be **introduced in Parliament next week**.

2. Review by Standing Committee on Finance

Once introduced, the bill will be referred to the **Standing Committee on Finance**, which will examine it in detail, consider feedback from stakeholders, and propose modifications if necessary.

3. Final Approval & Implementation

After deliberations, the bill will be **passed by both Houses of Parliament** and receive the **President's assent** before being notified for implementation.

Impact of the New Income Tax Bill

- **Better Clarity & Transparency:** Simplified language will make tax provisions **easier to understand**.
- **Lower Dispute Cases:** Reduction in tax ambiguities will help **minimize litigations**.
- **Ease of Compliance:** Individuals and businesses will **spend less time and effort on tax filing**.
- **Encouragement for Investment:** A stable and transparent tax system will **attract investors** and **boost economic growth**.

Cabinet approves extension of the tenure of National Commission for Safai Karamcharis for three years beyond 31.03.2025

- **Tenure Extension:** The Union Cabinet, chaired by PM Narendra Modi, has approved the extension of the **National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK)** for **three years** beyond **March 31, 2025**, up to **March 31, 2028**.
- **Financial Implication:** ₹50.91 crore for three years.
- **Objective:** Socio-economic upliftment of sanitation workers, improving working conditions, and achieving **zero fatalities** in hazardous cleaning.

Key Functions of NCSK

- **Policy Recommendations:** Suggests actions to eliminate inequalities for Safai Karamcharis.
- **Scheme Evaluation:** Monitors and evaluates rehabilitation programs.
- **Grievance Redressal:** Investigates complaints and ensures implementation of schemes.
- **Work Conditions Monitoring:** Examines wages, health, and safety of workers.
- **Reporting:** Provides reports to governments on issues affecting Safai Karamcharis.

Role under MS Act, 2013

- **Monitoring:** Ensures implementation of the Act.
- **Complaints Handling:** Enquires into violations and recommends actions.
- **Government Advisory:** Guides effective enforcement of the Act.
- **Suo-Motu Actions:** Takes action on non-implementation issues.

Background

- **Established:** August 1994 under the **National Commission for Safai Karamcharis Act, 1993**.
- **Mandate:** Focuses on the welfare and rights of sanitation workers in India.

Cabinet Approves Continuation and Restructuring of Skill India Programme

- **Approval:** The Union Cabinet extended the tenure of NCSK for **three years (till 31.03.2028)**.
- **Financial Outlay:** ₹50.91 crore.
- **Objective:** Improve socio-economic conditions, enhance working conditions, and ensure **zero fatalities in hazardous cleaning**.
- **Functions:**
 - Recommending programs for upliftment.
 - Evaluating implementation of schemes.
 - Investigating grievances on non-implementation.
 - Monitoring **working conditions, safety, and wages**.
 - Reporting to Central/State Governments.

Under the MS Act, 2013, NCSK monitors and ensures implementation, handles complaints, and advises governments on policy matters.

Continuation & Restructuring of Skill India Programme (SIP) till 2026

- **Financial Outlay:** ₹8,800 crore (2022-23 to 2025-26).
- **Aim:** Build a **skilled, future-ready workforce** through technology-driven and industry-aligned training.

- **Major Components:**

- **PM Kaushal Vikas Yojana 4.0 (PMKVY 4.0):**
 - Provides NSQF-aligned **short-term training, reskilling & upskilling**.
 - Focus on emerging technologies (**AI, 5G, Cybersecurity, Green Hydrogen, Drones**).
 - **400+ new courses**, digital & flexible learning, micro-credentials (7.5–30 hours).
 - **Skill Hubs** in IITs, NITs, KVs, JNVs, Sainik Schools, etc.
 - **International mobility** with skill certifications for global jobs.
 - Integrated with **PM Vishwakarma, PM Surya Ghar, and National Green Hydrogen Mission**.
- **PM National Apprenticeship Promotion Scheme (PM-NAPS):**
 - **25% stipend (₹1,500/month)** via DBT.
 - Targets **youth (14-35 years)** for **on-the-job vocational training**.
 - Focus on **AI, robotics, blockchain, green energy, Industry 4.0**.
- **Jan Shikshan Sansthan (JSS) Scheme:**
 - **Community-based vocational training** for women, rural youth (15-45 years).
 - Promotes **self-employment & wage-based jobs**.
 - Aligned with **PM JANMAN & ULLAS**.



- **Overall Impact:**

- Enhances employability, entrepreneurship, and economic growth.
- Aligns certifications with DigiLocker & National Credit Framework.
- Supports lifelong learning, upskilling, and reskilling.
- Strengthens India's global workforce competitiveness.

Parliament News

State-wise February Month Important Events

Andhra Pradesh

- The **Andhra Pradesh government** launched '**Mana Mitra**', a **WhatsApp Governance initiative**, making **161 civil services** accessible via WhatsApp. **Minister Nara Lokesh** unveiled the service in **Amaravati**, aiming to bring government services directly to the people. Developed in partnership with **Meta**, the initiative will expand with the integration of **blockchain** and **AI** technologies for seamless **digital governance**.

Arunachal Pradesh

- **Arunachal Pradesh Foundation Day** is observed on **February 20th** to commemorate the state's transition from a **Union Territory** to a full-fledged state in **1987**. Known as the **Land of the Rising Sun**, it is the first place in India to receive sunlight. Located in northeastern India, Arunachal Pradesh shares borders with **Bhutan, China, and Myanmar**, making it strategically important.

Assam

- Assam will host the world's largest **Jhumur dance performance** on **February 24, 2025**, as part of the **Advantage Assam 2.0 Investment Summit**. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will attend, and Assam aims to set a **Guinness World Record** with over **7,500 dancers**. The event showcases Assam's **cultural heritage** and serves as a platform to attract **investors**.

Gujarat

- The **Gujarat government** has appointed a panel, led by **retired Supreme Court judge Ranjana Desai**, to draft the **Uniform Civil Code (UCC)** for the state. The panel is tasked with preparing a detailed report within **45 days** on the potential implementation of the UCC. This move aligns with **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's vision** for equal rights and a **uniform law** across India.
- The **Gujarat government** has declared the inland **mangrove** in **Guneri village** (Kutch district) as the state's first **Biodiversity Heritage Site (BHS)**. This decision aims to conserve rare ecosystems critical to **biodiversity**. Guneri's inland mangrove is one of only eight such ecosystems globally, underscoring its **global significance**.

- The **Gujarat government**, led by **Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel**, launched **G-SAFAL** (Gujarat Scheme for Antyodaya Families for Augmenting Livelihoods) to empower underprivileged families, particularly women. The scheme will target **50,000 Antyodaya Anna Yojana (AAY)** cardholder families across **25 talukas** in **10 districts** over five years, focusing on **livelihood creation, financial inclusion, and social development** for sustainable growth.
- Gujarat's Finance Minister, **Shri Kanu Desai**, presented the **2025-26 Budget** digitally through the **National eVidhan Application (NeVA)**, supporting the **Digital India** vision. This move promotes **paperless governance**, enhancing **transparency, efficiency, and accessibility** in legislative proceedings, as part of the initiative to digitize state legislatures and streamline operations.

Haryana

- The **Haryana government** launched the '**Har Khet-Swasth Khet**' campaign to improve **soil health** and promote **sustainable farming**. The initiative involves collecting **soil samples** from every acre of farmland in the state, with **70 lakh samples** already collected and **55 lakh analyzed**. Over **86 lakh soil health cards** have been issued to help farmers make informed decisions on **soil fertility, nutrient management, and crop productivity**.
- The **Haryana government** has introduced new **Wildlife (Protection) Rules** permitting the shooting of **male Nilgais** (blue bulls) to address **human-wildlife conflict** and agricultural damage. However, the decision has faced protests from **environmentalists** and the **Bishnoi community**, who view Nilgais as sacred. Critics argue that **culling** is neither **ethical** nor a sustainable solution to the issue.
- India inaugurated its first **Ferret Research Facility** at the **Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI)** in **Faridabad**, Haryana, to boost **biomedical research**. This facility will focus on **infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases, and the development of vaccines and therapeutics**. It is expected to strengthen India's **research capabilities** and improve readiness for emerging diseases.

Himachal Pradesh

- The **Himachal Pradesh government**, under **Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu**, has approved a **pilot project for cannabis (hemp) farming**. The initiative focuses on exploring the **medicinal and industrial** benefits of cannabis cultivation, responding to growing global recognition of its value.
- Himachal Pradesh launched **North India's first Green Hydrogen Plant** in **Dabhota, Nalagarh**, with a 1 MW capacity. The **₹9.04 crore project** aims to make the state **India's first green state** by 2026. Developed by **HPPCL and Oil India Limited**, it will reduce carbon emissions through **renewable energy-based hydrogen production**.

Jharkhand

- The **Jharkhand government** has imposed a **one-year ban** on the **sale, manufacture, storage, and distribution** of **gutkha and pan masala**. The ban is enforced under the **Food Safety and Standards Act, 2006** and the **Food Safety and Standards (Prohibition and Restriction on Sales) Regulations, 2011**. **Health Minister Irfan Ansari** highlighted the **health risks**, particularly **oral cancer**, associated with gutkha, aiming to protect public health and prevent tobacco-related harm, especially among the youth.

Karnataka

- **PETA India** introduced **Ellie**, Asia's first life-sized **animatronic elephant** in **Bengaluru**, voiced by **Dia Mirza**. Ellie is designed to educate children about the **harsh realities of elephant captivity**. The **hyper-realistic animatronic** elephant moves and interacts, narrating a story of **cruelty** in circuses and her rescue to a **sanctuary**, teaching kids about **animal welfare, compassion, and the importance of not using elephants for entertainment**.
- **Lam Research**, a leading **semiconductor equipment manufacturer**, has announced an investment of over **₹10,000 crore** in **Karnataka**. The investment, unveiled at the **Global Investors Meet: Invest Karnataka 2025**, aims to boost **India's semiconductor ecosystem** and align with the government's push for **domestic chip manufacturing**. Lam Research has signed an **MoU** with **KIADB** for land in **Whitefield, Bengaluru**, to expand operations, enhance **R&D**, and grow its **supply chain** in India.
- **Karnataka** topped the **2024 Local Governance Performance Index**, excelling in **local body management, finances, and accountability**, surpassing **Kerala**. **Uttar Pradesh (UP)** also showed significant improvement, rising from **15th to 5th place**, reflecting progress in **transparency, anti-corruption measures, and administrative structures**.

Kerala

- The **Kerala government** has approved the **Kerala Health System Improvement Programme (KHSIP)** with a **₹2,424.28 crore** financial aid from the **World Bank**. Approved by **Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan** on February 7, 2025, the project aims to strengthen **healthcare infrastructure, improve disease prevention, and enhance the quality of life** for Kerala's citizens.

- Kerala is set to launch the 'nPROUD' initiative on **February 22, 2025**, making it the first state in India to **scientifically collect and dispose of expired and unused medicines** from households. Led by the **Kerala Drugs Control Department**, this project aims to address the **environmental hazards** and **health risks** associated with pharmaceutical waste.
- Kerala has launched the **nPROUD** initiative, a government-led program for the **safe disposal of expired and unused medicines**. This program aims to prevent **environmental hazards** and **health risks** from improper drug disposal, making Kerala the **first state in India** to implement such a systematic approach.
- Kerala has launched **Nayanamritham 2.0**, an **AI-driven eye screening initiative** in partnership with **Remidio**. It is the **world's first government-led AI-assisted screening program** for chronic eye diseases like **glaucoma, diabetic retinopathy (DR)**, and **age-related macular degeneration (AMD)**. This program expands access to advanced eye care, integrating **artificial intelligence** into **public health** to reach more people across the state.

Manipur

- **Manipur Chief Minister N. Biren Singh** resigned on **February 9, 2025**, amid escalating **ethnic violence** and **political pressure**. His decision follows nearly two years of unrest between the **Meitei** and **Kuki** communities, resulting in loss of lives and displacement. The resignation also comes after opposition calls for **accountability** and a planned **no-confidence motion**.
- In a significant political development, the **Ministry of Home Affairs has imposed President's Rule in Manipur** following the **resignation of Chief Minister N. Biren Singh on February 9**. The decision was taken under **Article 356 of the Indian Constitution**, which empowers the President to assume direct control of a state's administration in case of a breakdown of constitutional machinery.

Madhya Pradesh

- India's **first white tiger breeding centre** has been approved by the **Central Zoo Authority (CZA)** in **Rewa district, Madhya Pradesh**. Located in **Govindgarh**, near the **Mukundpur white tiger safari**, the centre aims to enhance **biodiversity conservation**, boost **wildlife tourism**, and create **local job opportunities**. The project, first approved in 2011, is linked to the **historical significance** of the last known wild white tiger in the region.
- Madhya Pradesh has introduced India's first **Global Capability Centers (GCC) Policy 2025** to attract multinational corporations, focusing on **Tier-2 cities** like **Indore, Bhopal, and Jabalpur**. The policy aims to provide a **business-friendly environment, financial incentives, and world-class infrastructure** to transform these cities into global operational hubs. This move aligns with **regional economic decentralization**, complementing broader trends like **Karnataka's GCC expansion** to promote balanced growth across India.
- Shivraj Singh Chouhan, Union Minister for **Rural Development** and **Agriculture**, launched the **NAKSHA pilot program** on February 18th in **Raisen, Madhya Pradesh**. The ₹194 crore project, fully funded by the **central government**, aims to modernize **urban land surveys** across **152 Urban Local Bodies (ULBs)** in **26 states** and **3 Union Territories (UTs)**. The initiative will enhance **land record accuracy**, support **urban planning**, and reduce **land disputes**.

Mizoram

- **Mizoram Foundation Day** is celebrated on **February 20** to mark the state's attainment of **statehood** in **1987**, becoming the **23rd state** of India. This occasion commemorates the transformation of the **Lushai Hills Autonomous District Council** into a full-fledged state, shared with **Arunachal Pradesh**, which also achieved statehood on the same day.

Odisha

- **Avaada Group** has partnered with **Casale** to develop a **1,500 TPD green ammonia plant** in **Gopalpur, Odisha**. The project aims to use **renewable energy** and advanced ammonia production technology for a **carbon-free** process. This collaboration highlights Avaada's commitment to reducing **carbon emissions** in industrial processes and advancing **India's clean energy sector**.
- **Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi** presented the **2025-26 state budget** with a total expenditure of **₹2.90 lakh crore**, focusing on **agriculture, irrigation, and rural development**. This marks the **first full-fledged budget** by the **BJP-led government**, showing a rise from the previous **₹2.65 lakh crore** budget for 2024-25, highlighting the state's commitment to **economic growth**.

Rajasthan

- The **'MY NREGA App'** was launched in **Barmer District, Rajasthan** to streamline the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MNREGA)** process. Spearheaded by **District Collector IAS Tina Dabi** and **CEO IAS Siddharth Palanichamy**, the app simplifies job applications for workers, reducing the need to visit **Gram Panchayats**. This **mobile-based solution** improves efficiency and has the potential to be replicated in other districts, marking a step toward **digitizing rural welfare programs**.

- The **Rajasthan government** has renamed two British-era landmarks in **Ajmer** to honor Indian heritage. **Foy Sagar Lake** is now **Varun Sagar**, and **King Edward Memorial Bhawan** has become **Maharishi Dayanand Vishrant Grih**. The renaming, confirmed by **Rajasthan Assembly Speaker Vasudev Devnani**, reflects India's efforts to **erase colonial remnants** and embrace **cultural pride**.
- **Rajasthan Deputy Chief Minister** and **Finance Minister Diya Kumari** presented the state's **first-ever Green Budget for 2025-26**, with a total outlay of ₹5.37 lakh crore. The budget focuses on **Bijli** (electricity), **Sadak** (roads), **Paani** (water) along with health and agriculture, aligning with Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030. The state government also plans to create 2.75 lakh jobs (1.25 lakh government and 1.5 lakh private) while fulfilling 73% of its first Budget announcements.

Telangana

- Hyderabad's **Srishti Art Gallery** and **Goethe-Zentrum Hyderabad** have collaborated to present the international art exhibition "**Topographies of Tents, Terracotta, and Time**". The exhibition explores themes of **identity, displacement, and transformation**, featuring works by renowned **national and international artists**. Curated by **Matthew Partridge**, this immersive experience promises to offer diverse artistic perspectives.

Uttarakhand

- Vaibhav Singh, an **IFoS officer** from **Uttarakhand**, developed an advanced **Forest Fire App** to combat increasing **forest fires**, inspired by technologies from **Canada, Australia, and South Africa**. The app enhances **fire detection, response efficiency, and real-time tracking** of firefighting teams. Adopted by the **Uttarakhand Forest Department**, it integrates **7,000 staff** and plans further **expansion**. Key features include **global inspiration**, collaboration with a **Canadian ecologist**, and advanced **fire mitigation tools**.
- The **Uttarakhand Cabinet** approved the **Bhoo Kanon (Land Law Amendment Bill)** on February 19, 2025, to regulate land purchases by non-residents. The law aims to protect **cultural heritage, natural resources, and citizens' rights**, while preserving the state's identity. It imposes a **ban on agricultural land purchases** in 11 hill districts and restrictions on residential land transactions. The bill will be presented in the ongoing **Budget session**.
- The **38th National Games 2025** concluded in **Haldwani, Uttarakhand**, showcasing India's growing sports culture. Held from **January 28 to February 14, 2025**, the Games focused on **sustainability** with the theme '**Green Games**'. Over **10,000 athletes** participated in **35 sports disciplines**, making it one of India's largest sports events. **Prime Minister Modi** emphasized the alignment with '**Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat**' and the event's eco-friendly approach, highlighting efforts to reduce environmental impact.

Uttar Pradesh

- **THDC India Ltd (THDCIL)** has started commercial operations of a **660-MW unit** at its **Khurja Super Thermal Power Plant (STPP)** in **Bulandshahr, Uttar Pradesh**, marking its entry into the **domestic thermal energy sector**. The **1,320 MW** project, costing **₹13,000 crore**, incorporates **modern technologies** like **Flue Gas Desulfurization (FGD)**, aiming to boost India's power generation while ensuring **environmental sustainability**.
- **The Uttar Pradesh Budget 2025-26**, presented by **State Finance Minister Suresh Kumar Khanna** on February 20, 2025, has a total outlay of **₹8,08,736 crore**. This reflects a 9.8% increase from the ₹7,36,437 crore budget of 2024-25. The budget focuses on research and development, Information Technology, infrastructure, welfare schemes, and urban development. Special emphasis has been placed on education, agriculture, healthcare, and artificial intelligence.
- The **Kashi Tamil Sangamam (KTS) 3.0** will be held from **February 15-24, 2025** in **Varanasi**, celebrating the bond between **Tamil Nadu** and **Kashi**. Organized by the **Ministry of Education** and Uttar Pradesh Government, it promotes knowledge exchange among scholars, artists, and professionals. Participants will also visit the **Mahakumbh** in **Prayagraj** and the **Ram Mandir** in **Ayodhya**. The event highlights **Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS)** in line with **NEP 2020**, fostering **cultural unity** and **Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat**.

Union Territories

- The **Election Commission of India (ECI)** has launched the '**Chandrayaan Se Chunao Tak**' initiative in **West Delhi** to boost voter awareness and participation. A special polling booth in **Vikaspuri** has been transformed into a **space-themed** voting experience, inspired by India's **space missions**. This initiative aims to engage **youth and elderly** voters, celebrating India's space achievements while enhancing voter engagement.
- **Rekha Gupta**, a **BJP leader** and **Shalimar Bagh MLA**, has been appointed as the new **Chief Minister of Delhi**, succeeding **AAP's Atishi Marlena**. The **BJP** secured a majority with **44 out of 70 seats** in the **Delhi Assembly elections**. Gupta, the only **woman CM** in **BJP-ruled states**, will be the **4th female CM of Delhi** after **Sushma Swaraj, Sheila Dixit, and Atishi Marlena**. The swearing-in will take place at **Ramlila Maidan** on **February 20, 2025**.

- **Dr. Jitendra Singh**, Minister of State for **Personnel, Public Grievances, and Pensions**, will chair the **12th All India Pension Adalat** in **New Delhi** on **February 13, 2025**. Organized by the **Department of Pension and Pensioners' Welfare (DoPPW)**, the event aims to resolve **long-pending pension grievances** of retired **Central Government employees**. With **180 cases** under review, it focuses on resolving issues pending for over **120 days**, enhancing the efficiency of **pension dispute settlements** since its launch in 2017.
- **BHARAT TEX 2025**, one of the largest global textile events, will be held from **February 14-17, 2025**, at **Bharat Mandapam** in **New Delhi** and **India Expo Centre & Mart** in **Greater Noida**. With **5,000 exhibitors** and **6,000 international buyers** from 110 countries, the event will highlight sectors like **Apparel, Home Furnishings, Technical Textiles, and Sustainable Textiles**, attracting over **120,000 visitors**. Backed by the **Ministry of Textiles**, it aims to showcase India's textile industry globally.
- The **CSB's International Conference – SILKTECH 2025** was inaugurated by **Shri Pabitra Margherita**, Minister of State for **Textiles & Foreign Affairs**, at **Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi**, as part of **Bharat Tex 2025**. Organized by **CSB-Central Tasar Research & Training Institute** and **CSTRI**, the conference focused on **emerging technologies** in the **silk sector**, aiming to enhance **quality, sustainability, and global competitiveness**.
- The **RSS** has inaugurated its new **headquarters 'Keshav Kunj'** in **Jhandewalan, New Delhi**. The **five lakh square feet** complex includes **three high-rise towers, an auditorium, a library, a hospital, a canteen, and a Hanuman temple**. Built with a focus on **sustainability** and modern infrastructure, it surpasses the size of the **BJP headquarters**. The **₹150 crore** project was funded entirely by **public donations**.
- India has inaugurated its first **Open-Air Art Wall Museum** at **Mausam Bhawan, New Delhi**, marking the **150-year journey** of the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**. The museum showcases **38 murals** that depict India's meteorological advancements and IMD's historical evolution. Developed in collaboration with **Delhi Street Art**, the murals transform the IMD's exterior walls into an artistic tribute to India's weather forecasting legacy.
- **Dr. Jitendra Singh**, Union Minister of State for **Science & Technology**, inaugurated India's first **Open Air Art Wall Museum** at **Mausam Bhawan, New Delhi**, marking the **150th anniversary** of the **India Meteorological Department (IMD)**. Developed with **Delhi Street Art**, the museum features vibrant murals showcasing IMD's history, technological progress, and societal contributions, blending **science and art**.

February Month Launches & Inaugurations:

- **MeitY** and **IIT Indore** launched **AgriHub**, an **AI-driven Center of Excellence (CoE)**, to transform **Indian agriculture**. AgriHub aims to tackle challenges like **drought, floods, and low productivity** using **AI, Machine Learning (ML), and Deep Learning (DL)**. The initiative will empower **farmers, researchers, and agribusinesses** through **technological innovation, startup incubation, and industry collaborations**.
- On **February 4, 2025**, **Union Minister Shri Shivraj Singh Chouhan** launched the "**Watershed Yatra**" campaign to raise awareness and encourage participation in **watershed development** activities under **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana (WDC-PMKSY 2.0)**. The initiative aims to promote **soil and water conservation, sustainable resource management, and enhance agricultural productivity, livelihoods, and environmental health** across India.
- On **February 2, 2025**, **Johannesburg** inaugurated the largest **Hindu temple** in the **Southern Hemisphere** as part of the **BAPS Multi-Cultural Centre**. The ceremony was attended by **South Africa's Deputy President Paul Mashatile** and spiritual leader **Mahant Swami Maharaj**. The temple serves as a hub for **worship, cultural exchange, education, and social service**.
- The Ministry of **Ayush** launched the "**Shatavari – For Better Health**" campaign to raise awareness about the medicinal benefits of **Shatavari**. Inaugurated by **Shri Prataprao Jadhav**, it focuses on promoting women's health and aligns with **India's Panch Pran Goal** for holistic development by 2047. This follows the success of previous campaigns on plants like **Amla, Moringa, Giloe, and Ashwagandha**.
- **UNICEF** has launched a national **roadmap** to address **child road safety**, aiming to reduce fatalities from **road accidents**, a leading cause of injury-related deaths among children. The plan includes **speed regulations, educational programs, and targeted measures** to create safer roads for young individuals.
- The **Aadi Mahotsav**, inaugurated by **President Droupadi Murmu** on February 16, 2025, celebrates **India's tribal heritage** and culture. Held at **Major Dhyan Chand National Stadium**, it promotes tribal **entrepreneurs, artisans, and artists**, showcasing their **crafts, food, attire, and jewelry**. The festival highlights the **sustainability and environmental harmony** of tribal practices, offering a platform for them to reach national and international audiences.
- On **February 18, 2025**, **Union Minister Bhupender Yadav** inaugurated the '**Waste Recycling and Climate Change 2025**' conclave by the **Recycling and Environment Industry Association of India (REIAI)**. The event emphasized **waste recycling, environmental sustainability, and economic growth**. Yadav highlighted the need for a **circular economy** to reduce waste, improve **resource efficiency**, and create **employment**.

- The IRDAI has launched **Bima-ASBA** to simplify premium payments for **life and health insurance** policies. Starting **March 1, 2025**, policyholders can use a **one-time UPI mandate (OTM)** to block funds in their bank accounts, ensuring **transparency and security** until the insurer accepts the policy proposal.
- India has launched the **Electronic Personnel License (EPL)** for flight crew, making it the second country after **China** to adopt digital licensing for pilots. Introduced by **Civil Aviation Minister K. Rammohan Naidu**, the initiative aims to improve **convenience, transparency, and efficiency** in the licensing process, supporting **aviation safety** and digital transformation in line with growing industry demands.

Important Festival

- The **2nd Simolu Festival** started on **February 15, 2025**, at **Bwisang-Na**, an eco-resort in **Assam**. The two-day event celebrated the blooming of **Shimul flowers** and aimed to promote **eco-tourism, conservation, and local culture**. Activities included **cycling, camping, ethnic cuisine, and cultural performances**. **Dr. Sonali Ghosh** of **Kaziranga National Park** emphasized the event's role in raising **environmental awareness**.
- The **Mising tribe** of Assam recently celebrated the **Ali Ai Ligang festival**, marking the start of the **sowing season**. Observed on the first Wednesday of the Assamese month of **Fagun**, this festival is integral to the agricultural traditions of the Mising community, which relies heavily on farming for their livelihood.
- **Thaipusam 2025**, a major festival in **Tamil Nadu**, is dedicated to **Lord Murugan**. The celebration includes **devotion, special prayers, kavadi offerings**, and grand festivities at **Murugan temples**, especially the **Aarupadai Veedu** (six abodes of Murugan). Thousands of devotees have gathered to partake in the spiritual events.

Miscellaneous National News

- India's railway safety will transform with the nationwide rollout of the **Kavach Automatic Train Protection (ATP)** system, confirmed by **Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw**. The system will be implemented across the entire railway network within **six years**, aiming to enhance **safety, efficiency, and passenger confidence** in one of the world's largest railway systems.
- Maharashtra is establishing **India's first AI university** to advance **AI education, research, and innovation**. A task force has been formed with experts from academia, industry, and government to drive the project. The university will focus on **R&D, technological innovation, skill development**, and shaping **AI policies**, positioning Maharashtra as a global hub for AI.
- In December 2024, the **Indian Army** renamed **Kolkata's Fort William** to '**Vijay Durg**' as part of its decolonization efforts. The new name honors **India's indigenous military history** and draws inspiration from the historic **Vijaydurg Fort** in **Maharashtra**, a stronghold under **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj**. This renaming reflects the government's broader push to remove **colonial influences** from institutions and landmarks.
- India aims to strengthen its **logistics sector** with initiatives like **PM Gati Shakti** and the **National Logistics Policy**, targeting a top 25 ranking in the **World Bank's Logistics Performance Index (LPI)** by 2030. Currently ranked 38th, India is advancing with rapid **infrastructure development, multi-modal transformation, and policy-driven advancements**. With a projected market size of **\$484.43 billion** by 2029, the government plans to reduce **logistics costs** from 13-14% of GDP to single digits. The study highlights the role of **advanced technologies and public-private partnerships** in making India a global logistics hub.
- The **Department of Consumer Affairs** has upgraded the **National Consumer Helpline (NCH)** with **AI-enabled technology** to enhance **consumer grievance redressal**. The new system offers **sector-wise analysis**, ensuring quicker resolutions and boosting **consumer trust**. As a result, both the number of calls and grievances resolved have significantly increased.
- India has reached a significant **milestone** by installing **100 GW of solar power capacity**, marking a major step in its **renewable energy** journey. Announced by **Union Minister Pralhad Joshi**, this achievement supports India's goal of transitioning to **cleaner energy** and reducing **fossil fuel** dependence.
- The **International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)**, established as a treaty-based intergovernmental organization with its headquarters in **India**, focuses on the global conservation of **seven iconic big cat species**: tiger, lion, leopard, snow leopard, cheetah, jaguar, and puma. Launched by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** on April 9, 2023, during the 50th anniversary of **Project Tiger**, the alliance aims to tackle issues like **illegal wildlife trade, poaching, and climate change**. By January 23, 2025, it gained **full international legal status** with ratifications from five countries.

- The **Union Cabinet**, chaired by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, has approved the **extension** of the **National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK)** for three more years, until **March 31, 2025**. Established in **1993**, the NCSK promotes the welfare of **Safai Karamcharis** (sanitation workers) by addressing their challenges and recommending programs to eliminate inequalities. It also monitors working conditions, health, safety, wages, and investigates grievances related to the non-implementation of welfare schemes.
- **Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla** announced the extension of **translation services** to **six additional languages**—**Bodo, Dogri, Maithili, Manipuri, Sanskrit, and Urdu**. This initiative aims to improve **accessibility** and **democratic participation** in Parliament. It is part of a broader plan to eventually offer translation for all **22 languages** in **Schedule 8** of the **Indian Constitution**. However, the inclusion of **Sanskrit** sparked debate over its **communicability** and **official status** in states.
- During his visit to **France**, **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** presented thoughtful gifts to **French President Emmanuel Macron** and **First Lady Brigitte Macron**. A standout gift was a **Dokra artwork**, showcasing **Indian folk traditions** and tribal craftsmanship, symbolizing India's **tribal heritage** and **musical culture**. Dokra, an ancient **metal-casting technique**, is renowned for its detailed craftsmanship. For **Brigitte Macron**, PM Modi gifted an **exquisite silver hand-engraved mirror** from **Rajasthan**, highlighting the state's renowned **metalwork** and design skills.
- On **February 13, 2025**, **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman** introduced the **Income Tax Bill, 2025** in the **Lok Sabha**. The bill aims to replace the **Income Tax Act, 1961**, simplifying tax provisions, using clearer terminology, and expanding sections and schedules. Despite **opposition protests**, the bill passed after a **voice vote**. The **Lok Sabha** was adjourned until **March 10, 2025**, for the second half of the **Budget session**.
- **President Droupadi Murmu** attended the **International Women's Conference** in **Bengaluru** on February 14, 2025, organized by **The Art of Living**. She highlighted the growing contributions of **Indian women (Nari Shakti)** in **science, sports, politics, arts, and culture**. Murmu praised their achievements, emphasizing the need for **mental strength** to break barriers and challenge stereotypes, urging women to continue advancing with confidence.
- On **February 13, 2025**, **PM Modi** met **Elon Musk** in **Washington, D.C.** at the **Blair House**, where Musk gifted him a **hexagonal ceramic heatshield tile** from **SpaceX's Starship test flight** (October 2024). The tile, used for atmospheric re-entry protection, symbolized the growing collaboration between India and Musk's ventures. **PM Modi** reciprocated with classic **Indian books: *The Crescent Moon* by Tagore, *The Great RK Narayan Collection*, and *Panchatantra***.
- On **Hindu College's 126th Founder's Day**, Union Minister for Education **Dharmendra Pradhan** praised the college's role in shaping **India's intellectual, cultural, and national identity**. He interacted with students and faculty, exploring an exhibition on **Skill Development and Entrepreneurship**, highlighting the importance of **innovation** and **entrepreneurship** for future job creation. Pradhan emphasized the college's ongoing contribution to **India's national development**.
- **Pariksha Pe Charcha 2025**, hosted by **Prime Minister Narendra Modi**, featured sportspersons **M C Mary Kom, Avani Lekhara, and Suhas Yathiraj**. The session focused on **goal setting, resilience, stress management**, and life lessons from sports. It encouraged students to embrace **hard work, discipline, and a growth mindset** to overcome academic and life challenges.
- The **Union Budget 2025** focuses on **economic growth, energy security, education, healthcare, and agricultural development**. Key measures include support for **MSMEs, full exemption of Customs Duties** on 25 critical minerals, expanded **insurance sector investments**, and a new **agricultural scheme** for low-yield districts. The budget also prioritizes **energy security**, with initiatives like the **MSME Loan Guarantee scheme** and **MoUs for critical mineral imports**, benefiting sectors like **space, defence, telecommunications, and renewable energy**.
- India and **Qatar** have upgraded their bilateral relations to a **strategic partnership**, focusing on **trade, investment, and energy**. During the visit of **Qatari Amir Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al Thani**, both nations set a goal to **double bilateral trade** from **\$14.08 billion** to **\$28 billion** in the next five years. Qatar also expressed interest in investing in key Indian sectors. This partnership strengthens ties with **UAE, Saudi Arabia, Oman, and Kuwait**, which share similar relations with India.
- Indian Ambassador **Harsh Kumar Jain** unveiled a statue of **Thiruvalluvar**, the renowned Tamil poet and philosopher, at **Gullas College of Medicine (GCM)** in **Cebu** on February 17, 2025. The event, celebrating the **75th anniversary of India-Philippines diplomatic relations**, was attended by dignitaries such as **former Philippine President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo**, senior officials, diplomats, and the **Indian diaspora**.
- The **Ministry of Labour & Employment (MoLE)** has signed an **MoU** with **APNA**, a job recruitment platform, to provide **10 lakh job opportunities** annually through the **National Career Service (NCS) Portal**. This partnership aims to **enhance employment accessibility** and connect **job seekers** with employers, supporting the government's efforts to streamline **digital hiring systems**.

- The **22nd Foundation Day** of the **National Commission for Scheduled Tribes (NCST)** was celebrated, emphasizing its role in protecting the rights and development of **Scheduled Tribes (STs)** in India. **Union Minister Shri Jai Prakash Singh** praised the NCST's proactive initiatives, especially its role in implementing the **Forest Rights Act**. The event included speeches, discussions, and presentations on **tribal welfare**, highlighting key **government programs** aimed at improving the lives of **Scheduled Tribes**.
- The **Union Government** has released **Fifteenth Finance Commission (XV FC)** grants for the fiscal year **2024-25** to enhance rural governance in **Bihar, Haryana, and Sikkim**. **Bihar** received **₹821.8021 crores** (second installment) and **₹47.9339 crores** (first installment). **Haryana** got **₹202.4663 crores** (second installment) and **₹7.5993 crores** (first installment). **Sikkim** was allocated **₹6.2613 crores**. The grants, meant for **Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)**, include **untied grants** for flexible use and **tied grants** for services like **sanitation and water supply**.
- **Bengal** led the **Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC) 2025** for the third consecutive year, recording **543 species** out of **1,068** observed across India. Despite fewer participants due to exam conflicts, Bengal's birdwatching community thrived, documenting rare species like the **Ibisbill** and **Common Starling**. The event highlights the state's rich **bird diversity** and commitment to **bird habitat preservation**.
- India has established its first **zoo-based biobank** at the **Padmaja Naidu Himalayan Zoological Park (PNHNP)** in **Darjeeling, West Bengal**. Operational since **July 2024**, the facility stores **genetic materials** from endangered species. The project, a collaboration with the **Centre for Cellular and Molecular Biology (CCMB)**, also includes an **animal museum**, enhancing **conservation and research** efforts in India.
- **Vishva Rajakumar**, a 20-year-old from **India**, has won the **Memory League World Championship**, showcasing exceptional cognitive skills. He set a record by recalling **80 digits** in just **13.5 seconds**, demonstrating his extraordinary **mental agility** in this challenging competition that tests memory recall of **numbers, images, and words**.

GOVT SCHEMES

CENTRAL GOVT SCHEMES

| Name of Initiative | Ministry | Purpose |
|--|----------|---|
| Centre Unveils New Agri-Tech Schemes for Higher Productivity | | <p>The Centre has launched several key schemes to upgrade agricultural technology, focusing on improving productivity, sustainability, and farmers' income. These initiatives incorporate digital technologies, modern farming techniques, and efficient resource management to enhance agricultural output while ensuring environmental sustainability.</p> <p>Key Government Initiatives</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Digital Agriculture Mission <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Uses Artificial Intelligence (AI), Big Data, and geospatial technology for, • Better crop monitoring • Soil management • Weather forecasting Crop Improvement & Agricultural Research <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has developed 2,900 crop varieties in the last decade. • 2,661 varieties are resistant to biotic and abiotic stresses (diseases, pests, drought, etc.). • 156 new technologies/machines introduced for production and post-harvest processing. Technological Advancements in Animal & Fisheries Sector <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of advanced diagnostics, vaccines, and processing methods. • Enhancing animal productivity, aquaculture efficiency, and fish health management. |

| Name of Initiative | Ministry | Purpose |
|---|--|---|
| | | <p>4. Farmer Training & Awareness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Krishi Vigyan Kendras (KVKs) and State Agricultural Universities (SAUs) conduct, Training sessions for farmers Field demonstrations Skill development programs to improve farm efficiency <p>5. Agricultural Marketing & Market Access</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> e-NAM (National Agricultural Market) for better price discovery & transparency. Kisan Rail & Kisan Udan for faster transportation of farm produce. Farmer Producer Organizations (FPOs) to reduce intermediaries and enhance farmers' profits. Promotion of Agri-tech startups and digital platforms like AGRI-Bazaar for direct farmer-buyer connections. <p>6. Sustainable Farming & Soil Health Management</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Soil Health Card Scheme promotes balanced fertilizer use. ICAR-recommended soil test-based nutrient management for: Reduced chemical fertilizer dependency Improved soil health Micro-irrigation & efficient irrigation methods under Per Drop More Crop (PDMC) scheme for water conservation. <p>7. Value Addition & Agri-Processing</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pradhan Mantri Kisan Sampada Yojana focuses on: Value-added processing of farm products Enhancing shelf life Linking farmers with agro-industries |
| <p>PM-JANMAN Package</p> | <p>Tribal Affairs Ministry</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The PM-JANMAN Package (Pradhan Mantri Janjati Adivasi Nyaya Maha Abhiyan), launched in November 2023, aims to improve the living conditions of Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups (PVTGs) in over 22,000 villages. Key interventions include building 4.9 lakh pucca homes, laying 8,000 km of roads, providing piped water to every household, and deploying 1,000 mobile medical units for healthcare delivery, targeting significant infrastructural and socio-economic improvements. |
| <p>Swavalambini' initiative</p> | <p>Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and NITI Aayog launched the 'Swavalambini' initiative on February 7, 2025, targeting women entrepreneurship in Assam, Meghalaya, and Mizoram. The program offers business skills, mentorship, and financial support to women, focusing on Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) for structured training. It aims to enhance women's participation in the region's entrepreneurial ecosystem. |
| <p>Government Initiatives to Support Women Employees and Entrepreneurs in India</p> | | <p>The Government of India has launched several initiatives aimed at promoting gender equality in the workplace and supporting women entrepreneurs. These initiatives focus on creating a safe, secure, and non-discriminatory environment for women employees while also fostering women-owned enterprises. Through legislative measures and various programs, the government seeks to ensure that women have equal opportunities for career growth, business development, and social security.</p> |

| Name of Initiative | Ministry | Purpose |
|--------------------|----------|---|
| | | <p>Legal Framework for Women’s Empowerment in the Workplace</p> <p>The Companies Act, 2013: Ensuring Gender Diversity in Corporate Boards The Companies Act, 2013, administered by the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, contains provisions designed to ensure a gender-equal environment in corporate India. One key provision under the Act mandates that listed companies and other public companies with a paid-up share capital of Rs. 100 crore or more, or turnover of Rs. 300 crore or more, must appoint at least one woman director on their boards. This requirement is outlined in Section 149 of the Companies Act, which is complemented by Rule 3 of the Companies (Appointment and Qualification of Directors) Rules, 2014.</p> <p>In addition, companies must include a statement in their Board Report, which is attached to the annual financial statement, confirming compliance with the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013. This ensures that companies have a mandatory Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) to address any grievances related to workplace harassment.</p> <p>Government Schemes Supporting Women Entrepreneurs The Government of India has introduced a variety of schemes aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs by offering financial support, training, and capacity building.</p> <p>Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGS) Under the Credit Guarantee Scheme for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGS), women entrepreneurs receive additional benefits compared to other entrepreneurs. This initiative is designed to provide financial support and guarantees to small businesses, helping women access capital to start or grow their enterprises.</p> <p>Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) The Prime Minister Employment Generation Programme (PMEGP) is a significant credit-linked subsidy scheme designed to generate employment opportunities in rural and urban areas. This program has a substantial focus on women beneficiaries, who receive higher subsidies compared to other non-special category applicants. PMEGP has been instrumental in promoting women entrepreneurship in India, especially in small-scale manufacturing and service sectors.</p> <p>Stand-Up India Scheme (SUI) The Stand-Up India Scheme (SUI) encourages entrepreneurship among women, Scheduled Caste (SC), and Scheduled Tribe (ST) borrowers. The scheme facilitates loans ranging from Rs. 10 lakh to Rs. 1 crore for greenfield enterprises. Each bank branch is mandated to provide loans to at least one woman borrower and one SC/ST borrower to promote economic inclusion and entrepreneurship in these communities.</p> <p>Yashasvini Initiative Launched on 27 June 2024, the Yashasvini initiative focuses on empowering women entrepreneurs, especially those in Tier-II/III towns. This program aims to enhance the capacity building of women entrepreneurs and to provide them with the necessary tools and support to establish and grow their businesses.</p> |

| Name of Initiative | Ministry | Purpose |
|--|---|---|
| | | <p>Legislative Provisions for Women’s Protection and Welfare</p> <p>In addition to promoting entrepreneurship, the Government of India has enacted several laws to ensure safe, secure, and non-discriminatory workplaces for women. These provisions also extend to maternity benefits and protection against sexual harassment at the workplace.</p> <p>The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013</p> <p>The Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 (commonly known as the SH Act) provides a comprehensive legal framework for the prevention and redressal of sexual harassment in the workplace. The law mandates the constitution of an Internal Complaints Committee (ICC) in organizations with 10 or more employees. In cases where the workplace has fewer than 10 employees, or when the complaint is against the employer, a Local Committee (LC) must be formed by the District Officer.</p> <p>To facilitate the filing of complaints, the revamped Sexual Harassment electronic-Box (SHe-Box) was launched by the government on 29 August 2024. This initiative provides a centralized platform for women to file complaints related to sexual harassment, regardless of their employment status or the sector they work in.</p> <p>Maternity Benefits and Workplace Equality</p> <p>The Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Act, 2017 requires establishments with 50 or more employees to provide a creche facility for women employees. This measure ensures that working mothers have access to childcare facilities while maintaining their professional responsibilities. Additionally, the Code on Social Security, 2020 and the Code on Wages, 2019 provide maternity benefits and emphasize the need for gender equality in the workplace.</p> <p>Supporting Working Mothers</p> <p>To support working mothers, the government introduced the “Palna” scheme on 1 April 2022. This Centrally Sponsored Scheme provides daycare facilities to ensure that working mothers can balance their professional and parental responsibilities while their children receive care and protection during working hours.</p> |
| <p>PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana</p> | <p>MINISTRY OF NEW AND RENEWABLE ENERGY</p> | <p>The PM Surya Ghar: Muft Bijli Yojana (PMSGMBY) marks its first anniversary on February 13, 2025, celebrating a year of promoting affordable solar energy for Indian households. Launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi on February 13, 2024, the scheme aims to install rooftop solar panels in one crore households by March 2027, reducing electricity costs and promoting sustainability. The scheme has significantly boosted India’s renewable energy sector and contributed to environmental conservation.</p> <p>Key Highlights of the Scheme</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Largest Rooftop Solar Initiative: The world’s largest domestic rooftop solar scheme, aiming to benefit one crore households by 2027. • Current Progress: As of January 27, 2025, over 8.46 lakh households have installed solar panels. • Increased Installation Rate: Monthly installations have surged tenfold, reaching 70,000 per month. • Financial Support: ₹4,308.66 crore in Central Financial Assistance (CFA) has been disbursed to 5.54 lakh households. |

| Name of Initiative | Ministry | Purpose |
|---|---|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Subsidy Benefit: Up to 40% subsidy, with an average subsidy of ₹77,800 per household. Zero Electricity Bills: 45% of beneficiaries now receive zero electricity bills, depending on usage. Top 5 States: States with the highest number of beneficiaries (data awaited). <p>Key Benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Free Electricity for Households – Reduced energy bills through subsidized solar panels. Government Savings – ₹75,000 crore saved annually in electricity costs. Renewable Energy Growth – Boosts solar power adoption in households. Reduced Carbon Emissions – Supports India’s climate goals. |
| Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan | Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Pradhan Mantri Annadata Aay Sanrakshan Abhiyan (PM-AASHA) scheme has been extended until 2025-26 to provide better income support to farmers. Key components include the Price Support Scheme (PSS) for procurement at Minimum Support Price (MSP), the Price Stabilization Fund (PSF) to manage price volatility, and the Price Deficit Payment Scheme (PDPS) to compensate for price differences, ensuring fair prices and income stability for farmers. |
| Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), | Ministry of Agriculture & Farmers Welfare | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY), launched on February 18, 2016, provides crop insurance to safeguard farmers from risks like natural disasters, pests, and diseases. In its nine years, it has disbursed ₹1.75 lakh crore in claims to over 23.22 crore farmers, stabilizing incomes and promoting sustainable agriculture and innovation. |

STATE GOVT SCHEMES

| Schemes | State | Purpose |
|--|--------|--|
| Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme | Odisha | <p>The Beti Bachao Beti Padhao (BBBP) scheme, launched on 22nd January 2015, aims to address gender imbalance and the declining child sex ratio in India. In alignment with the scheme’s objectives, the Odisha Government has implemented several initiatives to empower adolescent girls, prevent child marriages, and enhance their education and self-defense skills. These initiatives, launched in different districts, focus on raising awareness, ensuring legal protection, and providing skill-based training to create a safer and more inclusive environment for girls.</p> <p>Key BBBP Initiatives in Odisha</p> <p>1. “Nirbhaya Kadhi” (Fearless Bud) & “Mo Gelha Jiya” (My Dear Daughter) – Ganjam District</p> <p>Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Empower adolescent girls and promote gender equality. Prevent child marriage, sex selection, and female foeticide. <p>Coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 183,933 adolescent girls across 3,309 villages in Ganjam. <p>Key Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ganjam declared child marriage-free on 3rd January 2022. 20 out of 953 child marriages successfully prevented (2019-2024). 450,000 students from 3,614 schools took a pledge to say “No” to child marriage. ₹5,000 reward for first information on child marriage cases. OSCPCR recognized Ganjam’s efforts in preventing child marriages. |

| Schemes | State | Purpose |
|------------------------------------|----------------|---|
| | | <p>2. “Kalpana Avijan” – Dhenkanal District</p> <p>Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Track and monitor adolescent girls (10-19 years). Strengthen community engagement to prevent child marriages. <p>Coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1,13,515 adolescent girls identified and enrolled. <p>Key Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 343 child marriages prevented (2019-2024). 4,45,000 students from 3,425 schools pledged against child marriage. Awareness programs held in 1,211 villages. Dhenkanal administration felicitated during International Girl Child Week 2024. Odisha WCD and Mission Shakti recognized the initiative. Barsha Priyadarshini Sahoo awarded for taking a stand against child marriage. A rescued mountaineer became the brand ambassador for Kalpana Avijan. <p>3. “Swarna Kalika” – Keonjhar District</p> <p>Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Raise awareness about the negative effects of child marriage. Promote community-based interventions. <p>Key Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% reduction in child marriages (by 2024). 2,000 stakeholders engaged in awareness campaigns. ADVIKA app promoted for tracking and intervention. Community leaders and adolescents actively involved in the campaign. <p>4. “Veerangana Yojana” – Deogarh District</p> <p>Objective</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train adolescent girls in martial arts and self-defense. Boost self-esteem and confidence. <p>Coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 500 adolescent girls trained in a 30-day martial arts camp. 300 teachers and guardians sensitized on girls’ legal rights. <p>Key Achievements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50 master trainers developed, who trained 6,000 girl students across 300 schools. Recognized and institutionalized in schools and colleges. Featured in district festivals and won the prestigious SKOCH Award. |
| Bikashita Gaon Bikashita Odisha | Odisha | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Odisha Chief Minister Mohan Charan Majhi launched the ‘Bikashita Gaon Bikashita Odisha’ (BGBO) scheme in Khordha, aiming to boost rural infrastructure. With a ₹5,000 crore budget over five years, the scheme focuses on road connectivity, civic amenities, education, and micro tourism. It builds on previous initiatives, ensuring holistic village development while keeping development and politics separate. |
| “Nodi Bandhan” scheme | West Bengal | <p>The West Bengal government has launched the “Nodi Bandhan” scheme and allocated funds for the Ghatal Masterplan in the 2025-26 budget. The Nodi Bandhan scheme focuses on riverine development, erosion prevention along the Ganga-Padma, and enhancing livelihoods through pisciculture and irrigation. A ₹200 crore allocation is dedicated to combat riverbank erosion in Murshidabad and Malda. The Ghatal Masterplan, with ₹500 crore for flood prevention in West Midnapore, requires a total investment of ₹1,500 crore.</p> |

| Schemes | State | Purpose |
|------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Arunachal Pradesh government | Arunachal Pradesh | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Arunachal Pradesh government, led by Chief Minister Pema Khandu, has introduced initiatives to empower women, support youth, and drive development. The revamped Dulari Kanya Scheme now offers ₹50,000 for girls, with increased financial support for institutional deliveries and educational benefits for Class XI enrollment. The Arun Parivar Patra Authority Bill, 2025 will establish a citizen database for better governance and welfare delivery. Additionally, the Institute for Transforming Arunachal (ITA) will provide research-backed policy recommendations for governance, economic growth, and sustainable development. |

APPS & WEB PORTAL

| App & Web Name | Launched By | Purpose |
|-------------------|---------------------|---|
| 'Haj Suvidha App' | Government of India | The Government of India has launched the ' Haj Suvidha App ' to enhance the pilgrimage experience for Indian Haj pilgrims. The app provides essential services to ensure a smooth and fulfilling journey , reflecting the government's commitment to improving accessibility and convenience for pilgrims. |
| RBIDATA | RBI | The RBI has launched RBIDATA , a mobile app offering easy access to over 11,000 economic data series related to the Indian economy. Available on iOS and Android , it caters to researchers, students, policymakers, and the general public , providing structured, interactive data from the RBI's Database on the Indian Economy (DBIE) . |
| Jumpp | Yes Bank | Finvasia , a fintech company from Mohali, Punjab , has partnered with Yes Bank to launch Jumpp , an AI-powered super app . Jumpp simplifies personal finance management by offering various services on one platform, focusing on accessibility and ease of use , and aims to revolutionize how users manage their financial lives . |

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

- The **Indian Embassy** in the **Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC)** has issued an urgent advisory for **Indians in Bukavu** to evacuate due to escalating violence from **rebel forces**, including the **M23 group**, which has captured areas like **Goma**. This move highlights the embassy's commitment to ensuring the safety of **Indian nationals** amid the ongoing crisis.
- On **February 1, 2025**, **U.S. President Donald Trump** signed an executive order imposing **steep tariffs** on imports from **Mexico, Canada, and China** to address issues like **illegal immigration** and **fentanyl trafficking**. The move triggered strong **retaliatory measures** and sparked a global economic debate, with analysts warning of **inflationary risks, slowed economic growth, and potential trade wars**.
- On **January 30, 2025**, **New Zealand's Parliament** passed a law granting **Mount Taranaki (Taranaki Maunga) legal personhood**, recognizing it as a living entity with rights similar to a human. This historic decision is rooted in **Māori** spiritual and cultural beliefs, aiming to correct past **injustices** and promote **environmental conservation**.
- Vyacheslav Volodin**, Chairman of the **State Duma of Russia**, arrived in **India** on **February 3, 2025**, for an official visit to strengthen the **Russia-India strategic relationship**. His discussions with Indian leaders will focus on enhancing ties in **economic growth, education, technology, cultural exchanges**, and promoting deeper **inter-parliamentary cooperation**, highlighting the importance of the relationship in the current global context.
- Sri Lanka experienced its **highest deflation rate in 65 years**, with **consumer prices** falling by **4.0%** in **January 2025**, marking the fifth consecutive month of deflation. This follows sharp reductions in **electricity and fuel costs** after the country's **worst financial crisis**. Inflation, which peaked at **69.8%** in September 2022, has drastically declined, as the government, led by **President Anura Kumara Dissanayake**, continues implementing **IMF-backed economic reforms** to stabilize the economy.
- The **United Kingdom** is the first country to **criminalize AI-generated child sexual abuse material (CSAM)**. The **British government** is introducing strict legal measures to prevent the use of **generative AI** in creating and distributing CSAM, ensuring **severe punishments** for offenders. This historic move aims to combat child **exploitation** using advanced technology.

- The **ECOWAS** has officially recognized the **withdrawal of Niger, Mali, and Burkina Faso** after a year of diplomatic tensions, primarily over **military coups** and disagreements on **regional governance** and **external alliances**. This marks a significant shift in the **West African political landscape**, highlighting growing differences between these countries and ECOWAS.
- **Tshego Gaele**, a 34-year-old attorney from **Soweto**, has made history as the first **Black woman** to win the **Mrs World 2025** title in Las Vegas. Gaele, also the **2024 Mrs South Africa Queen**, follows in the footsteps of Candice Abrahams (2016). Her victory marks a milestone in the pageant's 40-year history, and she aims to champion **women's empowerment** while representing **South Africa** globally.
- On **February 1, 2025**, **Rasmus Paludan**, a far-right Danish politician, set fire to the **Holy Quran** outside the **Turkish Embassy** in **Copenhagen**, sparking global controversy. Paludan, leader of the far-right party **Stram Kurs**, claimed the act was a tribute to **Salwan Momika**, an Iraqi refugee killed days earlier. His actions reignited debates over **free speech**, **religious sensitivities**, and **hate speech** in Europe, with Paludan criticizing **Copenhagen police** for attempting to limit his protests.
- On **February 3, 2025**, **Bart De Wever**, leader of the **New Flemish Alliance (N-VA)**, became **Belgium's first Flemish nationalist Prime Minister**. After over eight months of coalition talks, a new government was formed with **five parties**: N-VA, **Christian Democrats (CD&V)**, **socialists (Vooruit)**, **liberals (MR)**, and **centrists (Les Engagés)**, collectively known as the "**Arizona**" coalition. This majority coalition in the **150-seat federal parliament** signals a shift in Belgium's political landscape under De Wever's leadership.
- China has launched an **antitrust investigation** into **Google**, initiated by the **State Administration for Market Regulation (SAMR)**. The probe targets potential violations of China's **Anti-Monopoly Law**, accusing Google of using its dominance in the global smartphone market to suppress competition, particularly against **Chinese companies** like **Oppo** and **Xiaomi**. This move escalates tensions amid ongoing **U.S.-China trade disputes** and the U.S. imposition of **tariffs on Chinese goods**.
- President **Donald Trump** signed an executive order impacting U.S. involvement in **U.N. bodies** like the **U.N. Human Rights Council** and **UNRWA**. The order called for a review of **U.S. funding** to the **U.N.** and its agencies, reflecting ongoing criticism of the **U.N.'s effectiveness** in resolving global issues. This decision has significant implications for **global diplomacy** and **U.S. foreign policy**.
- **GMR Airports Ltd (GAL)** has joined the **United Nations Global Compact (UNGC)**, committing to **sustainability** and **responsible business practices**. This partnership aligns GAL with the **UNGC's ten principles**, focusing on **human rights**, **labor standards**, **environmental protection**, and **anti-corruption**. GAL aims to integrate these principles into its operations to contribute to the **global sustainability agenda**.
- On **February 5, 2025**, President **Donald Trump** signed the "**No Men in Women's Sports Executive Order**", banning **transgender women and girls** from competing in female sports. This marks the **fourth executive order** targeting transgender individuals since his inauguration. The move has sparked **debate**, with supporters arguing it protects **women's sports**, while critics see it as an attack on **transgender rights**.
- **Argentina** has announced its withdrawal from the **World Health Organization (WHO)**, following the **United States's** earlier decision under **President Donald Trump**. President **Javier Milei** cited "deep differences" over the WHO's handling of health issues, especially the **COVID-19 pandemic**. The move has sparked debates over Argentina's **global standing**, healthcare policies, and the potential impact on the WHO's **credibility**, with critics warning of long-term consequences for both Argentina's healthcare system and **international relations**.
- **Panama** has withdrawn from **China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)**, signaling a shift in its foreign policy. President **José Raúl Mulino** cited growing tensions, especially over the strategic **Panama Canal**, and emphasized strengthening ties with the **U.S.** while reassessing **Chinese investments** in the country.
- Pakistan's **SUPARCO** has partnered with **CNSA** for the **Chang'e-8 lunar mission** in 2028, marking Pakistan's first major involvement in **lunar exploration**. The collaboration will deploy a **Pakistani rover** on the **Moon's south pole** as part of **China's International Lunar Research Station (ILRS)** project, marking a significant step in Pakistan's space ambitions.
- India contributed **USD 32.895 million** to the **UN regular budget** on **January 31, 2024**, securing a spot on the **Honour Roll** for timely payments. This reinforces India's ongoing **financial responsibility** within the UN framework.
- The **International Buddhist Confederation (IBC)** is launching the **Lord Buddha Trination Triservices Expedition**, a historic motorcycle journey involving the armed forces of **India**, **Nepal**, and **Sri Lanka**. The expedition will start at **Lumbini, Nepal** (Buddha's birthplace) and end in **Galle, Sri Lanka**, visiting key **Buddhist heritage sites**. The initiative aims to celebrate the shared **cultural heritage**, promote **peace**, **harmony**, **tourism**, and **environmental awareness**, while reinforcing the deep ties and historical spread of **Buddhism** across the three nations.
- The **Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI)** celebrated the **75th anniversary** of the **National Sample Survey (NSS)** on **7th February 2025** at **Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi**. The event marked the start of nationwide initiatives to emphasize NSS's role in **evidence-based policymaking** and **data-driven governance**. Highlights included keynote addresses, expert discussions, and the unveiling of **Diamond Jubilee publications** showcasing NSS's fieldwork contributions.

- On **6th February 2025**, NITI Aayog hosted the conclave "**Towards Viksit Bharat @ 2047**" in **New Delhi**. The event gathered top policymakers, including NITI Aayog officials and key government figures like the **Chief Economic Advisor** and **Secretary of Defence**. The conclave focused on **India's growth strategy** for 2047, covering **economic reforms, global partnerships, national security, legal frameworks, and digital infrastructure**.
- India and **Nicaragua** have signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** to implement **Quick Impact Projects (QIPs)**. The agreement, signed in **Managua**, aims to enhance **physical and social infrastructure** in Nicaragua, benefiting local communities. The MoU was formalized by **Indian Ambassador Sumit Seth** and **Nicaraguan Foreign Minister Valdrack Jaentschke**.
- US President **Donald Trump** has officially recognized **February 9** as "**Gulf of America Day**", following a significant name change to the **Gulf of Mexico**. This marks the first time such a day has been established, after Trump signed an executive order to rename the Gulf. The proclamation was signed aboard **Air Force One** while en route to the **Super Bowl** in **New Orleans**, located on the Gulf.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** and **French President Emmanuel Macron** inaugurated India's second diplomatic mission in **France**, the **Indian Consulate** in **Marseille**, on **February 12, 2025**. This move strengthens **Indo-French relations**, focusing on **economic, cultural, and strategic cooperation**. **Marseille**, France's second-largest city, holds strategic significance due to its location on the **Mediterranean coast** and its role as a vital **trade gateway** with **Africa, Asia, and the Middle East**, with the **Port of Marseille-Fos** handling significant imports and exports.
- **Bangladesh** has launched "**Operation Devil Hunt**", a large-scale security operation targeting **loyalists of former Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina** after attacks on protesters linked to her regime. The **interim government** under **Muhammad Yunus** aims to restore order and uphold **democratic values**. The unrest, fueled by rumors of Hasina's return from **exile in India**, led to violent protests and the destruction of buildings connected to her family. Tensions between **India** and **Bangladesh** have escalated following **India's condemnation** of the **Bangabandhu Memorial Museum** demolition.
- India and **South Korea** have signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** on **February 10, 2025**, to strengthen **logistics and infrastructure collaboration**. The agreement, signed by **Mr. Youngchan Kim** of KOTI and **H.E. Amit Kumar** (Indian Ambassador to South Korea), aims to improve **logistics efficiency**, enhance **infrastructure planning**, and promote **sustainable economic development** through **knowledge exchange** and **technical collaboration**.
- Ahead of Prime Minister **Narendra Modi's** visit to the U.S. and France, India plans to amend the **Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (CLNDA)** and **Atomic Energy Act**. These amendments aim to address concerns of **foreign nuclear companies**, boosting investment and resolving stalled projects like **EDF's reactors in Maharashtra** and **Westinghouse's reactors in Andhra Pradesh**. The changes support India's goal of achieving **100 GW nuclear power capacity by 2047**.
- U.S. President **Donald Trump** has announced a **25% tariff** on all **steel and aluminum imports**, effective from **March 4, 2025**. The decision removes **country-specific exemptions**, impacting major exporters like **Canada, Brazil, Mexico, and South Korea**. This move aims to simplify tariff policies, boost **domestic production**, and address **foreign dumping**, marking a return to **protectionist trade policies**.
- **Romania's President Klaus Iohannis** resigned ahead of an **impeachment vote** linked to the **cancellation of last year's presidential election**. The election was annulled over alleged **Russian interference**, sparking protests and political turmoil. Critics claimed Iohannis's actions undermined **democracy**. **Senate President Ilie Bolojan** will serve as **interim president** until the **May 2025 elections**.
- On **February 10, 2025**, President **Donald Trump** signed an **executive order** reversing federal policies promoting **paper straws** over **plastic ones**, calling paper straws **ineffective**. He stated, "These things don't work," highlighting issues like breakage. This decision marks a significant **policy shift**, sparking debates on **consumer convenience, environmental impact, and regulatory control**.
- **Tulsi Gabbard** has made history as the **first Hindu** to lead the **US intelligence community**, confirmed as the **Director of National Intelligence (DNI)**. She now oversees **18 intelligence agencies**, coordinating national security. A **former Democratic Congresswoman, Iraq War veteran, and 2020 presidential candidate**, Gabbard has had a controversial career with **independent stances, ties with India, and critiques of US foreign policy**.
- **Jotham Napat** was elected as **Vanuatu's new Prime Minister** unopposed. His nomination was proposed by **Charlot Salwai**, the leader of the Reunification Movement for Change. **Ishmael Kalsakau**, former prime minister, confirmed no other nominations and congratulated Napat.
- **Ilie Bolojan, President of the Senate**, has been sworn in as **Romania's interim President** following **Klaus Iohannis's resignation**. This transition occurs amid political uncertainty, with **presidential elections** scheduled for **May 2025**. Bolojan, a seasoned politician, aims to maintain stability during this period.

- On **February 12, 2025**, **Constantine Tassoulas**, former parliamentary speaker and senior member of the **New Democracy party**, was elected as **Greece's new president** with 160 votes in the **Hellenic Parliament**. He will succeed **Katerina Sakellariopoulou**, Greece's first female president, whose term ends in March. The **presidential position** in Greece is largely **ceremonial**, but the selection reflects the **political direction** of the country.
- China has approved the construction of a **deep-sea research facility** in the **South China Sea**, dubbed a "**deep-sea space station**". Located 2,000 meters below the ocean surface, the station aims to advance **marine exploration** and strengthen China's **geopolitical presence** in the region. Expected to be operational by **2030**, it will host six scientists for **month-long missions**, conducting real-time experiments in extreme underwater conditions.
- UNESCO launched the "**Imagine a world with more women in science**" campaign for the **10th anniversary** of the **International Day of Women and Girls in Science** on **February 11**. The campaign highlights the importance of **diverse perspectives** in **STEMM** fields and encourages more **female participation** with the hashtag **#EveryVoiceInScience**. While **women make up one-third** of the global scientific community, only **1 in 10 STEM leadership roles** is held by women. In India, **43% of STEMM enrollments** are women, but only **18.6% of scientists** are women, with **25% of R&D projects** led by women.
- India has been elected as the **Vice President** of the **International Organization of Aids to Marine Navigation (IALA)** during its inaugural **General Assembly** in **Singapore**. This election reflects India's growing influence in **global maritime affairs**, especially as IALA transitions from an **NGO** to an **IGO**. India's leadership in **maritime navigation** is expected to expand with upcoming **international events**.
- **Brazil** has joined the **OPEC+** group as an **observer**, approved by the **National Council for Energy Policy**. This move allows Brazil to participate in strategic discussions with major oil exporters while maintaining **independence** in production. The decision aligns with Brazil's preparations for hosting the **United Nations climate summit**, reflecting a balance between **energy security** and **environmental commitments**.
- Mount **Dukono** in **Indonesia** erupted on **February 20, 2025**, sending an **ash cloud** up to **2,000 meters** into the air. The eruption, on **Halmahera Island** in **North Maluku province**, led to **aviation warnings** and **safety advisories** for residents.
- **Kash Patel**, an **Indian-origin** official, was sworn in as the **ninth Director of the FBI** on **February 21, 2025**. Known for his ties to **former U.S. President Donald Trump**, Patel took the oath on the **Bhagavad Gita**. The ceremony, held at the **Eisenhower Executive Office Building**, was administered by **U.S. Attorney General Pam Bondi**. Patel succeeds **Christopher Wray**, who resigned at the end of the **Biden administration**.

VISITS

India Visits By Foreigners

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit to **France in February 2025** marked a significant step in strengthening bilateral relations between **India and France**. The visit was packed with strategic discussions, high-level diplomatic engagements, and agreements aimed at boosting cooperation in **artificial intelligence, nuclear energy, and trade**. Modi's trip also emphasized historical ties and people-to-people connections, highlighting India's growing global influence.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** will visit **Mauritius** next month as the **Guest of Honour** at the country's **National Day** celebrations. Mauritian Prime Minister **Navin Ramgoolam** highlighted that Modi's visit reflects the **deep and historic bilateral ties** between the two nations.
- **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's** visit to the **US** strengthened **India-US relations**, focusing on **trade, defense, and strategic cooperation**. His meeting with **President Donald Trump** emphasized **economic growth, global stability**, and agreements on **trade expansion, defense deals, counterterrorism, and regional security**.

Indian States Visits

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi visited the Mahakumbh Mela in Uttar Pradesh's Prayagraj, wherein he took a holy dip in the Triveni Sangam.

Foreign Visits By Indian Personalities

- Union Minister **Piyush Vedprakash Goyal, Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I)** visited the Sultanate of Oman from January 27 to 28, 2025. During the visit, he participated in the the 11th Session of the IndiaOman Joint Commission Meeting (JCM) and the IndiaOman Joint Business Council (JBC) meeting in Mascot, Oman. DTAA: Both countries also signed the Protocol to amend the India-Oman Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA).

BANKING & FINANCE

| S. No. | Bank Name | Purpose |
|--------|-----------------------------------|---|
| 1. | Airtel Payments Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Airtel Payments Bank has partnered with Karnataka Bulldozers for Celebrity Cricket League (CCL) 2025, becoming a co-sponsor to promote safe digital banking. This collaboration aims to enhance digital security and financial awareness among cricket fans, leveraging the sport's wide reach to engage a large audience. |
| 2. | Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (USFB) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (USFB) has applied for a universal banking licence to transition from a small finance bank to a full-fledged commercial bank. This move aims to expand financial services, enhance regulatory flexibility, and strengthen its position in the banking sector. Founded in 2017, USFB serves underserved populations and now seeks to offer a wider range of services, including corporate banking and larger loan products. |
| 3. | South Indian Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Indian Bank (SIB) has introduced two specialized startup current account products: SIB Business Startup Current Account for small businesses and SIB Corporate Startup Current Account for larger entities. These accounts are designed to simplify banking for startups, offering flexible features to support the growing entrepreneurship ecosystem in India. The move reflects SIB's commitment to empowering startups with tailored banking solutions. |
| 4. | State Bank of India (SBI) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> State Bank of India (SBI) reported an 84% rise in net profit for Q3 FY25, exceeding market expectations. The bank saw a 4% increase in net interest income (NII) and a significant decline in employee expenses. SBI showcased strong loan growth, improved asset quality, and higher deposit mobilization, despite a dip in the CASA ratio, maintaining robust overall financial health. |
| 5. | Indian Overseas Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) celebrated its 89th Foundation Day on February 10, 2025, by committing to sustainability and responsible banking. The bank became a signatory of the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF), aiming to enhance transparency in measuring greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions related to its lending and investment activities. |
| 6. | IDFC FIRST Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IDFC FIRST Bank, in partnership with Ikonz Studios, has launched an AI-powered holographic avatar of brand ambassador Amitabh Bachchan in five cities. Using Holographic Extended Reality (HXR) technology, the avatar creates lifelike 3D projections that interact with customers. It provides an immersive experience, offering information on products like Zero Fee Banking, Monthly Interest Credits, Mobile Banking, and the Current Account BRAVO. |
| 7. | Canara Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canara Bank appointed Dr. Madhavankutty G as its new Chief Economist in January 2025. With over two decades of experience in economic research, banking, and the corporate sector, Dr. Madhavankutty will shape the bank's economic strategy and guide decision-making with expertise in financial trends and macroeconomic analysis. |
| 8. | Axis Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Axis Bank has committed ₹104 crore to Ashoka University over the next four years to enhance its PhD and Post-Doctoral programs. The funding will support the establishment of advanced research centers in Neurosciences, Behavioral Studies, and Physics, offering fellowships and research grants. This initiative aims to build world-class labs, foster interdisciplinary research, and attract global experts and scholars. |
| 9. | South Indian Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> South Indian Bank (SIB) launched 'SIB Quick FD', a digital solution that allows customers to invest in Fixed Deposits (FDs) using funds from any bank account via UPI. This service simplifies the investment process, making it more accessible and customer-friendly, aligning with SIB's goal to provide easy and fast banking services. |
| 10. | Standard Chartered Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Standard Chartered Bank has appointed Prabdev (P.D.) Singh as its new CEO for India and South Asia, effective April 1, 2025. Singh, a corporate banking veteran and former CEO of JP Morgan India, replaces Zarin Daruwala, who will retire after nearly a decade of leadership. Under Daruwala's tenure, the bank expanded its Corporate and Investment Banking and Wealth and Retail Banking segments, significantly strengthening its presence in India. |

| S. No. | Bank Name | Purpose |
|--------|------------------------------------|---|
| 11. | Karnataka Bank | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karnataka Bank celebrated its 100th anniversary on February 18, 2024, by launching two new financial products: a children's savings account and a high-interest term deposit scheme for a limited period. These initiatives aim to expand the bank's customer base and reinforce its market presence while emphasizing its customer-centric approach. |
| 12. | SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SBI Cards and Payment Services Ltd has appointed Salila Pande as the new Managing Director and CEO effective April 1, 2025, succeeding Abhijit Chakravorty, who retires on March 31, 2025. The company also declared an interim dividend of ₹2.50 per share for the 2024-25 financial year. |

RBI News

Highlights of RBI Monetary Policy Committee 2025

The **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) held its 53rd meeting from February 5 to 7, 2025, under the chairmanship of **Shri Sanjay Malhotra**, the Governor of RBI. The meeting was attended by MPC members Dr. Nagesh Kumar, Shri Saugata Bhattacharya, Prof. Ram Singh, Dr. Rajiv Ranjan, and Shri M. Rajeshwar Rao.

After evaluating the current macroeconomic conditions and future economic trends, the MPC unanimously decided to reduce the repo rate by 25 basis points (bps) and maintain a neutral monetary policy stance. This decision aligns with the RBI's commitment to inflation control, economic growth, and financial stability.

Highlights of RBI Monetary Policy Committee 2025

The **Monetary Policy Committee (MPC)** reached the following key decisions in the meeting:

1. Repo Rate Cut

The **policy repo rate** under the **Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF)** was **reduced by 25 basis points (bps) to 6.25%** with **immediate effect**. This rate cut aims to stimulate economic growth by making borrowing cheaper for banks, businesses, and consumers.

2. Changes in Other Key Rates

Following the repo rate reduction, the RBI adjusted other key rates as follows:

- Standing Deposit Facility (SDF) Rate: Reduced to 6.00%
- Marginal Standing Facility (MSF) Rate: Set at 6.50%
- Bank Rate: Adjusted to 6.50%

3. Neutral Monetary Policy Stance

The **RBI decided to maintain a neutral stance**, ensuring flexibility in responding to future economic uncertainties. This approach will help achieve **inflation targets while supporting economic growth**.

4. Inflation Target and Economic Growth

The MPC reaffirmed its goal of maintaining **Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation at 4%** within a **+/- 2% range**, while fostering **steady GDP growth**.

Growth and Inflation Outlook

1. Global Economic Trends

The **global economy** continues to grow **below the historical average** despite resilience in **world trade expansion**. Key global economic concerns include:

- Slower disinflation
- Ongoing geopolitical tensions
- Uncertainty in global trade policies
- **Volatility in financial markets** due to the strong US dollar

These factors could **impact emerging markets like India**, influencing inflation, investment, and trade.

2. India's Growth Forecast

According to the **First Advance Estimates (FAE)**, India's **real GDP growth for 2024-25** is projected at **6.4%**. This growth is fueled by:

- Recovery in private consumption
- Strong performance in the services sector
- Gradual recovery in agriculture
- Improving industrial growth

For **2025-26**, the **real GDP growth is projected at 6.7%**, with quarterly estimates as follows:

- Q1 (April-June 2025) – 6.7%
- Q2 (July-September 2025) – 7.0%
- Q3 (October-December 2025) – 6.5%
- Q4 (January-March 2026) – 6.5%

Despite positive **domestic economic indicators**, potential **downside risks** include:

- Geopolitical instability
- Protectionist trade policies
- Fluctuating international commodity prices
- Financial market volatility

3. Inflation Trends

Inflation trends showed a decline, with **headline inflation softening in November-December 2024** from its peak of **6.2% in October 2024**. This reduction was driven by:

- **Lower food inflation** as vegetable prices declined
- **Stable core inflation across goods and services**
- **Deflation in the fuel sector**

For **2025-26**, **CPI inflation is projected at 4.2%**, with quarterly forecasts:

- Q1 (April-June 2025) – 4.5%
- Q2 (July-September 2025) – 4.0%
- Q3 (October-December 2025) – 3.8%
- Q4 (January-March 2026) – 4.2%

A **normal monsoon**, along with **good rabi crop production**, is expected to keep **food inflation in check**, while **global uncertainties and energy price volatility** pose **upside risks**.

Rationale for Monetary Policy Decisions

1. Inflation Moderation Supports Rate Cut

The **MPC noted a downward trend in inflation** and expects further moderation in **2025-26**. With **food inflation declining** and **previous monetary policies still impacting the economy**, the rate cut was seen as **necessary to support growth**.

2. Economic Growth Below Last Year's Levels

Although growth is recovering, it remains **below last year's levels**, requiring **policy intervention to boost demand**. The **repo rate reduction** is expected to:

- Encourage borrowing and investment
- Support private consumption
- Strengthen economic recovery

3. Global Uncertainties Demand Caution

While **monetary easing** is necessary, the **MPC remains cautious** due to risks from:

- Volatile global financial markets
- Uncertain trade policies
- Adverse weather events

4. Retaining a Neutral Stance for Flexibility

By maintaining a **neutral stance**, the **MPC ensures flexibility** in responding to **economic uncertainties** while keeping inflation under control.

Upcoming MPC Meetings

- MPC Meeting Minutes Publication: February 21, 2025
- Next MPC Meeting: April 7-9, 2025

The RBI will continue **closely monitoring** economic conditions and make policy adjustments as needed.

| Current Affairs related to Regulatory authorities | | |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| S.No. | Name | Purpose |
| 1. | Reserve Bank of India (RBI) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has selected Exto India Technologies to test offline payment solutions under its Regulatory Sandbox. This initiative aims to enable digital transactions in areas with limited or no internet connectivity, promoting financial inclusion. • The move addresses the challenge of internet access in rural and remote regions, expanding the accessibility of digital payments across India. |
| 2. | Reserve Bank of India (RBI) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced liquidity-boosting measures, including a \$5 billion USD/INR buy/sell swap auction, open market operations (OMOs), and a variable rate repo (VRR) auction. • These actions aim to alleviate liquidity constraints in the banking system and support economic stability. |
| 3. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reserve Bank of India (RBI) reported that only ₹6,691 crore of the ₹2000 banknotes remain in circulation, accounting for just 1.88% of the ₹3.56 lakh crore originally in use when the withdrawal was announced on May 19, 2023. • This indicates that 98.12% of the high-value notes have been returned to the banking system. |
| 4. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced exclusive internet domain names for Indian banks and financial institutions. • Banks will use 'Bank.in', while non-banking entities will adopt 'Fin.in'. This move, announced by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra, aims to enhance cybersecurity, reduce cyber threats, and promote secure financial transactions. |
| 5. | Reserve Bank of India (RBI) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved Tata Communications' plan to sell its full stake in Tata Communications Payment Solutions Ltd (TCPSEL) to Transaction Solutions International (TSI), the Indian arm of Australian fintech company Findi. • The deal is valued at ₹330 crore, with an additional ₹75 crore contingent on interchange rate adjustments. |
| 6. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has introduced Additional Factor Authentication (AFA) for cross-border Card Not Present (CNP) transactions to enhance digital payment security. • This measure aims to secure international transactions with Indian-issued cards, ensuring they are as safe as domestic transactions. • AFA is a multi-step process requiring cardholders to verify transactions through more than one method, reducing fraud and improving consumer protection in online shopping. |
| 7. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved the voluntary amalgamation of Twin Cities Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd. with Kranti Co-operative Urban Bank Ltd. in Hyderabad, Telangana. • Effective from August 23, 2023, this merger aims to strengthen the urban co-operative banking sector by improving financial stability, risk management, and customer service. Post-merger, Twin Cities' branch will operate under Kranti Bank. |
| 8. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has set up a nine-member Working Group to review trading and settlement timings in India's financial markets, aiming to enhance market efficiency and align with global standards. • This move responds to factors like the rise of electronic trading, 24x5 Forex trading, increased foreign investor participation, and the round-the-clock availability of payment systems. The report is expected by April 30, 2025. |

| Current Affairs related to Regulatory authorities | | |
|---|-----------------------|---|
| S.No. | Name | Purpose |
| 9. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has postponed the implementation of Liquidity Coverage Ratio (LCR) and project financing guidelines by a year, now set for March 31, 2026. The delay addresses concerns from banks about potential liquidity challenges. The LCR norms, originally set for April 1, 2025, would have required banks to maintain more high-quality liquid assets (HQLAs), impacting credit availability. The postponement aims to avoid disruptions to lending activities and ensure financial stability. |
| 10. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) imposed penalties on Federal Bank Ltd (₹27.30 lakh) and Karur Vysya Bank Ltd (₹8.30 lakh) for non-compliance with regulatory guidelines. The fines were a result of violations identified in account management and credit delivery systems during RBI's inspections, underscoring its firm stance on banking compliance. |
| 11. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has announced new ₹50 denomination banknotes featuring the signature of Sanjay Malhotra, the newly appointed RBI Governor. These notes, part of the Mahatma Gandhi (New) Series, maintain the existing design and ensure continuity in India's currency framework. Previously issued ₹50 notes will remain valid and legal tender. |
| 12. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed Small Finance Banks (SFBs) to offer pre-sanctioned credit lines through Unified Payments Interface (UPI). This move aims to boost financial inclusion by making credit more accessible, especially for individuals and small businesses with limited access to formal banking. The decision supports RBI's push to integrate credit into digital payment systems, benefiting millions in rural and semi-urban areas. |
| 13. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has lifted restrictions on Kotak Mahindra Bank, allowing it to resume onboarding new customers online and issuing new credit cards. The restrictions were imposed in April 2024 due to critical IT infrastructure shortcomings identified in audits from 2022 and 2023, including issues with IT inventory management, data security, and vendor risk assessment. The bank has now implemented corrective measures to restart its digital operations. |
| 14. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The RBI has injected ₹2.5 lakh crore into the banking system through a Variable Rate Repo (VRR) auction to address liquidity shortfall. This move aims to stabilize the banking sector, ensure smooth credit flow, and prevent disruptions in financial markets. |
| 15. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved Zulia Investments (a Temasek Holdings subsidiary) to increase its stake in AU Small Finance Bank to 7%. This move underscores Temasek's growing interest in India's financial sector and the rising prominence of AU Small Finance Bank, India's largest small finance bank, serving retail and MSMEs across the country. |
| 16. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Easebuzz has received RBI authorization to operate as an online payment aggregator (PA). This approval allows the company to provide secure and seamless payment processing for businesses in India, reinforcing its compliance and expanding its role in the fintech sector. |
| 17. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013 mandates the establishment of Lokpal at the Union level and Lokayuktas at the State level to investigate allegations of corruption against public officials. The term "Lokpal" is exclusively designated for the body created under this Act and came into force on January 16, 2024, under Section 3 of the Act. However, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) had introduced the Reserve Bank-Integrated Ombudsman Scheme (RB-IOS), 2021, which was erroneously translated into Hindi as "रिज़र्व बैंक-एकीकृत लोकपाल योजना, 2021." Since "Lokpal" is legally reserved for the anti-corruption body under the 2013 Act, corrective measures were needed. |

| Current Affairs related to Regulatory authorities | | |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| S.No. | Name | Purpose |
| 18. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) to open a branch in GIFT City, boosting its offshore banking operations. This move supports BoM's goal to expand its business in Gujarat by 25%, aiming to exceed ₹15,000 crore by Q2 FY 2024-25, and strengthens its presence in key financial hubs across India. |
| 19. | Reserve Bank of India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> RBI imposed penalties on Shriram Finance (₹5.80 lakh), Ujjivan Small Finance Bank (₹6.70 lakh), and Nainital Bank (₹61.40 lakh) for regulatory violations under the Banking Regulation Act, 1949. |

SEBI News

| S.No | Key Details |
|------|--|
| 1. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEBI is developing a secure UPI mechanism for market intermediaries to enhance investor security and prevent fraudulent transactions. This initiative aims to ensure that payments are routed only to legitimate intermediaries, addressing the growing issue of unregistered entities misleading investors and collecting funds fraudulently. |
| 2. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The 1% Club, has made history by becoming one of the first influencer-led companies to secure the SEBI Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) license. This milestone allows the platform to legally offer personalized financial advice and services, enhancing its credibility in the financial advisory sector, where regulated advisors have been scarce. |
| 3. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEBI imposed a ₹25 lakh fine on DB Realty Ltd (now Valor Estate Ltd) and seven associated individuals for financial misstatements and non-disclosures. The penalties were due to the company's failure to follow accounting standards and properly disclose a corporate guarantee provided to the Bank of India for Pune Buildtech Pvt Ltd. |
| 4. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) launched MITRA (Mutual Fund Investment Tracing and Retrieval Assistant) to help investors track, trace, and reclaim inactive or unclaimed mutual fund folios. MITRA addresses issues like outdated contact details and lack of KYC compliance. It offers a searchable database for investors to locate inactive folios that have not had transactions for over ten years. |
| 5. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SEBI has launched a new RPT portal to improve corporate governance and transparency in the Indian securities market. This platform enables timely and accurate reporting of Related Party Transactions (RPTs) by listed companies, ensuring comprehensive disclosure and easier monitoring by regulators and stakeholders. The initiative aims to strengthen governance standards and enhance market accountability. |

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

GDP & GROWTH RATE as per October 2024

- India's economy is expected to grow at 6.5% in FY26, up from 6.4% in FY25, according to Crisil's report. Key growth drivers include lower inflation, rate cuts by the RBI, normal monsoon, and stable global crude oil prices. However, challenges such as global trade barriers, weak exports, and the need for stronger private sector investments remain.
- Indian banks are expected to see a decline in net interest margins (NIMs) by 10 basis points in FY 2025-26 due to the RBI's rate cut of 25 basis points to 6.25%. This cut will impact floating rate loans like housing, SME, and retail loans, leading to lower interest rates and margin compression. Non-banking financial institutions (NBFI) will also face challenges, with increased competition and declining yields, affecting profitability.
- India's urban unemployment rate remained steady at 6.4% in the October-December quarter of FY25, according to the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS). This shows stability in urban employment, despite shifts in gender-specific job trends, youth employment, and labor force participation. The data offers crucial insights into urban labor market conditions for policymakers.
- India's total exports grew 7.2% YoY from April 2024 to January 2025, driven by key industries like electronics manufacturing and aerospace. This growth reflects India's increased global trade engagement, though U.S. tariffs pose a potential challenge to sustaining this momentum.
- India's economy is projected to grow at 6.4% in Q3 FY25, up from 5.4% in the previous quarter. This growth is driven by higher government spending and a rebound in exports. Gross Value Added (GVA) is expected to rise by 6.6%, with industry at 6.2%, services at 7.7%, and agriculture at 4.0%. A key highlight is the record \$36.9 billion in service exports in December 2024.

- **State Bank of India (SBI)** has revised **India's GDP growth forecast** for **FY25** to **6.3%**, slightly below the **National Statistical Office (NSO)** projection of **6.4%**. This adjustment reflects concerns over slowing economic momentum, especially in **lending, manufacturing, and aggregate demand**. Policymakers are focusing on sustaining growth through **fiscal and monetary measures**.

ECONOMY NEWS

- The **Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT)** has released the **Wholesale Price Index (WPI)** for **January 2025**, reporting an annual inflation rate of **2.31% (provisional)** compared to January 2024. The increase in inflation is primarily due to the rising prices in the categories of **manufactured food products, food articles, non-food articles, and textiles**. The **month-over-month (MoM) WPI change** for January 2025 stood at **(-) 0.45%** compared to December 2024, indicating a marginal decline in wholesale prices.
- India's **retail inflation**, measured by the **Consumer Price Index (CPI)**, eased to **4.31% in January 2025**, its lowest in five months, down from **5.22%** in December. This decline is primarily due to a sharp drop in **food prices**, especially **vegetables**, which saw a rise of only **11.35%** compared to **26.6%** in December, driven by fresh **winter supplies**.
- India's **industrial output growth** slowed to **3.2% in December 2024**, down from **5%** in November, according to the **Index of Industrial Production (IIP)**. The slowdown was mainly due to weaker performance in the **manufacturing sector**, which grew only **3%**, while **electricity generation** saw strong growth. This decline raises concerns about the country's **economic momentum** heading into **2025**.

RBI

BUSINESS NEWS

- The **Financial Intelligence Unit of India (FIU-IND)** imposed a **₹9.27 crore penalty** on **Bybit Fintech Limited** for violating the **Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA)**. The penalty follows Bybit's expansion in **India** without proper **registration** with the FIU-IND, as required by Indian laws. The action reflects the government's heightened scrutiny of **crypto platforms**, with additional measures including blocking Bybit's **websites** under the **Information Technology Act, 2000** for **non-compliance**.
- The **National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI)** has proposed an increase in **ATM interchange fees** for both **cash and non-cash** transactions to address rising **operational costs** and support ATM network expansion. The last fee revision was in **2012**, and rising costs of **ATM maintenance, security, and cash loading** prompted this move. The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI)** formed a committee in **2019** to review the fees, leading to the recommendation for higher interchange charges.
- Zomato has rebranded itself as **"Eternal"** from February 6, 2025, reflecting a shift in its vision and consolidating its business verticals. The name **"Eternal"** had been used internally for over two years, signaling a transformation. The new identity integrates four key divisions while keeping the original **Zomato** brand for **food delivery**.
- **India Post Payments Bank (IPPB)** and **PNB MetLife India Insurance** have formed a **bancassurance partnership** to make **life insurance** more accessible across India. The collaboration leverages IPPB's extensive network to offer PNB MetLife's solutions, particularly in **remote and underserved regions**, aiming to bridge the **financial security gap** and provide affordable insurance to a broader customer base.
- **Gopal Vittal**, Vice Chairman and MD of **Bharti Airtel**, became the **Acting Chair** of the **GSMA Board**, following the resignation of **José María Álvarez-Pallete**, Chairman and CEO of **Telefónica**. This leadership transition highlights changes in the **global telecommunications industry** and its influential roles.
- Zepto, the Indian **quick commerce** startup, became the second most downloaded app globally in the **food and drinks category**, surpassing **KFC** and **Domino's**, with **McDonald's** at the top. The company's **300% growth** in the second half of 2024, driven by features like **"buy now, pay later"**, highlights the rapid expansion of India's quick commerce sector, with **Blinkit, Zomato, and Swiggy** also ranking in the top 10.
- India is introducing new **HSN codes** for **Geographical Indication (GI)-tagged rice** varieties like **Red Rice, Black Rice, and Kalanamak Rice** to improve export processes. These distinct codes will help **recognize** specialty rice varieties, avoid trade barriers, and ensure fair pricing and **global recognition** for premium rice.
- **Reliance Consumer Products Ltd (RCPL)** has launched a **sports hydration drink** brand, **Spinner**, co-created with **Muttiah Muralitharan**. Priced at ₹10 for a 150 ml bottle, it offers an affordable alternative to brands like **Gatorade** and **Powerade**. Spinner plans to collaborate with **IPL teams** and aims to create a **\$1 billion** sports beverage category within three years.
- **Tata Elxsi** and **Garuda Aerospace** have partnered to create a **Centre of Excellence** for **drone design, engineering, and certification**. The **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)**, signed at **Aero India 2025**, supports India's **self-reliance** in **UAV technology** and aligns with the **'Make in India'** initiative. The collaboration aims to develop **indigenous drone solutions** for **defence, agriculture, and smart city** applications.

- **Tata Consultancy Services (TCS)** has secured a major IT transformation deal with **UPM**, a Finland-based sustainable materials company. The partnership will focus on **cloud migration, digital transformation, and enhancing operational efficiency**. TCS will manage IT functions such as **data center operations, network services, and end-user support** for UPM's 19,000 employees, ensuring a seamless technology-driven ecosystem.
- Actor **Pankaj Tripathi** has co-founded **Velvet**, a **cinematic audio storytelling platform** launched in **October 2024**. The platform, which focuses on **Hindi audio content**, aims to deliver immersive storytelling experiences. Velvet has already gained significant traction, attracting over **10,000 listeners** on its platform and over **1 million** through distribution partners like **Josh App** in India and **Future Today Group** in the US. Tripathi aims to elevate India's rich **storytelling tradition** into an engaging audio experience.
- Indian banks are expected to see a **decline in net interest margins (NIMs)** by 10 basis points in FY 2025-26 due to the **RBI's rate cut** of 25 basis points to 6.25%. This cut will impact **floating rate loans** like housing, SME, and retail loans, leading to **lower interest rates** and margin compression. **Non-banking financial institutions (NBFI)**s will also face challenges, with increased **competition** and declining **yields**, affecting profitability.
- **Reliance Industries** and **Disney** have launched **JioHotstar**, merging **JioCinema** and **Disney+ Hotstar**. This new platform offers a **comprehensive streaming experience**, combining **live sports, premium entertainment, and exclusive international content**. Users of the original platforms will need to transition to JioHotstar for uninterrupted access to their favorite **shows, movies, and sports events**.
- **Campa Cola**, owned by **Reliance Consumer Products**, has secured the **Rs 200 crore co-presenting rights** for **IPL 2025**, replacing **Coca-Cola's Thums Up**. This move signifies Reliance's strategy to scale its **market presence** and introduce new **sports drinks** during the IPL season, challenging global beverage giants.
- Meta's **Project Waterworth** is a groundbreaking initiative to lay a **50,000-kilometer undersea cable** connecting **India, the US, Brazil, and South Africa**. The project aims to improve **high-speed internet services** and facilitate **digital inclusion**, supporting everything from **cloud computing** to **AI applications**. It is designed to meet the growing demand for fast, secure, and reliable digital infrastructure, boosting economic growth and innovation across five continents.
- **IRDAI** launched the **Bima Trinity** plan at the 9th **Bima Manthan** to transform India's insurance sector. The plan includes **Bima Sugam**, a unified digital marketplace aimed at simplifying the process of buying, servicing, and claiming insurance policies. This initiative seeks to make insurance **accessible, affordable, and efficient** for all, driving **inclusive growth** in the industry.
- **Reliance New Energy Battery Limited**, a subsidiary of **Reliance Industries**, has secured a **10 GWh capacity** under the **PLI Scheme for Advanced Chemistry Cell (ACC) Battery Storage**. The **Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI)** signed a **Programme Agreement** with the company on **February 17, 2025**, marking a significant step in **India's domestic battery manufacturing** and reducing **import dependence**.
- **N. Chandrasekaran**, Chairman of **Tata Group**, has been awarded an **honorary knighthood** by the **United Kingdom** on **February 14, 2025**. This prestigious recognition honors his exceptional role in enhancing **India-UK business relations**, particularly through his leadership in Tata Group's **investments and collaborations** in the UK.
- India's **smartphone exports** hit a record **Rs 1.55 trillion** in the April 2024 to January 2025 period, a 56% rise from the previous year. This growth, driven by the **Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme**, has been fueled by global giants like **Apple** and **Samsung**, with Apple contributing 70% of total exports. The government's push for local production has transformed India into a major smartphone manufacturing hub.
- **360 ONE Asset** plans to acquire a **15% stake** in **Bharti AXA Life Insurance**, bringing fresh capital to support its **expansion and innovation**. This investment will enhance **product offerings, distribution networks**, and enable the company to strengthen its position in the competitive **life insurance market**, catering to the growing demand for **tailored insurance solutions**.
- **LIC** has launched the **'One Man Office' (OMO)** initiative on **February 17, 2025**, aimed at enhancing the efficiency of its agents by providing **24x7 digital services**. The initiative supports **LIC's vision of 'Insurance for All by 2047'** by offering tools for **policy sales, customer service, and business management**. This digital transformation allows agents to work independently and productively without a traditional office setup, benefiting both **policyholders** and **LIC**.
- **Tata Power** has partnered with **Amazon Web Services (AWS)** to modernize its **digital infrastructure** and support India's shift to a **smarter, sustainable energy ecosystem**. The collaboration focuses on using **cloud technology** to improve **operational efficiency**, enhance **grid resilience**, and provide consumers with advanced **energy management tools**.
- **Zomato** has launched **'Nugget'**, an **AI-powered customer support platform** that automates and streamlines customer service. Developed over three years, it now handles **15 million monthly interactions** across Zomato's ecosystem, including **Blinkit** and **Hyperpure**. This initiative underscores Zomato's focus on **AI-driven solutions** to enhance **customer experience** and **operational efficiency**.

MoU's & AGREEMENTS

MoUs WITH COUNTRY

| Country | MoU's With | Field/Purpose |
|---------|--|--|
| India | Israel | India and Israel are set to strengthen their economic and trade relations with the India-Israel Business Forum and CEO Forum on February 11, 2025 , in New Delhi . These forums will focus on technological collaboration , investment opportunities , and cross-sector partnerships . Organized by DPIIT, CII , and the Embassy of Israel , the Business Forum aims to expand trade and foster collaborations between businesses from both countries. |
| India | European Free Trade Association | India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) , comprising Switzerland, Norway, Iceland, and Liechtenstein , have launched the India-EFTA Desk to deepen economic collaboration . This follows the India-EFTA Trade and Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) , making EFTA the first European bloc to formalize a trade pact with India. The desk will enhance transparency, trust , and ease of doing business between the two regions, strengthening their growing economic ties . |
| India | Argentina | Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy met with H.E. Raúl Alejandro Jalil , Governor of Catamarca, Argentina , to enhance mining sector cooperation, focusing on lithium exploration and investment. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between MECL and the Provincial Government of Catamarca , aiming to boost collaboration in the exploration and development of critical minerals like lithium , essential for electric vehicle (EV) batteries and renewable energy storage . |
| India | Nepal | India and Nepal have signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between CSIR, India and Nepal Academy of Science and Technology (NAST) on February 18, 2025 . The agreement, signed at CSIR-National Physical Laboratory , aims to enhance scientific collaboration in fields like biotechnology, environmental sciences, alternative energy , and material sciences , building on their long-standing partnership. |

MoUs BETWEEN ORGANIZATION

| Organization | MoU's With | Field/Purpose |
|--|---|---|
| Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) | Carbon Market Association of India (CMAI) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Indian Institute of Corporate Affairs (IICA) and Carbon Market Association of India (CMAI) signed an MoU on February 4, 2025, to advance India's carbon markets and decarbonisation efforts. The partnership, announced during the IICA-CMAI Masterclass, will focus on training, research, policy advocacy, and knowledge-sharing to support India's transition to a low-carbon economy. Shri Nitin Gadkari, Minister for Road, Transport & Highways, emphasized the importance of biofuels, green hydrogen, and sustainable energy solutions. |
| IIITDM Kancheepuram | ERNET India | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> IIITDM Kancheepuram has partnered with ERNET India, an autonomous scientific society under MeitY, to enhance research in cutting-edge technologies. The collaboration, formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU), will establish a joint research laboratory focused on the Internet of Things (IoT) functionality validation sandbox project. |

| Organization | MoU's With | Field/Purpose |
|--------------|------------|---|
| TRIFED | Meesho | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TRIFED has partnered with Meesho, the Indian Federation of Culinary Associations (IFCA), and the Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Rural Industrialization (MGIRI) to promote tribal businesses and integrate them into the B2B sector. The MoUs, signed on February 18, 2025, during the "Aadi Mahotsav" in New Delhi, aim to enhance tribal entrepreneurship and market access, fostering the growth of tribal products. |

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

| Person Name | Appointed As | Entity / Place | Key Notes |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|--|
| Justin Hotard | CEO | Nokia | Replacing Pekka Lundmark. Hotard, currently Intel's EVP for Data Center & AI Group, brings expertise in AI and data centers, vital for Nokia's growth. Sari Baldauf, Nokia's Chair, praised Hotard's ability to accelerate growth in tech firms. Lundmark, who led Nokia since 2020, will serve as an advisor until the end of the year for a smooth transition. |
| Maimun Alam | Director | Ministry of Steel | Her appointment, approved by the Government of India, is based on the Department of Revenue's recommendation. She will serve a five-year tenure or until further orders. The Department of Personnel & Training (DoPT) has issued an order for her to assume her new role immediately. |
| CA. Charanjot Singh Nanda | 73rd President | Institute of Chartered Accountants of India | Their leadership will focus on upholding high professional standards in India's accounting profession. |
| CA. Prasanna Kumar D | Vice-President | Institute of Chartered Accountants of India | Their leadership will focus on upholding high professional standards in India's accounting profession. |
| Vivek Joshi | Election Commissioner of India | Election Commission of India | At 58, he is one of the youngest to join the Election Commission of India (ECI). His tenure will last until February 18, 2031. |
| V Anantha Nageswaran's | Chief Economic Advisor | | The Indian government has extended V Anantha Nageswaran's tenure as Chief Economic Advisor (CEA) until March 2027. |
| Gyanesh Kumar | Chief Election Commissioner of India | Election Commission of India | Gyanesh Kumar, was officially appointed as the next Chief Election Commissioner (CEC) by the Law Ministry. This appointment marks a significant milestone, as he is the first CEC to be appointed under the new law governing the selection of Election Commission (EC) members. |

AWARDS

Grammy Awards 2025: Complete List of Winners, Key Highlights, and Record-Breaking Moments

Grammy Awards 2025: The 67th Annual Grammy Awards held on February 2, 2025, at the Crypto.com Arena in Los Angeles marked a milestone in the music industry. With host Trevor Noah bringing charm and excitement to the event, the night became a celebration of musical talent across various genres. Beyoncé made history, while Kendrick Lamar dominated the evening with multiple awards, cementing his place as one of the most influential artists.

Full List of Major Grammy Winners in 2025

| Award Category | Winner(s) |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Album of the Year | Beyoncé – “Cowboy Carter” |
| Record of the Year | Kendrick Lamar – “Not Like Us” |
| Song of the Year | Kendrick Lamar – “Not Like Us” |
| Best New Artist | Chappell Roan |
| Best Pop Solo Performance | Sabrina Carpenter – “Espresso” |
| Best Pop Vocal Album | Sabrina Carpenter – “Short n’ Sweet” |
| Best Country Album | Beyoncé – “Cowboy Carter” |
| Best Country Duo/Group Performance | Beyoncé & Miley Cyrus – “II MOST WANTED” |
| Best Rap Album | J. Cole – “The Off-Season” |
| Best Rock Album | The Black Crowes – “Shake Your Money Maker” |
| Best R&B Song | Kehlani – “After Hours” |
| Best Dance/Electronic Performance | Justice & Tame Impala – “We Are the People” |
| Best Score Soundtrack | Bear McCreary – “God of War Ragnarök: Valhalla” |
| Dr. Dre Global Impact Award | Alicia Keys |

2025 Australian Cricket Awards

| Aspects | Details |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Travis Head’s Dominant Year | Scored 1,427 runs across formats, including 4 centuries . Excelled in Tests, ODIs, and T20Is. Played crucial innings under pressure. |
| Allan Border Medal Winner | Travis Head secured 208 votes , finishing 50 votes ahead of Josh Hazlewood and 61 votes ahead of Pat Cummins . |
| Men’s ODI Player of the Year | Travis Head won the award, edging past Alex Carey . Known for aggressive batting and anchoring key ODI innings. |
| Shane Warne Test Player of the Year | Josh Hazlewood won after taking 30 Test wickets at an average of 13.17 . Excelled in home conditions. |
| Men’s T20I Player of the Year | Adam Zampa won for his impactful leg-spin, taking key wickets in the middle overs. |
| Belinda Clark Award Winner | Annabel Sutherland won her first Belinda Clark Award for all-round performances across formats. |
| Women’s Test Performances | Annabel Sutherland scored 210 vs. South Africa and a century in the Ashes Test vs. England . |
| Women’s ODI Player of the Year | Ashleigh Gardner won after scoring 385 runs and taking 23 wickets . |
| Women’s T20I Player of the Year | Beth Mooney won after scoring 618 runs at an average of 47.53 and a strike rate of 129.83 . |
| BBL Player of the Tournament | Glenn Maxwell & Cooper Connolly were joint-winners for their standout performances. |
| WBBL Player of the Tournament | Ellyse Perry & Jess Jonassen were joint-winners for their batting and bowling contributions. |

Sportstar Aces Awards 2025: Find Out The Winners

The **2025 Sportstar Aces Awards** celebrated India’s finest sporting talents at the Taj Mahal Palace, Mumbai, on February 14, 2025. The event recognized top athletes for their remarkable performances, with hockey legend P.R. Sreejesh and shooter Manu Bhaker clinching the top honors. Notable achievements in chess, cricket, and football were also acknowledged.

Winners List of All Category

1. **Special Recognition Game Changer Award** – Jay Shah
2. **Best State for Promotion of Sports** – Madhya Pradesh
3. **Best Corporate to Promotion of Sports** – Reliance
4. **Best PSU for Promotion of Sports** – Railway Sport Promotion Board
5. **Best University for Promotion of Sports** – Kalinga Institute Industrial Technology (KIIT)
6. **Sports Women of the Year (Non-Olympic Sport)** – Divya Deshmukh (Chess)
7. **Sports Women of the Year (Para Sport)** – Avani Lekhara (Shooting)
8. **Club/State Team of the Year** – Mumbai Cricket Team – 2023-24 Ranji Trophy Champions
9. **National Team of the Year** – Indian Men’s & Women’s Chess Teams – Gold at 45th Chess Olympiad
10. **Young Achiever of Year (Male)** – Parth Manek (Shooting)
11. **Young Achiever of Year (Female)** – Neha Sangwan (Wrestling)
12. **Lifetime Achievement Award (Male)** – Gurbux Singh (Hockey)
13. **Lifetime Achievement Award (Female)** – Mary D’Souza Sequeira (Hockey)
14. **Super Achievers Para Athletes** – Avani Lekhara (Shooting), Navdeep Singh (Para-Athletics), Harvinder Singh (Para-Archery)
15. **Sportsman of the Year (Olympic Sport)** – Swapnil Kusale and Sarabjot Singh (Shooting)
16. **Inspirational Icon Award** – PV Sindhu (Badminton)
17. **Coach of the Year** – Jaspal Rana (Shooting)
18. **Sportstar of the Year (Female)** – Manu Bhaker (Shooting)
19. **Sport Women of the Year (Olympic Sport)** – Manu Bhaker (Shooting)
20. **Sportstar of the Year (Male)** – PR Sreejesh (Hockey)

BAFTA Awards 2025: Full Winners List Unveiled!

The **78th BAFTA Awards** celebrated the finest achievements in cinema, with *Conclave* and *The Brutalist* emerging as the biggest winners of the night, each securing four awards. The French musical crime drama *Emilia Pérez* continued its dominance, winning Best Film Not in the English Language, beating Payal Kapadia’s *All We Imagine As Light*, marking its third major loss to *Emilia Pérez* this year. Meanwhile, director Brady Corbet (*The Brutalist*) and lead actor Adrien Brody (*The Brutalist*) secured top honors. The awards also saw *Dune: Part Two* winning in technical categories, while *Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl* took home Best Animated Film.

Winners list in the Table

| Category | Winners Name |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Best Film | Conclave |
| Best Director | Brady Corbet (<i>The Brutalist</i>) |
| Best Actor in a Leading Role | Adrien Brody (<i>The Brutalist</i>) |
| Best Actress in a Leading Role | Mikey Madison (<i>Anora</i>) |
| Best Actor in a Supporting Role | Kieran Culkin (<i>A Real Pain</i>) |
| Best Actress in a Supporting Role | Zoe Saldaña (<i>Emilia Pérez</i>) |
| Best Original Screenplay | Jesse Eisenberg (<i>A Real Pain</i>) |
| Best Adapted Screenplay | Peter Straughan (<i>Conclave</i>) |
| Best Animated Film | <i>Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl</i> |
| Best Documentary | <i>Super/Man: The Christopher Reeve Story</i> |
| Best Film Not in the English Language | <i>Emilia Pérez</i> |
| Best Casting Anora | (Sean Baker and Samantha Quan) |
| Best Cinematography | <i>The Brutalist</i> (Loi Crawley) |
| Best Costume Design | <i>Wicked</i> (Paul Tazewell) |
| Best Editing | <i>Conclave</i> (Nick Emerson) |

| Category | Winners Name |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Best Makeup & Hair | The Substance |
| Best Original Score | The Brutalist (Daniel Blumberg) |
| Best Production Design | Wicked |
| Best Sound | Dune: Part Two |
| Best Special Visual Effects | Dune: Part Two |
| Outstanding British Film | Conclave |
| Outstanding British Debut | Kneecap (Rich Peppiatt) |
| Best British Short Animation | Wander to Wonder |
| Best British Short Film | Rock, Paper, Scissors |
| Best Children's & Family Film | Wallace & Gromit: Vengeance Most Fowl |
| EE Rising Star Award | David Jonsson |

Awards in Arts & Culture / Films

| Award Name | Award Winner | Key Notes |
|--|--------------------|---|
| Grammy Award for Best New Age, Ambient, or Chant Album for her project 'Triveni' | Chandrika Tandon | Chandrika Tandon, an Indian-American musician, won the Grammy Award for Best New Age, Ambient, or Chant Album for her project 'Triveni', created with Wouter Kellerman and Eru Matsumoto. The award was presented at the 67th Grammy Awards on February 2, 2025, in Los Angeles. Tandon, known for blending ancient mantras with modern music, expressed gratitude, emphasizing the album's focus on peace and healing. |
| 'CA in Public Service' Award from the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) | Deepak Kumar Kedia | Deepak Kumar Kedia, Inspector General at NSG, received the 'CA in Public Service' Award from the Institute of Chartered Accountants of India (ICAI) on February 1, 2025. The award recognizes his contributions to public service, especially in law enforcement and national security. Kedia, known as the 'CA in Uniform', has made significant impacts in counter-terrorism and national security. |
| Sahitya Akademi Award 2024 in Dogri | Chaman Arora | For his book Ik Hor Ashwthama , a collection of short stories. The book was unanimously selected by a three-member jury. The award will be presented to his family or nominee at a ceremony in New Delhi on March 8, 2025. |
| NETPAC Award | Varsha Bharath's | Varsha Bharath's directorial debut, Bad Girl , has won the prestigious NETPAC Award at the International Film Festival Rotterdam (IFFR) 2025. Presented by Anurag Kashyap and Vetrimaaran, the film initially faced mixed reactions due to its bold themes but has now gained critical recognition. This win places Bad Girl alongside notable Indian films like Nasir (2019), Naukar ki Kameez (1999), and Vidheyan (1995), all previous recipients of the award. |
| Grande Médaille the highest honor from the Aero-Club de France | Tom Cruise | In recognition of his contributions to aviation and his inspiration to future pilots. The award, presented by Catherine Maunoury, highlights Cruise's passion for flying, performing his own stunts, and incorporating aviation in films like Top Gun: Maverick and Mission: Impossible . |
| Outstanding Achievement in Indian Cinema' award at IIFA 2025 | Rakesh Roshan | Rakesh Roshan will receive the 'Outstanding Achievement in Indian Cinema' award at IIFA 2025 for his significant contributions as a director, producer, and actor. The award will be presented during IIFA's 25th anniversary celebrations on March 8-9, 2025, in Jaipur, Rajasthan. |

| Award Name | Award Winner | Key Notes |
|--|--------------|---|
| Forward Faster Sustainability Award 2025 | NTPC Ltd | NTPC Ltd., India's largest power utility, won the Forward Faster Sustainability Award 2025 in the Water Resilience category. Presented by the UN Global Compact Network India in Chennai on February 13, 2025, this award highlights NTPC's dedication to sustainable water management, conservation, and environmental stewardship . |
| Nita Ambani | | Nita Ambani , Founder and Chairperson of Reliance Foundation , has been awarded the Governor of Massachusetts' Citation for her significant contributions to education, healthcare, sports, arts, culture, and women's empowerment . This recognition acknowledges her leadership in philanthropy and her positive societal impact in India and beyond. |
| Nagaland Forest Management Project | | The Nagaland Forest Management Project (NFMP) won the SKOCH Award 2024 for its contributions to national development . Presented at the 100th SKOCH Summit in New Delhi , the award was accepted by Ango Konyak and Wennyei Konyak . The project, supported by JICA , focuses on improving forest ecosystems , rehabilitating jhum areas , and promoting sustainable livelihoods . |

SUMMITS, EVENTS & CONFERENCE

| Category | Event | Venue | Key Points |
|----------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---|
| Summits | Global Justice, Love & Peace Summit | Dubai | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dubai will host the Global Justice, Love & Peace Summit on April 12-13, 2025, at the Dubai Exhibition Centre. Organized by the I am Peacekeeper Movement, the summit will feature 2,800 peacekeepers and 72 speakers, including 10 Nobel Laureates and heads of state. Under the patronage of Sheikh Nahayan Mabarak Al Nahayan, the event aligns with the UAE's Year of Community initiative and aims to foster justice, love, and peace globally. |
| Summits | BIMSTEC Youth Summit 2025 | Gandhinagar, Gujarat | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The BIMSTEC Youth Summit 2025 will be held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, from 7th to 11th February 2025, bringing together young leaders from BIMSTEC nations. Inaugurated by Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, the summit aims to strengthen ties among Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. Focused on youth-led initiatives, leadership, and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), it is organized by the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports. |
| Summits | AI Paris Summit | Paris | <p>Key Takeaways from PM Modi's Speech at AI Paris Summit</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> AI's Transformative Impact – AI is revolutionizing governance, economy, security, and society at an unprecedented pace. Global AI Governance – Collaboration is crucial for fair regulations that promote trust and shared values. Beyond Risk Management – AI governance must balance risk mitigation with fostering innovation and accessibility. AI for Global Good – AI can advance healthcare, education, and agriculture while tackling cybersecurity threats. AI and Jobs – AI reshapes jobs, necessitating investment in skilling and re-skilling workforces. |

| Category | Event | Venue | Key Points |
|----------|--|----------------|---|
| | | | <p>6. Sustainability in AI – AI’s high energy consumption demands green energy solutions and efficient AI models.</p> <p>7. India’s AI Leadership – India’s Digital Public Infrastructure and National AI Mission drive inclusive AI growth.</p> <p>8. Human-Centric AI – AI must serve humanity with ethical responsibility and inclusivity.</p> |
| Summits | Summit for Action on Artificial Intelligence | Paris | The “ Summit for Action on Artificial Intelligence ” has started in Paris , co-chaired by Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron . The summit brings together world leaders , industry experts, and researchers to discuss AI ethics, regulation, and responsible development , aiming to shape the future of AI as it transforms industries, economies, and governance globally. |
| Summits | World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit (WAVES) | Mumbai | India will host the inaugural World Audio Visual Entertainment Summit (WAVES) at the Jio World Convention Centre in Mumbai from May 1 to 4, 2025 . The summit aims to establish India as a global media and entertainment hub , bringing together industry leaders, CEOs , professionals, and creative minds to foster collaboration, investment, and technological advancements in the entertainment sector. |
| Summits | Global AI Summit | Paris | Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced that India will host the next Global AI Summit , following discussions at the AI Action Summit in Paris . Co-chaired by PM Modi and French President Emmanuel Macron , the summit focused on global cooperation in AI . India’s leadership in AI , commitment to inclusivity , and key AI initiatives were highlighted. |
| Summits | World Government Summit (WGS) 2025 | Dubai | The World Government Summit (WGS) 2025 was held in Dubai from February 11-13 , focusing on “ Shaping Future Governments. ” India , represented by Union Environment Minister Bhupender Yadav , highlighted its commitment to green growth and climate resilience . Yadav discussed clean technology, electric vehicles, and climate-resilient infrastructure , emphasizing the need for financial resources to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and tackle climate change . |
| Summits | 17th BRICS Summit | Brazil, Russia | The 17th BRICS Summit will be held in Rio de Janeiro on July 6-7, 2025 , bringing together Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa , and invited nations. The summit will focus on global governance reforms, economic cooperation, and shared prosperity among Global South countries. With BRICS expanding to include nations like Iran, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia , this event will shape future global trade, finance , and diplomatic ties. |
| Events | 14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum | New Delhi | The 14th Asian Fisheries and Aquaculture Forum (14AFAF) held from February 12-14, 2025 , at ICAR Convention Centre, New Delhi , with the theme “ Greening the Blue Growth in Asia-Pacific. ” Organized by the Asian Fisheries Society (AFS) , ICAR, Department of Fisheries (DoF) , and AFS Indian Branch (AFSIB) , the forum focus on sustainable fisheries and aquaculture development . With over 1,000 delegates from 24 countries, the event address issues like resource management, climate change, aquaculture sustainability, and policy advancements . Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh inaugurate the event. |

| Category | Event | Venue | Key Points |
|------------|--|------------|---|
| Events | All India Kinnar Mahasammelan | Ajmer | Ajmer hosted the first-ever All India Kinnar Mahasammelan from February 17, 2025, at a private school in Vaishali Nagar. The 10-day transgender conference, organized in memory of Anita Bai , addresses issues faced by the transgender community. Over 2,000 members participated, engaging in religious rituals like Kalash Puja and Chak Pujan . The event also features stalls on medical services, banking, and travel, with strict supervision for invited members. |
| Events | SOUL (School of Ultimate Leadership) Conclave 2025 | New Delhi | The SOUL (School of Ultimate Leadership) Conclave 2025 , inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi at Bharat Mandapam, New Delhi , focuses on developing future leaders for a Viksit Bharat (Developed India) . The event aims to train individuals in governance, business, technology, sports, and social sectors , fostering strategic decision-making and a solution-driven mindset . A dedicated SOUL campus will be set up near GIFT City, Gujarat to provide world-class leadership training. |
| Events | Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) | Bangladesh | India has taken over the Chairmanship of the Bay of Bengal Programme Inter-Governmental Organisation (BOBP-IGO) from Bangladesh during the 13th Governing Council Meeting in Malé, Maldives . The transition occurred during the “Policy Guidance for Mainstreaming Ecosystem Approach to Fisheries Management (EAFM) in Small-Scale Fisheries” conference, held from February 20 to 22, 2025 , organized by the Ministry of Fisheries & Ocean Resources of the Maldives in collaboration with BOBP-IGO. |
| Events | SAMVAD programme | | Prime Minister Narendra Modi delivered a video message at the SAMVAD programme in Thailand , emphasizing India's cultural ties with Thailand and Asia. He recalled SAMVAD's origins with former Japanese PM Shinzo Abe in 2015 and its role in promoting debate and understanding . His speech focused on shared Asian heritage, conflict avoidance, environmental harmony , and the teachings of Bhagwan Buddha for a peaceful, prosperous future. |
| Conference | IIAS-DARPG India Conference 2025 | | India is hosting the IIAS-DARPG India Conference 2025 in New Delhi from February 10-14, 2025 , marking the first time it's held in the country. The conference brings together experts from over 55 countries to discuss public administration, governance, and policymaking innovations, and includes the annual General Assembly of the International Institute of Administrative Science (IIAS) . |

INDEX

RANKING

Henley Passport Index 2025: Singapore Ranks No. 1, India at 80th

The **2025 Henley Passport Index**, compiled by Henley & Partners, **ranks 199 passports** based on their visa-free or visa-on-arrival access to global destinations. The rankings are based on International Air Transport Association (IATA) data, highlighting global mobility trends. **Singapore holds the top spot**, while **India ranks 80th**, sharing the position with Algeria, Equatorial Guinea, and Tajikistan. The report also highlights countries gaining or losing mobility privileges over the years.

Key Highlights of the Henley Passport Index 2025

Top-Ranking Passports

- **1st Place: Singapore**
- Visa-free access to 193 out of 227 destinations.
- **2nd Place: Japan & South Korea**
- Visa-free access to 190 countries.
- Japan regained visa-free access to China, lost during Covid-19.
- **3rd Place: European Nations**
- Finland, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Ireland
- Access to 189 destinations.

India's Position (Rank 80)

- Shared with Algeria, Equatorial Guinea, and Tajikistan.
- Indian passport holders can travel to **62 countries visa-free** or with visa-on-arrival.

Bottom Ranking Passports

- **99th (Last): Afghanistan** – Access to 25 destinations.
- **98th:** Syria – Access to 27 destinations.
- **97th:** Iraq – Access to 30 destinations.
- Countries Showing Growth & Decline

Significant Gainers

- **UAE (Rank 8, 185 destinations)**
- Gained access to 72 more destinations in the past decade.
- Only Arab nation in the top 10.
- **China (Rank 59, 58 destinations)**
- Improved from 94th in 2015 to 59th in 2025.
- Secured 29 new visa-free access destinations in the past year.

Significant Decliners

- **Venezuela** – Suffered the biggest drop in rankings over the past decade.
- **USA** – Experienced an unexpected decline in its ranking.
- **Afghanistan** – Widening mobility gap, losing access to two more destinations.

Top 10 Rankers in Index

- **1st.** Singapore
- **2nd.** Japan, South Korea
- **3rd.** Finland, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Ireland
- **4th.** Austria, Belgium, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Sweden
- **5th.** Greece, New Zealand, Switzerland
- **6th.** Australia, United Kingdom
- **7th.** Canada, Czechia, Hungary, Malta, Poland
- **8th.** Estonia, UAE
- **9th.** Croatia, Latvia, Slovakia, Slovenia, United States
- **10th.** Iceland, Lithuania

Note: Many Countries are tied with same number of score in the index and they have same number of position in the index.

India and Its Neighbor Country Rankings

- **China** – 59th
- **India** – 80th
- **Bhutan** – 83rd
- **Sri Lanka**- 91st
- **Bangladesh** – 93rd
- **Nepal** – 94th
- **Pakistan** – 96th
- **Afghanistan** – 99th

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India's Rank in Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2024

Corruption remains a significant global challenge, affecting governance, democracy, and development. **The Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) 2024**, released by Transparency International, ranks India at 96th position out of 180 countries, with a score of 38—a decline from 39 in 2023 and 40 in 2022. The CPI evaluates nations based on perceived levels of public sector corruption, using a scale from 0 (highly corrupt) to 100 (very clean).

Key Findings of CPI 2024**India's Ranking and Score**

- **India** ranked **96th** out of 180 countries.
- **Score:** 38 (down from 39 in 2023 and 40 in 2022).
- India ranked 93rd in 2023 and 40th in 2022.

Global and Regional Rankings

- **Denmark (1st) is the least corrupt nation**, followed by **Finland (2nd) and Singapore (3rd)**.
- South Sudan, Somalia, Venezuela, and Syria are ranked among the most corrupt nations.

India's neighbors

- **Pakistan:** 135th
- **Sri Lanka:** 121st
- **Bangladesh:** 149th
- **China:** 76th

Most Corrupt Nations (Bottom Rankings)

- **South Sudan** – Lowest score (8 points), displacing Somalia.
- **Somalia** – 9 points.
- **Venezuela** – 10 points.
- **Syria** – 12 points.

Corruption and Climate Action

- Corruption threatens climate initiatives, hindering emission reductions and adaptation efforts.
- Misuse of funds meant for climate action worsens global heating effects.
- Undue influence and bribery obstruct policies aimed at environmental protection.

Global Corruption Trends

- **United States dropped** from 69 to 65 points, ranking 28th (down from 24th).
- **France fell** from 71 to 67 points, ranking 25th (down from 20th).
- **Germany dropped** from 78 to 75 points, ranking 15th (down from 9th).
- **Mexico** dropped five points to 26 due to judicial inaction on corruption.
- **Russia** fell from 26 to 22 points, further impacted by its invasion of Ukraine.
- **Ukraine** declined one point to 35, but showed progress in judicial independence and anti-corruption efforts.

Trends in Corruption Levels

- 32 countries have reduced corruption levels since 2012.
- 148 countries have either stagnated or worsened in the same period.
- The global average CPI score remains at 43, indicating limited improvement.
- More than two-thirds of countries score below 50, showing widespread corruption issues.

Challenges and Recommendations

- Corruption fuels democratic decline, instability, and human rights violations.
- Developed nations with high CPI scores often protect fossil-fuel interests rather than fighting corruption.
- Financial hubs in wealthy nations facilitate illicit funds, worsening corruption worldwide.
- Urgent global action is required to combat corruption for a sustainable and democratic future.

India Ranks 3rd in Global LEED Green Buildings 2024

| Key Points | Details |
|----------------------------------|---|
| Why in News? | India ranked 3rd globally in LEED green building certifications 2024, with 370 projects covering 8.50 million GSM of certified space. |
| Top Countries in LEED 2024 | 1. China – 25+ million GSM 2. Canada – 10 million GSM 3. India – 8.50 million GSM |
| India’s Previous Rankings | 2023: 3rd (7.23 million GSM, 248 projects) 2022: 2nd (10.47 million GSM, 323 projects) |
| LEED Certification Body | U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC) |
| India’s Green Building Authority | Green Business Certification Inc. (GBCI) |
| US LEED Market | Largest globally with 56+ million GSM certified |
| GBCI India Head | Gopalakrishnan Padmanabhan |
| LEED Certification Criteria | Sustainability, Energy efficiency, Water conservation, Carbon footprint reduction |
| India’s Climate Goal Link | Supports UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 2030 |

India’s Logistics Performance Sees Major Leap in Global Rankings

India has achieved a remarkable milestone in the **World Bank’s Logistics Performance Index (LPI) 2023**, securing the **22nd rank in the International Shipments category** and moving up to **38th place overall** among **139 countries**. This improvement underscores the country’s focused efforts on enhancing logistics efficiency, reducing costs, and integrating advanced technology.

What Led to India’s Rise in the LPI Rankings?

India’s progress in the logistics sector can be attributed to multiple factors, including **policy reforms, technology-driven initiatives, and improved infrastructure**. The country has significantly enhanced its global trade competitiveness by streamlining supply chains, cutting delays, and boosting efficiency in freight movement.

- **International Shipments Rank Improvement:** In 2018, India was ranked **44th** in the International Shipments category. The jump to **22nd place** in 2023 highlights the success of government policies aimed at easing global trade.
- **Turnaround Time at Ports:** Indian ports have significantly reduced processing times, with an **average turnaround time of 0.9 days**, outperforming major economies such as **the USA (1.5 days), Australia (1.7 days), and Germany (1.3 days)**. This has been possible due to port modernization and automation.

How Have Government Policies Boosted Logistics Growth?

The government has launched key policy initiatives aimed at strengthening **India’s logistics infrastructure** and reducing inefficiencies. Some of the most impactful policies include:

- **PM GatiShakti National Master Plan:** Launched in **October 2021**, this initiative focuses on multimodal connectivity to integrate various transport networks and improve cargo movement. The aim is to reduce **logistics costs** and drive economic growth by **2024-25**.
- **National Logistics Policy (NLP):** Introduced in **September 2022**, this policy seeks to address last-mile delivery challenges, reduce bottlenecks, and enhance overall logistics efficiency. The policy plays a crucial role in making India’s logistics sector more structured and cost-effective.

What Role Does Technology Play in India’s Logistics Transformation?

Technology has been a game-changer in India’s logistics sector. Some of the significant tech-driven improvements include:

- **Logistics Data Bank Project:** Implemented by **NICDC**, this initiative uses **radio frequency identification (RFID) tags** to track containers in real time. This has significantly **reduced delays and improved supply chain transparency**.
- **Automation and AI Integration:** Indian ports and warehouses are increasingly adopting **automation, AI, and digital tracking systems** to enhance cargo handling efficiency.

What is India’s Vision for the Future of Logistics?

India is planning long-term improvements in logistics under the **Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047**, which aims to **position the country as a global logistics hub**.

Key focus areas include:

- **Port Capacity Expansion:** The government is working on **greenfield and brownfield developments** to accommodate growing trade demands.
- **Sustainability Measures:** Plans are in place to develop **hydrogen hubs** and implement **eco-friendly logistics solutions**.
- **Boosting Shipbuilding:** India aims to become a **leading player in shipbuilding and repair**, increasing its presence in the global maritime industry.

The Road Ahead

India’s consistent rise in the **World Bank’s Logistics Performance Index** from **54th in 2014 to 38th in 2023** is a reflection of its **policy-driven and technology-backed transformation**. With further advancements in **infrastructure, digitalization, and sustainability**, India is poised to strengthen its position as a key player in global trade logistics.

Mukesh Ambani Tops Asia’s Wealthiest Families List

Asia’s wealthiest families continue to shape the global economy, with their influence spanning across diverse industries such as technology, finance, real estate, and energy. **According to Bloomberg’s 2025 rankings, Mukesh Ambani and the Ambani family have retained the top position**, reaffirming their dominance in business and wealth creation. The rankings highlight the remarkable legacy of Asia’s top business dynasties, showcasing their ability to sustain and expand their financial empires over generations.

Top Ranked Families in the List

| Rank | Family Name | Business Group | Country |
|------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------|
| 1 | Ambanis | Relaince Industries | India |
| 2 | Chearavanonts | Charoen Pokphand Group | Thailand |
| 3 | Hartonos | Djarum, Bank Central Asi | Indonesia |
| 4 | Mistrys | Shapoorji Pallonji Group | India |
| 5 | Kwoks | Sun Hung Kai Properties | Hong Kong |
| 6 | Tsai Family | Cathay Financial, | Taiwan |
| 7 | Jindals | OP Jindal Group | India |
| 8 | Yoovidhya Family | TCP Group | Thailand |
| 9 | Birlas | Aditya Birla Group | India |
| 10 | Lees Family | Samsung | South Korea |
| 11 | Zhangs | China Hongqiao | China |
| 12 | Cheng | (New World Development) | Hong Kong |
| 13 | Bajaj’s | Bajaj Group | India |
| 14 | Pao/Woos | BW Group | Hong Kong |
| 15 | Kwek/Queks | Hong Leong Group | Singapore/Malaysia |
| 16 | Kadoories | CLP Holdings | Hong Kong |
| 17 | Chirathivats | Central Group | Thailand |
| 18 | Hindujas | Hinduja Group | India |
| 19 | Sys | SM Investments | Philippines |

Forbes India 30 Under 30 2025

The Forbes India **30 Under 30 list for 2025** has been released, showcasing **42 young achievers** under the **age of 30 across 19 diverse categories**. This year’s list introduces the **Artificial Intelligence (AI) category** for the **first time**, highlighting the growing impact of **AI-driven innovations**. The honorees include entrepreneurs, professionals, and artists who have made remarkable contributions in their respective fields while also driving social change through sustainability and community-focused ventures.

What Makes the Forbes India 30 Under 30 List 2025 Special?

The Forbes India 30 Under 30 list, now in its 12th edition, has evolved significantly over the years to reflect changing industry trends. This year’s edition is notable for several reasons:

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI) as a New Category:** The addition of AI marks a significant shift, emphasizing how AI-based solutions are transforming industries. This reflects the increasing relevance of AI in business, healthcare, and creative fields.
- **Diverse Sectors Represented:** The list features achievers from sectors including healthcare, entertainment, finance, technology, and social entrepreneurship.
- **Focus on Social Impact:** Many honorees are not only excelling professionally but are also contributing to sustainability, inclusivity, and social progress.

Who Are Some Notable Honorees on the 2025 List?

- **Healthcare Sector:** Devika Gholap, Co-founder and Chief Product Officer of OptraScan, is recognized for her work in digital pathology, helping improve cancer diagnostics.
- **Entertainment Industry:** National Award-winning actress Aparna Balamurali earns a spot for her contributions to Indian cinema.
- **Youngest Achiever:** Devan Chandrasekharan, at just 18, is the youngest honoree. As the Founder and Managing Director of Fuselage Innovations, he exemplifies youthful ingenuity in business and technology.

What Are the Key Highlights of This Year’s List?

11 Women Achievers: This year, 11 women feature on the list, reinforcing the rising influence of women in leadership roles across industries.

Recognition of Professionals: Apart from entrepreneurs, 12 professionals have been included for their outstanding work, balancing business ventures with corporate leadership.

Massive Financial Deals: One of the honorees has secured a deal worth \$500 million, showcasing the high economic impact young leaders are making.

How Has the Forbes India 30 Under 30 List Evolved Over Time?

Since its inception, Forbes India 30 Under 30 has consistently reflected the changing business and innovation landscape. The 2025 list continues this tradition by recognizing young individuals who not only excel in their respective industries but also push boundaries in technology, entrepreneurship, and social impact. The inclusion of AI as a category indicates how Forbes is adapting to emerging trends in the global economy.

Women Billionaires Global List 2025: Forbes Billionaire List

Top 10 Richest Women in the World (as of February 2025)

In the 2025 edition of the **Forbes’ Women Billionaire List**, while most of the names have remained the same as last year, there have been some notable additions, and shifts in net worth and ranking.

Top 10 Women Billionaires (2025)

| Rank | Name | Net Worth (USD) | Source of Wealth |
|------|---|-----------------|--|
| 1 | Alice Walton | \$112.5 billion | Walmart |
| 2 | Francoise Bettencourt Meyers and Family | \$74.4 billion | L’Oréal |
| 3 | Julia Koch and Family | \$74.2 billion | Koch Industries |
| 4 | Jacqueline Mars | \$42.3 billion | Mars Inc |
| 5 | Rafaela Aponte-Diamant | \$39.0 billion | Mediterranean Shipping Company (MSC) Group |
| 6 | Abigail Johnson | \$36.0 billion | Fidelity Investments |
| 7 | Savitri Jindal & Family | \$32.3 billion | JSW Group |
| 8 | MacKenzie Scott | \$32.3 billion | Amazon |
| 9 | Miriam Adelson & Family | \$31.5 billion | Las Vegas Sands |
| 10 | Marilyn Simons & Family | \$31.0 billion | Hedge Funds |

Other Ranking News

India is facing a rise in **extreme weather events** due to **climate change**, accounting for **10% of global weather-related deaths**. From 1993 to 2022, over 400 events resulted in **80,000 deaths** and **\$180 billion** in economic losses. Rising temperatures have led to **severe monsoons, heatwaves, and lightning**, with recent incidents like **floods and landslides** in northern states and **Kerala**. The increase is driven by **unpredictable weather, deforestation, and carbon emissions**.

The **BJP** is the richest political party in India for FY **2023-24**, with an income of ₹4,340.47 crore, according to the **Association for Democratic Reforms (ADR)** report. The **INC** follows with ₹1,225.11 crore, while other national parties like **CPI(M), AAP, BSP, and NPEP** have also reported their financial standings. The report highlights the growing **financial influence** of political parties in India.

Union Minister **Prof. S.P. Singh Baghel** unveiled the report "**Status of Devolution to Panchayats in States**" in New Delhi, assessing the **devolution of power, functions, and finances to Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs)**. The report shows an increase in devolution to **Rural Local Bodies (RLBs)** from **39.9% in 2013-14 to 43.9% in 2021-22** and ranks states based on their **devolution index**.

Reliance Industries Limited (RIL) has achieved a major milestone by securing the **second spot** in the **FutureBrand Index 2024**, surpassing global giants like **Apple and Nike**. This is the first time an **Indian company** has entered the **top three** of this global ranking, highlighting **Reliance's strong brand perception** and influence. **Samsung** claimed the top spot, with **RIL** outperforming companies like **Disney, Netflix, and Microsoft**.

REPORT

NITI Aayog Unveils Report on State Higher Education

NITI Aayog has launched a policy report titled '**Expanding Quality Higher Education through States and State Public Universities**'. Released by Vice Chairman Suman Bery, along with key officials from NITI Aayog and the Department of Higher Education (DHE), the report is a first-of-its-kind policy document focused on State Public Universities (SPUs). It provides detailed quantitative analysis on key aspects such as quality, funding, governance, and employability over the past decade. The report presents nearly 80 policy recommendations and a strategic roadmap to enhance India's higher education landscape, aligning with the goals of NEP 2020 and India's vision for Viksit Bharat 2047.

Key Highlights of the Report**1. Launch and Key Stakeholders**

- The report was released by NITI Aayog Vice Chairman Suman Bery, Dr. Vinod Kumar Paul (Member, NITI Aayog), CEO BVR Subrahmanyam, Secretary DHE Vineet Joshi, and AIU Secretary General Dr. Pankaj Mittal.
- It is the first policy document specifically focusing on States and SPUs.
- Based on extensive stakeholder consultations with State Government Officials, Vice-Chancellors of 50 SPUs, and State Higher Education Councils.

2. Role of SPU's in Higher Education

- 80% of India's higher education takes place in State Public Universities.
- SPUs must transition from just providing access to delivering world-class education.
- By 2035, enrolment in SPUs is projected to rise to 7 crore students as per NEP 2020 targets.

3. Challenges Identified in SPUs

- **Funding Limitations** – Need for increased investment and better financial management.
- **Governance Issues** – Need for structural reforms and leadership capacity building.
- **Capacity Building** – Training for Vice-Chancellors, teachers, and staff.

4. Policy Recommendations and Key Strategies

- The report includes nearly 80 recommendations covering,
- **Improving Quality:** Enhancing research, pedagogy, and curriculum development.
- **Boosting Funding & Financing:** Strengthening institutional financial capacity.
- **Governance Reforms:** Upgrading governance structures for better accountability.
- **Industry-Academia Linkages:** Enhancing employability through stronger partnerships.

5. Financial Commitments & Government Initiatives

- PM-USHA scheme allocates ₹13,000 crores (2023-26) for SPUs.
- ₹100 crores per SPU for transitioning into Multidisciplinary Education and Research Universities (MERUs).
- 10,000 PMRF research fellows, 6,500 new IIT seats, and the Bharatiya Bhasha textbook scheme to boost higher education.

6. Alignment with National Goals

- Supports NEP 2020 implementation and India’s goal of becoming a knowledge hub.
- Essential for developing human capital and achieving the Viksit Bharat 2047 vision.

| Report Name | Key Notes |
|---|--|
| International Air Transport Association (IATA) report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • India has become the global leader in passenger load factor (PLF), achieving an 86.4% in 2024, surpassing the US (84.1%) and China (83.2%). • The country's booming aviation sector carried 16.3 crore domestic passengers in 2024, showcasing its rapid growth and efficiency. • India’s booming aviation sector carried 16.3 crore domestic passengers in 2024, highlighting its rapid growth and efficiency. |
| Journal Agricultural and Forest Meteorology | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new study predicts that climate change will drastically affect cocoa production in West and Central Africa, which supplies over 70% of the world's cocoa. • Conducted in Ivory Coast, Ghana, Nigeria, and Cameroon, the research warns that by 2050, 50% of cocoa-growing areas may become unsuitable due to rising temperatures and changing rainfall. • The study underscores the need for adaptive strategies to sustain production while preventing deforestation. |

DEFENCE

Aero India 2025: India’s Largest Defence Expo Begins

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh inaugurated **Aero India 2025**, the **15th edition of India’s premier aerospace and defence exhibition**, on **February 10, 2025**, at **Yelahanka Air Force Station, Bengaluru**. This **five-day event**, regarded as **Asia’s largest** in the sector, is a key platform showcasing **India’s advancements in defence technology, aerospace innovations, and global collaborations**.

What Makes Aero India 2025 the Largest Edition Yet?

The scale of **Aero India 2025** is unprecedented, spanning **42,438 square meters** with participation from **30 defence ministers, 43 military chiefs, and representatives from 90 countries**. The exhibition features an extensive display of **70 fighter jets, transport aircraft, and trainer aircraft**, along with **30 helicopters performing aerial maneuvers**.

One of the major highlights is the presence of **Russian and American fifth-generation stealth fighter jets**, including the **Russian Su-57** and **Lockheed Martin’s F-35 Lightning II**. Their participation signals **India’s growing stature as a global defence and aerospace hub**.

Another key attraction is the **India Pavilion**, which showcases over **275 cutting-edge defence exhibits**. Notable innovations on display include the **Advanced Medium Combat Aircraft (AMCA), Combat Air Teaming System (CATS), and Twin-Engine Deck-Based Fighter (TEDBF)**. Alongside, the **IDEX Pavilion**, dedicated to Indian defence startups, features **indigenously developed advanced technologies**, reinforcing India’s push for self-reliance in defence.

How is the Indian Government Supporting Defence Growth?

The Indian government has made a strong commitment to defence modernization. The **Union Budget 2025-26** allocated **₹6.81 lakh crore** to the **Ministry of Defence**, with **₹1.80 lakh crore set aside for capital acquisition**. Importantly, **75% of this modernization budget is earmarked for domestic procurement**, strengthening the Indian defence ecosystem.

Rajnath Singh also emphasized **public-private collaboration** in boosting India’s defence manufacturing capabilities. A notable example is the **Tata Advanced Systems Limited-Airbus joint venture** for manufacturing **C-295 transport aircraft in Gujarat**. Such initiatives highlight the growing synergy between the **government, private companies, and international defence firms**.

How is India’s Defence Industry Growing in Manufacturing and Exports?

India’s **domestic defence production** is set to **exceed ₹1.25 trillion (\$14.24 billion) by March 2025**, a major boost to its **Make in India** initiative. This growth is driven by **indigenous production of advanced fighter jets, missiles, drones, and defence systems**.

On the export front, **India’s defence exports are expected to cross ₹210 billion**, setting a new record. The Indian government has been **aggressively promoting defence exports**, securing deals with countries in **Southeast Asia, the Middle East, and Africa**.

Aero India’s Journey from 1996 to 2025

Since its launch in **1996**, **Aero India** has grown into one of the **world’s most significant aerospace exhibitions**. The **2023 edition** recorded over **seven lakh visitors**, representatives from **98 countries**, and **809 exhibitors**, resulting in **over ₹75,000 crore in MoUs and technology transfers**. The **2025 edition aims to exceed these milestones**, reinforcing India’s **strategic position in global aerospace and defence**.

Aero India 2025 is not just about showcasing military strength; it represents **India’s ambitions to become a global defence hub**, attract foreign investments, and **strengthen international defence collaborations**. The event reflects **India’s vision for self-reliance, technological innovation, and strategic global partnerships** in the aerospace sector.

EXERCISE

| EXERCISE NAME | VENUE / PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES | KEY NOTES |
|---|--|---|
| Ekuverin | Maldives | The 13th edition of the India-Maldives military exercise ‘Ekuverin’ is being held from 2-15 February 2025 in the Maldives. This biennial exercise, alternating between the two countries, strengthens their defence cooperation . The opening ceremony took place on 2 February 2025 at the Maldives National Defence Forces (MNDF) training center in Maafilaafushi . |
| TROPEX-25 | Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Coast Guard | TROPEX-25 (Theatre Level Operational Readiness Exercise 2025) is a major Indian Navy-led military exercise held in January 2025. It involves the Indian Army, Indian Air Force, and Indian Coast Guard . The biennial exercise showcases jointness among armed forces, emphasizing fleet coordination, rapid response, and India’s combat readiness in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR) . It highlights integrated operations and India’s evolving military doctrine . |
| Cyclone 2025’ | India and Egypt | The joint military exercise ‘Cyclone 2025’ between India and Egypt has begun at the Mahajan Field Firing Range in Rajasthan , lasting 14 days. The exercise aims to enhance defense cooperation , focusing on improving interoperability of special forces in counter-terrorism, reconnaissance, and specialized operations . Key areas include sniping, combat free fall, surveillance, and target designation under harsh desert conditions, boosting operational capabilities in challenging environments. |
| ‘Winged Raider’ joint military exercise | The Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF) | The Indian Army and Indian Air Force (IAF) conducted the ‘Winged Raider’ joint military exercise in the Eastern Theater to enhance coordination and improve rapid deployment capabilities. The exercise focused on special airborne operations , using both fixed-wing and rotary-wing aircraft , including the Chinook helicopter for the first time in the region. The drill emphasized airborne insertion techniques, special forces, and tactical maneuvering , showcasing inter-service synergy and mission readiness. |
| CYCLONE-III | India and Egypt | India and Egypt have launched the CYCLONE-III joint special forces exercise in Rajasthan, from February 10 to 23, 2025 . This exercise enhances military cooperation by focusing on special operations tactics, counter-terrorism drills, and advanced military strategies . The Indian and Egyptian contingents consist of 25 personnel each, with Indian troops from Special Forces Battalions and Egyptian personnel from the Special Forces Group . |
| Exercise Dharma Guardian | India and Japan | The sixth edition of Exercise Dharma Guardian will be held from February 25 to March 9, 2025, at Mount Fuji, Japan. This Indo-Japanese military exercise will focus on urban warfare tactics and counter-terrorism operations under the UN mandate. It strengthens India-Japan defence ties, following India’s Army Chief’s visit to Japan in October 2024, and underscores the commitment to regional stability and security in the Indo-Pacific. |

| EXERCISE NAME | VENUE / PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES | KEY NOTES |
|---------------|---------------------------------|---|
| NAVDEX 2025 | | Goa Shipyard Ltd (GSL) is showcasing its indigenously designed Fast Patrol Vessels (FPVs) and Offshore Patrol Vessels (OPVs) at NAVDEX 2025 in Abu Dhabi. The FPV is 50 meters long, capable of reaching 35 knots, and is designed for patrolling, anti-smuggling, anti-terrorist operations, and wartime communication. It features three 2,720 kW diesel engines for high maneuverability and can accommodate 35 personnel in fully air-conditioned conditions. These vessels highlight India's maritime capabilities under the "Make in India" initiative. |

TESTING

| MISSILES NAME | FEATURES |
|---------------|---|
| 1. | DRDO conducted three successful flight trials of the Very Short-Range Air Defence System (VSHORADS) at the Chandipur test range, Odisha. The system demonstrated its precision, reliability, and effectiveness in targeting high-speed aerial threats, especially drones and loitering munitions, enhancing India's air defence capabilities. |

DEAL & MoU's

- India's **defense** and **aerospace** sectors received a boost with the development of the **Large Area Additive Manufacturing (LAAM)** system at the **DRDO-Industry-Academia Centre of Excellence (DIA-CoE)** at **IIT Hyderabad**. This **collaboration** between IIT Hyderabad, **DRDO's Defence Research & Development Laboratory (DRDL)**, and industry partners enables the large-scale production of **metal parts** through **additive manufacturing**, paving the way for India's growth in **advanced manufacturing technology**.
- The **Union Budget 2025-26** allocated **Rs 6,81,210.27 crore** to the **Ministry of Defence (MoD)**, marking a **9.53% increase** from the previous year. This accounts for **13.45%** of the total Union Budget, the highest among all ministries. The budget aligns with **Prime Minister Narendra Modi's** vision of **'Viksit Bharat @ 2047'**, focusing on a **technologically advanced** and **'Aatmanirbhar'** Armed Forces.
- India's **domestic defense production** has surpassed **₹1.27 lakh crore**, marking a historic milestone in its defense sector. This accomplishment highlights India's growing **self-reliance** and prominence in global defense manufacturing. The announcement was made by **Union Defence Minister Rajnath Singh** ahead of **Aero India 2025**, Asia's largest aerospace and defense exhibition in **Bengaluru**, showcasing India's **defense capabilities** and inspiring innovation in the sector.
- Saab** and **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** signed a **Memorandum of Understanding (MoU)** on **February 13, 2025**, to collaborate on the **Electronic Warfare Laser Warning System-310 (LWS-310)**. This partnership aims to strengthen **India's defense sector**, supporting the **'Make in India'** initiative by enabling HAL to domestically manufacture and maintain the advanced system. **Technology transfer** under a **Maintenance Transfer of Technology (ToT)** agreement will enhance **self-reliance** in critical **defense technology**.
- India is in talks for a **\$200 million deal** to supply its **Akash missile system** to the **Philippines**, marking a significant step in its defense exports. The **Akash missile** is a **medium-range surface-to-air missile** with a range of up to 25 kilometers, capable of targeting various threats. Known for its **mobility** and **cost-effectiveness**, the system has been operational with the **Indian Army** and **Air Force** since 2009, making it a reliable choice for enhancing **air defense capabilities**.
- India** and **Malaysia** have strengthened **defence cooperation**, focusing on the maintenance and operational expertise of their **Sukhoi-30 (Su-30)** fleets. During **Defence Secretary Rajesh Kumar Singh's** visit to **Kuala Lumpur**, both nations finalized key agreements between the **Indian Air Force (IAF)** and **Royal Malaysian Air Force (RMAF)**. The discussions, held during the **13th Malaysia-India Defence Cooperation Committee (MIDCOM)** meeting, also covered **cybersecurity**, **artificial intelligence**, **maritime security**, and **defence industry partnerships**.

ARMY, NAVY & AIR FORCE NEWS

- India's **Defence Ministry** conducted a pilot study on **Lethal Autonomous Weapons Systems (LAWS)**, in collaboration with the **Manohar Parrikar Institute of Defence Studies and Analyses**. The study focuses on the role of **Artificial Intelligence (AI)** in modern warfare, exploring its integration into India's defence strategy while addressing **ethical, legal, and accountability** challenges.
- The **Indian Navy's First Training Squadron (1TS)**, including **INS Sujata, INS Shardul, and ICGS Veera**, visited **Changi Naval Base in Singapore** on **6th February 2025**. This visit, part of a **Long-Range Training Deployment**, strengthens **maritime cooperation** and mutual understanding between India and Singapore. **Dr. Shilpak Ambule**, High Commissioner of India, highlighted India's role in **Indo-Pacific maritime security** during the visit, which included **professional exchanges and friendly sports fixtures**.
- **DRDO** announced an expansion of its **Research Verticals and Thrust Areas** through its **Industry Academia – Centres of Excellence (DIA-CoEs)**. This initiative, led by the **Directorate of Futuristic Technology Management (DFTM)**, aims to streamline research, integrate advanced technologies, and bolster **India's defense capabilities**.
- **Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL)** has renamed its **HJT-36** jet training aircraft to '**Yashas**' after extensive upgrades to improve **flight characteristics**. Unveiled at **Aero India 2025**, the aircraft now features enhanced **departure characteristics, spin resistance, advanced avionics**, and a modern **cockpit** for better **pilot training and operational use**. The renaming marks a significant milestone in HAL's development of advanced training systems.
- The **Indian Air Force (IAF)** successfully concluded the **Mehar Baba Competition-II (MBC-II)**, focused on advancing India's **unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)** capabilities. Launched on April 6, 2022, the competition aimed to develop **swarm drone-based systems** for detecting foreign objects on aircraft surfaces. The initiative, which wrapped up on July 29, 2024, strengthened collaboration between **Indian industry, academia, and end-users**.
- The **Matsya-6000** is a **fourth-generation deep-ocean submersible** developed under India's **Deep Ocean Mission** and the **Samudrayan Project**. Designed by the **Ministry of Earth Sciences and National Institute of Ocean Technology**, it can carry three people and operates at depths of up to **500 meters**. Successfully tested for **operational efficiency**, it aims to advance India's **deep-ocean exploration** capabilities.
- **Indian Navy** launched its **eighth Missile Cum Ammunition (MCA) Barge, LSAM 11**, in **Mira Bhayandar, Maharashtra**. The barge plays a key role in **logistical support**, transporting ammunition and supplies to Navy platforms, especially at **outer harbors and jetties**, enhancing operational capabilities during maritime missions.
- The **Indian Navy's First Training Squadron (1TS)**, consisting of **INS Sujata and ICGS Veera**, concluded a three-day **goodwill visit to Sihanoukville, Cambodia** on 17 February 2025. During the visit, **Capt Anshul Kishore** and commanding officers engaged with the **Royal Cambodian Navy (RCN)**, including a meeting with **Admiral Tea Vinh**, focusing on **bilateral cross-training, interoperability, joint exercises, regional security**, and enhancing **maritime cooperation** in line with **India's SAGAR vision**.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

SATELLITES LAUNCHES

- The **ISRO**-launched **NVS-02 navigation satellite** on **January 29, 2025**, encountered a **technical issue** post-launch. Although the satellite's **solar panels** deployed and communication was established, a **malfunctioning valve** prevented the **Liquid Apogee Motor (LAM)** from firing, hindering its **orbit-raising maneuvers**. As a result, **NVS-02** remains in an **elliptical Geosynchronous Transfer Orbit (GTO)** instead of its intended **geostationary orbit**.
- The **Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency (JAXA)** successfully launched the **fifth H-3 rocket** carrying the **Michibiki No. 6 satellite** from the **Tanegashima Space Center**. This satellite will enhance Japan's **positioning system**, a counterpart to the **U.S. GPS**. The launch took place at **5:30 p.m.** and successfully placed the satellite into its designated orbit.

NATIONAL

- Researchers at **Banaras Hindu University (BHU)** have discovered a new species of **phytopathogenic fungus, Epicoccum indicum**, responsible for **leaf spot disease** in **Chrysopogon zizanioides (vetiver)**. This significant finding, published in **Fungal Diversity**, enhances agricultural research, as vetiver is vital for **medicinal and environmental** uses. The discovery was made by **Raghvendra Singh and Soumyadeep Rajwar** using **molecular phylogenetic analysis**.
- **ISRO** unveiled its new **FEAST 2025** software at the **8th National Finite Element Developers'/FEAST Users' Meet (NAFED08)** held at **IIT Hyderabad**. The event, in collaboration with **Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC)**, gathered over 250 experts from **academia, industry, and research institutions** to discuss **advancements in finite element-based structural analysis**.

- ISRO and IIT Madras have developed the **IRIS** (Indigenous RISC-V Microprocessor for Space Applications), an **indigenous semiconductor chip**. This achievement supports India's **Atmanirbhar Bharat** initiative, aiming for **self-reliance in space technology** and reducing reliance on **foreign tech**.
- India launched '**Srjanam**', the first **automated biomedical waste conversion system**, at **AIIMS Delhi** on **February 10, 2025**. Inaugurated by **Dr. Jitendra Singh**, this **eco-friendly** and **cost-effective** innovation, developed by **CSIR-NIIST**, aims to reduce environmental hazards by eliminating the need for **incineration**, offering an alternative to traditional **biomedical waste disposal** methods.
- The **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** and the **International Telecommunication Union (ITU)** have signed a **Letter of Intent (LoI)** to explore the potential of **AI-driven digital twin technologies**. This partnership aims to integrate advancements like **5G, IoT, AI**, and **AR/VR** to create virtual models for **real-time monitoring** and **simulations**, transforming **urban** and **infrastructure planning**.
- Google has unveiled **Ananta**, its largest campus in **India**, located in **Mahadevapura, Bengaluru**. Named after the Sanskrit word for "infinite," Ananta is a hub of **innovation, collaboration**, and **sustainability**, emphasizing India's role in global **technology** and **AI advancements**.
- ISRO has developed a **10-tonne vertical planetary mixer**, the largest of its kind, for **solid propellant production**. Created in collaboration with **Central Manufacturing Technology Institute (CMTI)**, Bengaluru, the mixer enhances the efficiency and safety of **solid rocket motor manufacturing**. This milestone improves productivity, quality, and throughput in rocket motor production, reflecting India's growing **space technology** capabilities and commitment to **self-reliance**.

INTERNATIONAL

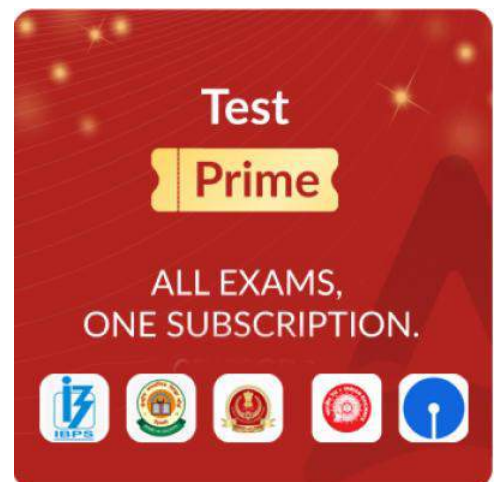
- The **Ocean Coordination Mechanism (OCM)** has been launched to address challenges facing the **Caribbean** and **North Brazil shelf**, aiming to protect **marine life** and ensure **sustainable resource management**. With oceans covering over **70%** of the Earth's surface, OCM focuses on **biodiversity preservation**, **climate change resilience**, and combating **pollution, overfishing**, and **habitat destruction**.
- Researchers at the **University of Queensland** have successfully created **kangaroo embryos** through **in vitro fertilization (IVF)**, marking a breakthrough in **conservation science**. This advancement in **assisted reproductive technologies (ART)** could help protect endangered **marsupial species** like **koalas, Tasmanian devils**, and **northern hairy-nosed wombats** from extinction.
- Israeli researchers from the **University of Haifa** have discovered brain mechanisms involved in recognizing others' **emotional states**. Their study, published in **Current Biology**, highlights the **medial prefrontal cortex (mPFC)**'s role in **emotional recognition** and behavior. This breakthrough could have implications for treating **social disorders** like **autism**, where emotional perception and social interaction are often challenging. ()
- A research team led by **Professor Wang Min** from the **Institute of Vertebrate Paleontology and Paleoanthropology** has discovered two **Jurassic-era bird fossils** in **Fujian Province, China**, dated to about **149 million years ago**. The findings, published in **Nature**, challenge prior assumptions about bird evolution and show greater **diversification** by the end of the **Jurassic period**. The discovery of **Baminornis zhenghensis**, the oldest **short-tailed bird**, extends the origin of this feature by **20 million years**, refining the understanding of **avian evolution**.
- The **European Space Agency's (ESA) Euclid telescope**, launched on **July 1, 2023**, began its six-year mission to explore the **dark Universe**. In **September 2023**, during initial testing, **Euclid** discovered a rare **Einstein Ring** in **NGC 6505**, located **590 million light-years** away. The ring, formed by **gravitational lensing** from a distant galaxy **4.42 billion light-years** away, underscores **Euclid's** capabilities in uncovering cosmic secrets, advancing our understanding of **gravity, dark matter**, and **dark energy**.
- The **International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER)**, under construction in **France**, is the world's largest tokamak-based fusion reactor. A collaborative project involving **35 nations**, including the **US, China, India**, and **EU**, ITER aims to develop **magnetic confinement fusion** as a sustainable, carbon-free energy source. Its main goal is to achieve **burning plasma**, where the fusion reaction sustains itself. While not generating electricity, ITER will be a critical step toward future **commercial fusion power plants**.
- Elon Musk's **xAI** launched **Grok 3**, a highly advanced AI chatbot, hailed as the **most intelligent AI** ever developed. The launch attracted nearly **100,000 viewers** and highlighted Grok 3's exceptional capabilities. The development required **massive computing power**, with **100,000 GPUs** set up in just **122 days** and the **H100 cluster** doubled in **92 days**. This immense infrastructure has significantly enhanced Grok 3's **speed, accuracy**, and **reasoning abilities**, positioning it as one of the **most sophisticated AI systems**.

- **Microsoft** has unveiled its **Majorana 1 chip**, a quantum processor using a **novel topological core architecture**. This innovation introduces **topological qubits**, which are more **robust against errors** compared to traditional quantum chips, offering a stable and scalable solution for solving **complex industrial and scientific problems**.
- Chinese researchers at the **Wuhan Institute of Virology** discovered a new bat coronavirus, **HKU5-CoV-2**, which can infect human cells via the **ACE2 receptor**, similar to **SARS-CoV-2**. The virus belongs to the **merbecovirus** subgenus and shares similarities with **MERS**. While it has a lower binding efficiency, the presence of a **furin cleavage site** suggests it could still pose a risk for zoonotic transmission, highlighting the need for continuous surveillance of bat-borne viruses.
- **Microsoft** introduced **Magma**, a groundbreaking **multimodal AI model** that understands both **images and language** in digital and physical environments. Unlike traditional **vision-language models**, Magma integrates **verbal and spatial intelligence**, allowing it to perform **UI navigation and robotic manipulation** with greater precision. Developed by researchers from multiple universities, Magma is the first model to interpret and act on multimodal inputs in real-world tasks.
- **John McFall**, a **British astronaut and former Paralympian** with a **prosthetic leg**, has been **medically cleared** by the **European Space Agency (ESA)** for long-duration missions to the **International Space Station (ISS)**. This historic decision highlights ESA's commitment to **inclusive space exploration**. McFall, who lost his leg in a motorcycle accident at 19, is also a **trauma surgeon** and was part of an ESA study exploring astronauts with **physical disabilities**.

SPORTS

CRICKET

- **Wriddhiman Saha**, the former India wicketkeeper-batter, has announced his retirement from all formats of cricket at 40. Known for his exceptional **wicketkeeping skills**, Saha played his final match for **Bengal** against **Punjab** in the **Ranji Trophy 2024-25**. He had retired from **international cricket** in November 2024 and thanked his **family, coaches**, and cricketing associations for their support.
- The **ICC** launched the theme song '**Jeeto Baazi Khel Ke**' for the **ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025**, sung by **Atif Aslam**. The song is designed to build excitement as the countdown begins, with just **12 days** left before the tournament starts.
- **Marcus Stoinis**, the Australian all-rounder, has announced his **retirement from ODI cricket**, ruling him out of the **2025 ICC Champions Trophy**. The 35-year-old, who played a key role in Australia's **2023 ODI World Cup victory**, will now focus on **T20 cricket**. His decision comes amid **injuries** to key Australian players like **Mitchell Marsh, Pat Cummins**, and **Josh Hazlewood**.
- At **33 years and 164 days**, **Varun Chakravarthy** became India's second-oldest cricketer to make an **ODI debut**, after **Farokh Engineer**. The **Kolkata Knight Riders (KKR)** spinner made an impact by dismissing **Phil Salt** in his opening spell. His performance could influence his selection for the upcoming **Champions Trophy**, possibly replacing a specialist **spinner**.
- **Dimuth Karunaratne**, former **Sri Lankan captain** and veteran opener, retired from **international cricket** after his 100th **Test** against **Australia** in **Galle**. The 36-year-old scored 36 and 14 in his farewell match, which Australia won. The **ICC**, led by Chairman **Jay Shah**, praised his exceptional career, with Karunaratne retiring as one of Sri Lanka's most accomplished **Test openers**, scoring **7,222 Test runs** and **16 centuries**.
- **Rohit Sharma** delivered a stellar performance in the second **ODI** against **England** in **Cuttack**, scoring **119 runs** off 90 balls, with **12 fours** and **7 sixes**. His knock helped India secure a **four-wicket win**. Rohit surpassed **Chris Gayle** to become the second-highest **six-hitter** in **ODI history**, behind **Shahid Afridi**, and overtook **Sachin Tendulkar** as the second-highest run-getter for India as an **opener** in international cricket.
- The **International Cricket Council (ICC)** has launched the '**Donate Organs, Save Lives**' campaign to raise **organ donation awareness**. The initiative will kick off on **February 12, 2025**, ahead of the third ODI between **India and England** in Ahmedabad. The campaign aims to leverage cricket's influence to encourage people to **pledge organ donation** and save lives. **ICC Chief Jay Shah** emphasized the role of sports in driving positive **social change**.
- **Reliance Industries**, through its subsidiary **RISE Worldwide**, has acquired a **49% stake** in **Oval Invincibles**, a franchise in the **ECB's The Hundred** league. This deal expands **Mumbai Indians' (MI)** global cricket presence. **Surrey County Cricket Club** remains the primary stakeholder, sharing ownership and decision-making with Reliance.



- The ICC announced the **Players of the Month** for **January 2025**, awarding **Jomel Warrican** (West Indies) and **Beth Mooney** (Australia). **Warrican** won the **Men's Player of the Month** for his key role in West Indies' historic **Test victory** in Pakistan, while **Mooney** was named **Women's Player of the Month** for her explosive batting in **Australia's Ashes triumph**.
- The **ICC Champions Trophy** will take place from **February 19 to March 9, 2025**, in **Pakistan** and **Dubai**. **Shikhar Dhawan**, former India opener, has been named one of the **official event ambassadors**, adding excitement to the tournament. The event promises thrilling cricket action, with Dhawan's involvement further engaging fans.
- **Shohely Akhter** of **Bangladesh** has become the first **woman cricketer** banned by the ICC for **corruption**. The **36-year-old** was found guilty of attempting to **fix matches** during the **2023 Women's T20 World Cup** and has received a **five-year ban** from all forms of cricket.
- **Babar Azam**, Pakistan's star batter, became the **joint-fastest player** to score **6,000 ODI runs** in just **123 innings**, matching **Hashim Amla's** record. He achieved this milestone during the **final of the ODI tri-series** against **New Zealand** at the **National Stadium**, further cementing his place in cricket history.
- **G Kamalini**, a 16-year-old **India U19 star**, made history as the youngest debutant in the **Women's Premier League (WPL)**. She received her **Mumbai Indians (MI)** cap on February 18, 2025, during their match against **Gujarat Giants (GG)** at **Kotambi Stadium, Vadodara**, surpassing her **U19 teammate Shabnam Shakil** for the record.
- **Mohammed Shami** became the **fastest Indian bowler** to reach **200 ODI wickets** during the **India vs Bangladesh** match in the **ICC Champions Trophy 2025**. He broke **Ajit Agarkar's** record, achieving the milestone in **133 matches**. Globally, Shami ranks joint second with **Saqlain Mushtaq**, behind **Mitchell Starc**. He also became **India's highest wicket-taker** in ICC ODI events with **60 wickets** in 19 matches, surpassing **Zaheer Khan's** record.
- **Rohit Sharma** became the **second fastest batsman** to score **11,000 runs** in **One-Day Internationals (ODIs)** during India's **Champions Trophy 2025** match against **Bangladesh** on **February 20, 2025**. He is now the **fourth Indian** and **10th player overall** to achieve this milestone in ODI cricket. ()

BADMINTON & TENNIS

- **Simona Halep**, a **two-time Grand Slam champion** and former **World No. 1**, announced her retirement from tennis at 33 after an injury-plagued comeback post-doping suspension. She retired following a **first-round loss** at the **Transylvania Open**. Halep's career highlights include winning **Wimbledon 2019** and the **French Open 2018**, **24 WTA singles titles**, and earning over **\$40 million** in prize money.
- **Carlos Alcaraz** won his first **indoor hardcourt title** at the **Rotterdam Open**, defeating **Alex de Minaur** 6-4, 3-6, 6-2. This victory, his **17th ATP Tour title**, made him the first **Spanish champion** in the tournament's 52-year history. Despite battling a cold and tough three-set matches, Alcaraz demonstrated resilience and adaptability, further enhancing his tennis legacy.
- **Jil Teichmann**, from **Switzerland**, won the **2025 Mumbai Open** singles title by defeating **Mananchaya Sawangkaew** of **Thailand** in the final. The **WTA 125** event, held at the **Cricket Club of India** from **February 3-9, 2025**, marked Teichmann's second **WTA 125** title, following her 2024 **Ljubljana** victory.
- **Kyrian Jacquet** of **France** won his first **ATP title** by clinching the **2025 Chennai Open** men's singles title, defeating **Elias Ymer** of **Sweden** in the final on **February 9, 2025**. The **ATP 100 Challenger** event took place at the **SDAT Tennis Stadium** in **Nungambakkam, Tamil Nadu**, from **February 3-9, 2025**.

CHESS

- **R Praggnanandhaa** won the **Tata Steel Masters chess tournament** in the Netherlands on **February 2, 2025**, defeating **D Gukesh** 2-1 in a thrilling tie-breaker. This victory marked his **first-ever Tata Steel Masters title**, with a pivotal contribution from **Arjun Erigaisi**, who defeated Gukesh earlier in the tournament. Praggnanandhaa's win is a significant milestone in his career.

ATHLETIC & FOOTBALL

- **Marcelo**, the legendary **Brazilian footballer**, announced his retirement at 36 after a stellar career. He won **25 major trophies** during his **15 years at Real Madrid**, including **five UEFA Champions League** titles. Marcelo also played for **Fluminense** and **Olympiacos**. **Real Madrid** president **Florentino Perez** praised him as one of the greatest left-backs in football. Marcelo expressed gratitude and hinted at staying involved in football in the future.

- **Cristiano Ronaldo** tops the 2025 list of **highest-paid athletes**, earning **\$285 million**, with **\$200 million** from **Al Nassr** and **\$65 million** from endorsements. Other top earners include **Jon Rahm** (\$218 million), **Lionel Messi** (\$135 million), **LeBron James** (\$128.7 million), and **Neymar** (\$110 million). This highlights the rising commercial value of football, especially with Middle Eastern investments.

HOCKEY

- **Shrachi Rarh Bengal Tigers** won the **Men’s Hockey India League (HIL) 2024-25** with a **4-3** victory over **Hyderabad Toofans** in the final. Held at **Birsa Munda International Hockey Stadium, Rourkela**, the Tigers secured the championship with **Jugraj Singh’s hat trick** and **Sam Lane’s late goal**.

OTHER SPORTS NEWS

- **Meghalaya** will host the **39th National Games** in **February/March 2027**, as officially announced by the **Indian Olympic Association (IOA)**. **IOA President PT Usha** conveyed the decision to **Meghalaya Chief Minister Conrad Sangma**. Meghalaya will receive the **IOA flag** during the closing ceremony of the **38th National Games** in .
- **Pankaj Advani**, India’s most decorated cueist, won his **36th national title** and **10th men’s snooker championship** by defeating **Brijesh Damani** in the final. This victory, following an earlier group-stage loss, solidifies his legacy and secures his place in **upcoming international championships**.
- **Kevin Durant** became the **eighth NBA player** to surpass **30,000 career points** during a game against the **Memphis Grizzlies**, reaching the milestone with two free throws in the third quarter. He finished the game with **34 points**, despite the **Phoenix Suns** losing 119-112. Durant joins NBA legends like **LeBron James**, **Kareem Abdul-Jabbar**, **Kobe Bryant**, and **Michael Jordan** in the **30,000-point club**, achieving the feat in his **1,101st game**, tying Abdul-Jabbar for the third-fastest.
- The **9th Asian Winter Games** were held in **Harbin, China**, from **February 7-14, 2025**, with **athletes from 34 countries** competing in **11 winter sports**. **China** topped the medal tally with 85 medals, followed by **Republic of Korea** and **Japan**. **India**, sending its largest-ever contingent of 59 athletes, did not win medals but saw growth in winter sports, with **Tara Prasad** achieving her **personal best** in figure skating, finishing 8th.
- **Jacob Kiplimo** of **Uganda** set a new **world half-marathon record** in **Barcelona**, completing the **21.0975 km** race in **56 minutes and 42 seconds**. This was **48 seconds faster** than the previous record set by **Yomif Kejelcha** of **Ethiopia** in November 2024. Kiplimo’s performance is being celebrated as the **greatest single improvement** in the **men’s world half-marathon record** in history.
- Indonesia achieved a historic **first-ever Asia Mixed Team Badminton Championship** title, defeating **defending champions China** 3-1 at the **Conson Sports Centre** in Qingdao, China. The team showcased outstanding skill and determination, securing the win with a dominant performance in the **men’s doubles match**, marking a major milestone in Indonesia's badminton legacy and breaking China’s stronghold in the tournament.
- In July 2023, the **IOC** announced the launch of the **Olympic Esports Games**, with **Saudi Arabia** set to host the inaugural event in **2027**. The **Saudi Olympic and Paralympic Committee** and the **Esports World Cup Foundation** are key partners in this historic initiative. The event aims to bridge **esports** with traditional sports, expanding opportunities for global players and making a significant impact on the gaming industry.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

| Book Name | Author | Key Notes |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| I Am a Soldier’s Wife: The Life and Love of Toni Lidder’ | Geetika Lidder | Honors the legacy of Brigadier LS Lidder, a distinguished Indian Army officer. The memoir celebrates his dedication to the nation, compassionate nature, and inspirational character. Launched in the presence of Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi, the book highlights his extraordinary humanity and professional grace. |
| The New Icon: Savarkar and the Facts’ | Arun Shourie | The book critically examines the controversial legacy of Vinayak Damodar Savarkar, challenging historical narratives, similar to his 1997 work on B R Ambedkar. With Savarkar lacking political protection, the book is expected to significantly influence national discourse. |
| I Am? | Gopichand P. Hinduja | Vice President Shri Jagdeep Dhankhar launched the book “I Am?”, compiled by Gopichand P. Hinduja, Chairman of the Hinduja Group. The event was attended by an elite gathering of political leaders, business magnates, and diplomats, marking it as a prestigious occasion. |

OBITUARY

NATIONAL

| S.No | PERSON NAME | FIELD | KEY NOTES |
|------|--------------------------|---|--|
| 1 | Navin Chawla | Former Chief Election Commissioner of India | Led the 2009 Lok Sabha elections, contributed to electoral reforms. |
| 2. | Shyam Benegal | filmmaker | A visionary filmmaker and pioneer of Indian parallel cinema, passed away on December 23, 2024, at the age of 90. Known for redefining storytelling with realistic and socially relevant narratives, his death marks the end of an era, leaving behind an unmatched legacy in Indian cinema. |
| 3. | Acharya Satyendra Das | chief priest | Acharya Satyendra Das , the chief priest of the Shri Ram Janmabhoomi Temple in Ayodhya , passed away at 85 on February 7, 2024 . He had been serving as the head priest since the age of 20, dedicating over six decades to religious service , and his death has left the Hindu community and devotees of Lord Ram in deep mourning. |
| 4. | Gyalo Thondup | 14th Dalai Lama | Gyalo Thondup, the elder brother of the 14th Dalai Lama, passed away on February 8, 2025, at 97 in Kalimpong, West Bengal. |
| 5. | Pandit Prabhakar Karekar | Hindustani classical vocalist | Renowned Hindustani classical vocalist Pandit Prabhakar Karekar passed away at 80 in Mumbai after a brief illness. Born in Goa, Karekar was known for his devotional renditions like Bolava Vithal Pahava Vithal and Vakratund Mahakay. |
| 6. | Sukri Bommagowda | Renowned folk singer and Padma Shri awardee | She was a respected figure in the Halakki Vokkaliga community, celebrated for her role in preserving folk traditions through music. |
| 8. | Pratul Mukhopadhyay | Renowned Bengali vocalist, composer, and lyricist | Renowned Bengali vocalist, composer, and lyricist Pratul Mukhopadhyay passed away at the age of 83. Known for his soulful songs like Ami Banglar Gaan Gai and Dinga Bhasao Re, Mukhopadhyay played a pivotal role in shaping Bengali music. |
| 9 | C Krishnaveni | Veteran Telugu actor and producer | Veteran Telugu actor and producer C Krishnaveni passed away at 102 in Hyderabad due to age-related issues. Known for her significant contributions to the Telugu film industry, she introduced legendary figures like NT Rama Rao (NTR) and Ghantasala Venkateswara Rao. Krishnaveni's legacy includes her roles as an actor, singer, and producer. |
| 10 | Milind Rege | Former Mumbai cricket captain | Milind Rege, former Mumbai cricket captain and a key figure in Indian domestic cricket, passed away on February 19, 2025, at the age of 76 due to cardiac arrest. |
| 11 | Mayadhar Raut | Renowned Odissi maestro and "Father of Odissi dance," | Mayadhar Raut, renowned Odissi maestro and "Father of Odissi dance," passed away on February 22, 2025, at the age of 92. A Padma Shri awardee, Raut played a key role in the revival and codification of Odissi dance in the 1950s. His contributions, including the introduction of Sanchari Bhava, Mudra Viniyoga, and Rasa Theory, were pivotal in shaping Odissi into a structured classical dance form. |

INTERNATIONAL

| S.No | PERSON NAME | FIELD | BORN PLACE | KEY NOTES |
|------|---------------|---|------------------------|---|
| 1 | Horst Koehler | Former President of Germany (2004–2010) | German-occupied Poland | Former IMF Managing Director, focused on Africa, independent political stance. |
| 2 | The Aga Khan | Spiritual Leader, Philanthropist | Switzerland | Led the Ismaili Muslim community, founded AKDN for humanitarian work. |
| 3 | Brian Murphy | British Actor | United Kingdom | Best known for Man About the House, George and Mildred, influential in 70s sitcoms. |

| S.No | PERSON NAME | FIELD | BORN PLACE | KEY NOTES |
|------|--------------|---------------------------|------------|--|
| 4 | Sam Nujoma | Namibia's first president | Namibia | Known as the "Father of the Namibian Nation", Nujoma played a pivotal role in leading Namibia to freedom from apartheid South Africa in 1990. |
| 5. | Gene Hackman | Oscar-winning actor | Russia | Russian chess grandmaster Boris Spassky, the 10th World Chess Champion, has passed away at the age of 88. The news was confirmed by International Chess Federation (FIDE) general director Emil Sutovsky, who informed Reuters about his demise. |

IMPORTANT DAYS

| Date | Day/Observance | Theme/Description |
|--------------|---|---|
| February 2 | World Wetlands Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Wetlands Day on February 2 raises awareness about the critical role of wetlands in supporting biodiversity, human well-being, and cultural heritage. The 2025 theme, 'Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future', highlights their importance in preserving life, combating climate change, and promoting sustainable livelihoods. Protecting wetlands is crucial for the future of both nature and humanity. |
| February 4th | World Cancer Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Cancer Day, observed on February 4th, raises awareness and urges action against cancer, which caused nearly 10 million deaths globally in 2022, according to the WHO. The theme for World Cancer Day 2025, "United by Unique", launches a three-year campaign running until 2027, emphasizing the importance of global unity in addressing the cancer crisis and reducing its burden. |
| February 6 | International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Day of Zero Tolerance for Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) was observed on February 6, 2025. FGM, involving the partial or total removal of female genitalia for non-medical reasons, is recognized as a human rights violation with severe physical, psychological, and social consequences. While prevalent in 30 countries across Africa and the Middle East, FGM remains a global issue, affecting regions like Asia, Latin America, and immigrant communities in Western Europe, North America, Australia, and New Zealand. |
| February 10 | World Pulses Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Pulses Day, celebrated on February 10, raises global awareness about the sustainability and nutritional value of pulses. Recognized by the United Nations (UN), the day emphasizes pulses' role in food security, improving human health, and enhancing soil fertility, contributing to a sustainable agricultural system. |
| February 10 | International Day of the Arabian Leopard | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The United Nations declared February 10 as the International Day of the Arabian Leopard in resolution 77/295, first celebrated in 2024 at the UN Headquarters. The Arabian leopard (Panthera pardus nimr), a critically endangered subspecies, faces threats pushing it to the brink of extinction. The day emphasizes the need for conservation and global awareness to protect this iconic species. |
| February 11 | International Day of Women and Girls in Science | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Day of Women and Girls in Science (IDWGS) 2025, celebrated on February 11, promotes gender equality and women's empowerment in STEM fields. The day recognizes the contributions of women and girls in science and advocates for their equal access to opportunities. The theme for 2025 is "Unpacking STEM Careers: Her Voice in Science", highlighting the dynamic and collaborative nature of science in addressing global challenges. |

| Date | Day/Observance | Theme/Description |
|---|------------------------------------|---|
| February 11 | International Epilepsy Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The day focuses on combating the smuggling of drugs, arms, gold, fake currency, and other illicit goods, aiming to engage government agencies and the public in protecting India's security and economy. |
| February 12 | National Productivity Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Productivity Day is observed annually on February 12 in India to raise awareness about productivity's role in economic growth, sustainability, and innovation. Organized by the National Productivity Council (NPC), it kicks off a week-long celebration from February 12 to 18, focusing on improving efficiency across industries, startups, and businesses. |
| February 13 | World Radio Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Radio Day is celebrated annually on February 13 to honor radio as a key medium for communication, information, and entertainment. Recognizing its role in fostering dialogue, promoting democratic values, and amplifying diverse voices, the day was established by UNESCO in 2011 and adopted by the United Nations in 2013. |
| February 12 | Darwin Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Darwin Day is celebrated on February 12 to honor Charles Darwin, the pioneer of the theory of evolution and natural selection. It commemorates his groundbreaking work in reshaping our understanding of biology and species evolution, promoting scientific thinking, curiosity, and rational thought, while encouraging advancements in science education and research. |
| February 13 | National Women's Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Women's Day is celebrated on February 13 in India to honor the birth anniversary of Sarojini Naidu, a freedom fighter, poet, and social reformer. Known as the Nightingale of India, Naidu was a key figure in the freedom struggle and a strong advocate for women's rights and gender equality. The day highlights her contributions and promotes women's empowerment, leadership, and equal opportunities. |
| February 15 (Third Saturday of February) | World Pangolin Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The day aims to raise awareness about pangolins, the world's most trafficked mammals, which face threats from illegal wildlife trade, habitat destruction, and high demand for their scales and meat. Conservationists and animal lovers unite to promote conservation efforts and advocate for stronger protection laws. |
| February 15 | International Childhood Cancer Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Day raises awareness about childhood cancer and advocates for improved treatments and support for young patients and their families. Established in 2002 by Childhood Cancer International (CCI), ICCD emphasizes early detection, healthcare accessibility, and ongoing medical research, highlighting the challenges faced by children battling cancer and encouraging community participation. |
| February 17 | Global Tourism Resilience Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Global Tourism Resilience Day, observed on February 17, celebrates the strength and adaptability of the tourism industry. It highlights the importance of a resilient sector capable of overcoming challenges like pandemics, economic crises, and environmental changes, ensuring continued economic growth, cross-cultural exchange, and sustainability. |
| February 20 | World Day of Social Justice | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Day of Social Justice, observed annually on February 20, promotes fairness, equality, and inclusivity worldwide. Established by the United Nations (UN), it addresses issues like poverty, social exclusion, gender inequality, unemployment, human rights violations, and inadequate social protection systems. The 2025 observance emphasizes aligning global efforts for a just and sustainable future amid challenges like climate change and economic transformation. |

| Date | Day/Observance | Theme/Description |
|---------------|--------------------------------------|--|
| February 21st | International Language Day Mother | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> International Mother Language Day is observed on February 21st to promote linguistic and cultural diversity. The 2025 theme marks the “Silver Jubilee Celebration of International Mother Language Day”, celebrating 25 years of efforts to preserve endangered languages, safeguard cultural heritage, and enhance education and peace through language preservation. |
| February 24 | Central Excise Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central Excise Day is observed on February 24 to commemorate the establishment of the Central Excise and Salt Act, 1944. The day honors the contributions of the Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) in efficient tax administration, curbing corruption, and supporting India's economic growth. The act consolidated 11 excise-related laws and laid the foundation for modern excise taxation in India, with excise duty being a key source of government revenue for public welfare programs like education and healthcare. |
| February 27 | World Protein Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World Protein Day, celebrated on February 27, raises awareness about the importance of protein in human nutrition. It highlights the health benefits of adequate protein intake and addresses the challenges of protein deficiency. The day underscores the role of protein-rich foods in improving global nutritional security and well-being. Initiated by the US Soybean Export Council (USSEC), it aims to educate people on the vital role of protein in health. |
| February 27 | World NGO Day | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> World NGO Day is observed annually on February 27 to honor the contributions of NGOs in addressing global issues like humanitarian aid, education, healthcare, human rights, and environmental conservation. The theme for 2025 is “Empowering Grassroots Movements for a Sustainable Future”, highlighting the role of local organizations in sustainable development. |

Miscellaneous

- The '**Culinary, Crafts & Clicks – Moods & Magic**' festival, organized by the **Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA)** and **MyGov**, celebrates India's **cultural richness** through **food, traditional arts, and photography**. A major highlight is the '**Moods and Magic**' **photography contest**, inviting participants to capture the essence of India's **public spaces** through candid moments and artistic expressions, showcasing vibrant **cultural interactions**.
- In honor of **Mohammed Rafi's 100th birth anniversary**, the **Indian government** has announced the release of a **₹100 commemorative coin** celebrating his monumental contributions to **Indian music and culture**. **Prime Minister Narendra Modi** praised Rafi as a "musical genius," emphasizing his **versatility** and lasting cultural impact across generations.
- Purnima Devi Barman**, an Indian biologist and wildlife conservationist, has been named in **TIME Magazine's Women of the Year 2025** list. She is the only Indian woman honored, recognized for her efforts in **conserving the greater adjutant stork (Hargila)**. Barman's work has positively impacted both the **environment and society**, alongside global figures like **Nicole Kidman and Gisele Pelicot**.
- A **Lancet study** based on **GBD 2021** data reveals a **30% decline** in India's **suicide death rate** from 1990 to 2021, with a notable decrease among **females**. Globally, one person dies by **suicide** every **43 seconds**. The decline in India is attributed to various **mental health initiatives** and **policy reforms**
- Nearly **700,000 Olive Ridley turtles** laid eggs at the **Rushikulya rookery** in Odisha's **Ganjam district** during the **2025 arribada**, marking a record high. The mass nesting, which began on **February 16** and ended on **February 23**, surpassed the previous record of **637,000** turtles in 2023. Favorable **climatic conditions** and improved **beach maintenance** contributed to the surge in numbers. The highest recorded mass nesting in India occurred in **2001** at **Gahirmatha rookery** with about **741,000** turtles.

- **Champakam Dorairajan**, a Brahmin woman from Madras, **played a pivotal role in shaping India’s constitutional history through her legal challenge to caste-based reservations in educational institutions.** Her case, State of Madras v. Champakam Dorairajan (1951), led to the First Amendment of the Indian Constitution, which introduced Article 15(4) allowing affirmative action for socially and educationally backward classes. This case marked the first instance where the **Supreme Court struck down a law for violating fundamental rights, setting the stage for future debates on merit, equality, and reservations in India.**
- **Gharials (Gavialis gangeticus)**, a unique species of long-snouted crocodilians, are **critically endangered** due to habitat destruction, pollution, and fishing practices. **Madhya Pradesh (MP) has emerged as a leader in their conservation**, hosting over 80% of India’s gharials. Recently, CM Mohan Yadav released 10 gharials into the Chambal River, reinforcing MP’s commitment to their protection.
- The recent sighting of **85 Cape Vultures (Gyps coprotheres)** in **South Africa’s Eastern Cape after three decades marks a significant milestone for conservationists.** These vultures, exclusive to Southern Africa, play a vital role in maintaining ecological balance by preventing disease spread through carrion disposal. Conservation efforts have helped stabilize their population, but vultures globally continue to face threats. This resurgence highlights the importance of sustained conservation initiatives.

Static Takeaways

| Sr. No | Name | Static Details |
|--------|---|--|
| 1 | RBI | Governor - Sanjay Malhotra Head Office - Mumbai |
| 2 | SEBI | Chairman - Madhavi Buch Head Office - Mumbai |
| 3 | SBI | CMD - Challa Sreenivasalu Head Office - Mumbai |
| 4 | ISRO | Chairman - Narayanan Head Office - Bengaluru |
| 5 | JAXA (The Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency) | President - Hiroshi Yamakawa |
| 6 | DRDO | HQ - Delhi |
| 7 | Zepto | CEO - Aadit Palicha |
| 8 | Kotak Mutual Fund | CEO - Nilesh Shah Head Office - Mumbai |
| 9 | Ujjivan Small Finance Bank | CEO - Sanjeev Nautiyal Head Office - Bengaluru |
| 10 | BIMSTEC | HQ - Dhaka, Bangladesh |
| 11 | ODISHA | Governor- Hari Babu Kambhupati CM- Moham Majhi Capital- Bhubneshwar |
| 12 | Gujarat | Governor- Acharya Devvrat CM- Bhupendra Patel Capital- Gandhinagar |
| 13 | Andhra Pradesh | Governor- S. Abdul Nazeer CM- Chandrababu Naidu Capital- Amravati |
| 14 | Kerala | Governor- Rajendra Arlekar CM- Pinarayi Vijayan Capital- Thiruvananthpuram |
| 15 | Rajasthan | Governor- Haribhau Bagade CM- Bhajan Lal Sharma Capital- Jaipur |

| Sr. No | Name | Static Details |
|--------|------------------------------|---|
| 16 | Himachal Pradesh | Governor- Shiv Pratap Shukla CM- Sukhvinder Sukhu Capital- Shimla |
| 17 | USA | President - Donald Trump Capital - Washington D.C. |
| 18 | Panama | Head - Jose Raul Mulino Capital - Panama City |
| 19 | Uganda | President - Yoweri Museveni Capital - Kampala |
| 20 | New Zealand | PM - Maori Capital - Wellington |
| 21 | Pakistan | PM - Shehbaaz Sharif Capital - Islamabad |
| 22 | Belgium | PM - Bart De Wever Capital - Brussels |
| 23 | Russia | President - Vladimir Putin Capital - Moscow |
| 24 | South Africa | President - Cyril Ramaphosa Administrative Capital - Pretoria |
| 25 | Democratic Republic of Congo | President - Felix Tshisekedi Capital - Kinshasa |

| Sr. No | Name | Static Details |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Minsters in Govt. of India | | |
| 1 | Union Minister of Agriculture | Shivraj Singh Chouhan |
| 2 | Union Minister of Finance | Nirmala Sitharaman |
| 3 | Union Minister of Forest, Environment and Climate Change | Bhupenda Yadav |
| States of India | | |
| 4 | West Bengal | Governor - C.V. Ananda Bose CM - Mamta Banerjee Capital - Kolkata State Animal - Fishing Cat State Bird - White-throated Kingfisher State Flower - Night-flowering Jasmine |
| 5 | 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. |
| 6 | Uttarakhand | Governor - Gurmit Singh CM - Pushkar Singh Dhama 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 | Name | Static Details |
|--------|----------------|---|
| 7 | Gujarat | <p>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</p> |
| 8 | Delhi | <p>L. Governor - Vinai Kumar Saxena CM - Rekha Gupta Capital - New Delhi</p> |
| 9 | Madhya Pradesh | <p>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</p> |
| 10 | Karnataka | <p>Governor - Thawar Chand Gehlot CM - Siddharamaiya 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</p> |
| 11 | Kerala | <p>Governor - V. Arlekar CM - Pinarayi Vijayan Capital - Thiruvananthpuram 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</p> |
| 12 | Jharkhand | <p>Governor - Santosh Gangwar CM - Hemant Soren Capital - Ranchi State Boundaries - Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Odisha, West Bengal State Animal - Elephant State Bird - Koel State Tree - Sal</p> |

| Sr. No | Name | Static Details |
|---------------------------|--------------|--|
| 13 | Odisha | <p>Governor - Hari Babu Kambhupati CM - Moham Majhi Capital - Bhubneshwar State Border - Madhya Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, West Bengal, Bihar, Jharkhand, Chhattisgarh, Bay of Bengal State Animal - Sambhar State Bird - Blue Jay / Indian Roller</p> |
| 14 | Rajasthan | <p>Governor - Haribhau Bagde CM - Bhajanlal Sharma Capital - Jaipur State Border - Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat International Border - Pakistan State Flower - Rohida (Tecomella undulate) State Bird - Godawan or Great Indian Bustard State Animal - Camel, Chinkara</p> |
| Countries of World | | |
| 15 | Qatar | <p>Head of State - Sheikh Tamim Bin AL Thani Capital - Doha Currency - Qatari Riyal Neighbouring Countries - Saudi Arabia, Bahrain, UAE</p> |
| 16 | Brazil | <p>President - Lula Da Silva Capital - Brasilia Currency - Brazilian Riyal Neighbouring Countries - Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay, Bolivia, Colombia, Suriname, French Guiana, Guyana, Peru</p> |
| 17 | Mauritius | <p>PM - Navin Ramgoolam Capital - Port Louis Currency - Mauritian Rupee</p> |
| 18 | Indonesia | <p>President - Prabowo Subianto Capital - Jakarta Currency - Indonesian Rupiah Neighbouring Countries - Malaysia, PNG, Timor-leste, Singapore, Philippines</p> |
| 19 | USA | <p>President - Donald Trump Capital - Washington D.C. Currency - American Dollar Neighbouring Countries - Canada, Mexico, Cuba, Bahamas</p> |
| 20 | China | <p>President - Xi Jinping Capital - Beijing Currency - Chinese Yuan Neighbouring Countries - India, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Afghanistan, North Korea, Mongolia, Russia, Tajikistan, Vietnam, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan</p> |
| 21 | Argentina | <p>President - Javier Milei Capital - Buenos Aires Currency - Argentina Peso Neighbouring Countries - Chile, Brazil, Bolivia, Paraguay, Uruguay</p> |
| 22 | Saudi Arabia | <p>President - Mohammed Bin Salman Capital - Rlyadh Currency - Saudi Riyal Neighbouring Countries - Jordan, Iraq, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, UAE, Oman, Yemen</p> |

| Sr. No | Name | Static Details |
|---|-----------------------------|--|
| Banking Corporations/Companies/Big Platforms | | |
| 23 | Axis Bank | MD - Amitabh Chaudhary Head office - Mumbai |
| 24 | SEBI | Chairman - Madhabi Buch Head office - Mumbai |
| 25 | RBI | Governor - Sanjay Malhotra Head office - Mumbai |
| 26 | Meta | CEO - Mark Zuckerberg Head office - California |
| 27 | South Indian Bank | MD - P R Seshadri Head office - Thirissur, Kerala |
| 28 | Standard Chartered Bank | MD - Pankaj Walia Head office - Mumbai |
| 29 | Karnataka Bank | MD - Srikrishana Hari Head office - Mangaluru |
| 30 | Tata Motors | CEO - Marc Lilstosella Head office - Mumbai |
| 31 | Tata Power | CEO - Praveer Sinha Head office - Mumbai |
| 32 | Zomato | CEO - Deepinder Goyal Head office - Gurugram, Haryana |
| 33 | Reliance Industries Limited | Chairman - Mukesh D Ambani Head office - Mumbai |
| 34 | Google | CEO - Sundar Pichai Head office - California |
| 35 | ISRO | Chairman - V Narayanan Head Office - Bengaluru |