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**MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS  
EBOOK  
MARCH 2025**

**YOUR GUIDE TO  
MOST IMPORTANT  
CURRENT AFFAIRS  
AND EVENTS OF THE  
MONTH.**

**IAS | BANKING | SSC | NDA/CDS | AND OTHER COMPETITIVE EXAMS**

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# Big Decision on DA Hike by Modi Government: 2 Percent Raise for Central Government Employees

The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved a 2% rise in Central Government Employees' Dearness Allowance (DA) and Dearness Relief (DR) for pensioners on Friday.

The government has approved a 2% increase in Dearness Allowance (DA) for Central Government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) for pensioners, starting from January 1, 2025. This raises the DA/DR from 53% to 55% of the Basic Pay/Pension to help offset rising prices.

## DA Hike Benefits Central Gov Employees

This will benefit around 48.66 lakh central government employees and 66.55 lakh pensioners. With this change, DA will increase from 53% to 55%, giving employees a compensation raise ahead of the upcoming 8th Pay Commission.

## Financial Impact of DA Hike on Government

The combined impact on the exchequer of increases in Dearness Allowance and Dearness Relief will be Rs. 6614.04 crore per annum.

This rise is consistent with the approved methodology, which is based on the recommendations of the 7th Central Pay Commission.

The last rise came in July 2024, when DA was raised from 50% to 53%.

**ALSO READ: [Gifts for MPs: Modi Government Hikes Salary and Allowances by 24%! Check their New Salary Structure](#)**

## What is Dearness Allowance?

Dearness Allowance (DA) is a financial incentive offered to government employees to help offset inflation and keep their salary in line with rising living costs.

While basic salaries are set by a pay commission every ten years, DA guarantees that employees receive occasional adjustments to assist them in managing inflation.

### **DA Hike Increased Every 2 Years**

The government increases the DA twice a year. The notification may be late, but the DA rate is based on the All India Consumer Price Index (Industrial Workers) readings for January and December.

# India Ranks 24th in Free Speech Among 33 Countries; Pakistan Shows Improvement

According to a new global study conducted by The Future of Free Expression, an independent think tank located in the United States, India ranks 24th out of 33 countries in terms of support for the freedom of speech. According to its report, 'Who in the World Supports Free Speech?', "while abstract support for free speech remains strong, commitment to protecting controversial speech is eroding in many parts of the world."

The October 2024 study also found that "more countries have seen declines rather than improvements in free speech support since 2021, with some of the biggest drops occurring in democratic nations like the United States, Israel, and Japan."

## Most Free Speech Countries

Scandinavia dominated the top rankings, with Norway and Denmark at the top of the Future of Free Speech Index, scoring 87.9 and 87.0 respectively.

## Countries with the Biggest Changes in Free Speech Rankings

Indonesia (56.8), Malaysia (55.4), and Pakistan (57.0) made the most significant increases, although remaining at the bottom of the rankings. India, with a score of 62.6, finished 24th, trailing only South Africa (66.9) and Lebanon (61.8). At the same time, several authoritarian-leaning states, like as Hungary (85.5) and Venezuela (81.8), scored high, "suggesting a disconnect between government restrictions and public attitudes".

## Free Speech in India

Regarding its findings in India, the study discovered that, while the majority of Indians believe it is critical to speak freely without government censorship, support for criticism of government policies is lower than the global average. For example, 37% of Indian respondents agreed that "governments should be able to prevent people" from criticizing government policies, the highest percentage of any country questioned. In contrast, 5% of respondents in the United Kingdom agreed with this statement, while only 3% did in Denmark.

## Perception vs. Reality of Free Speech in India

In general, countries that promote free speech tend to have more freedom of expression in practice, and vice versa. However, India was an exception to this pattern. "India, Hungary, and Venezuela constitute the most significant departures from the typical pattern, with actual free speech protection being very low in comparison to popular acceptance. "These are all examples of democratic backsliding in countries that had previously demonstrated high levels of respect for political liberties, including freedom of expression," according to the report.

When asked if their ability to speak freely about political issues has improved or deteriorated over the past year, "Indians and South Africans believe that they have undergone the most significant progress, although observers and rankings tend to agree that the situation in India has become worse if anything," the report stated.

### **Importance of Free Speech**

Noting that "free speech is more than a legal right, it depends on a culture of open debate and tolerance for dissent," Jacob Mchangama, executive director of The Future of Free Speech, stated, "Our findings show that while many nations still claim to champion free expression, in practice, the willingness to defend controversial speech is slipping." Without a public commitment to free expression, even the most robust legal safeguards may become mere paper assurances."

# Startup Mahakumbh in India: The Biggest Startup Event Opening Date, Objective; Details Here

Startup Mahakumbh, India's largest gathering of startups, will take place from April 3 to 5 at Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi to help India's most promising startups move forward.

The Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) will lead the event, with key organizers including the Associated Chambers of Commerce and Industry of India (ASSOCHAM), NASSCOM, The Indus Entrepreneurs (TiE), the Indian Private Equity & Venture Capital Association (IVCA), and the Bootstrap Foundation.

## India Emerging as Startup Powerhouse

It is well-supported by the Government e Marketplace (GeM), the Small Industries Development Bank of India (sidbi), the Export Credit Guarantee Corporation of India Limited (ECGC), the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), and Startup India, demonstrating a national commitment to promoting innovation and entrepreneurship.

India has emerged as a worldwide startup powerhouse, owing to a healthy innovation culture and a strong entrepreneurial ecosystem.

## Startup Mahakumbh Objective

With over 1.67 lakh companies, the country is experiencing an increase in Fintech, AI, DeepTech, Agritech, HealthTech, BioTech, ClimateTech, FinTech, Gaming, Mobility, Manufacturing, and SpaceTech advancements. Despite this momentum, many firms struggle to secure finance, mentorship, and worldwide expansion, making scalability and industry collaboration critical for long-term success.

Startup Mahakumbh seeks to bridge this gap and be a vibrant convergence of ideas, giving companies the opportunity to demonstrate their innovations while meeting with stakeholders who are critical to their success.

## Startup Mahakumbh Companies Participating

Over 50 countries, 1,000 investors, and 3,000 exhibitors are scheduled for participation. Startup Mahakumbh will provide an unrivaled chance for startups to pitch their ideas to notable global investors and acquire insights from top accelerators, policymakers, and business executives from the United States, Europe, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia.

The event will feature industry pioneers such as Aman Gupta (boAt Lifestyle) in the D2C segment, Anjali Bansal (Avaana Capital) in Climate Tech, Aakrit Vaish (INDIAai Mission) in AI & DeepTech[SM1], Harsh Jain in Gaming, Nithin Kamath in FinTech, and Rikant Pittie in Mobility, among others, who will anchor key sector-specific pavilions, providing targeted guidance and deep industry insights.

### **Learning and Mentorship for Startups**

The event will also act as a valuable networking opportunity for entrepreneurs to connect with industry experts and open up new growth opportunities through strategic partnerships.

Founders will obtain practical insights and help on developing scalable business models through exclusive knowledge sessions, masterclasses, mentoring sessions, fireside chats, and a special challenge called Startup Maharathi. The competition aims to find and accelerate India's most promising early and growth-stage startups.

### **How will Startup Mahakumbh Help?**

It will also include interactive exhibitions demonstrating cutting-edge solutions and technologies that can spark new ideas and collaborations. Participating in these interactive engagements allows founders to uncover possible partners and access lucrative funding opportunities, which can help them accelerate their growth trajectory.

# Kavach Expansion: Will It Make Indian Railways Accident-Free?

Following the clearance of Version 4.0 by the Research Designs and Standards Organisation (RDSO) in July last year, India's indigenously produced Kavach Automatic Train Protection (ATP) system is on its way to large-scale deployment.

This is a significant advancement in railway safety, increasing accuracy and efficiency for train operations across the country.

## What is Kavach?

Kavach, a highly technology-intensive system that requires highest order safety certification (SIL-4), assists the Loco Pilot in running the train within specified speed limits by automatically applying brakes in case the Loco Pilot fails to do so and also helps the trains to run safely during inclement weather.

## Kavach Latest Version

Since its initial trials in 2016, the system has undergone significant evolution.

Based on their experience and the system's Independent Safety Assessment by an Independent Safety Assessor (ISA), three firms were approved in 2018-19 to deliver Kavach Version 3.2.

Kavach version 3.2 was deployed on 1,465 Route Km (RKm) of the South Central Railway, giving the Railways valuable experience.

Kavach was approved as the national ATP system in July 2020. The Indian Railways' Research Design and Standards Organization (RDSO) certified the latest Version 4.0 in July 2024.

## Kavach 4.0 Key Features

The current version 4.0 of the Kavach ATP introduces:

- Improved location accuracy for better train positioning.

- Improved signal aspect information in huge railroad yards.
- A direct interaction with electronic interlocking systems allows for simple integration.
- Station-to-station communication with Optical Fibre Cable (OFC) to improve coordination

### **Key Components of Kavach 4.0 Installation**

The installation of the Kavach System includes the following essential activities:

- Station Kavach is installed at every station and block section.
- RFID tags were installed along the whole length of the rail.
- Installing telecom towers throughout the section.
- Laying optical fibre cable along the train.
- Loco Kavach is provided on every locomotive that runs on Indian Railways.

**ALSO READ:** [India Offers the Lowest Railway Fares Among Neighboring Countries Including Pak: Ashwini Vaishnaw](#)

**ALSO READ:** [Could Kavach Technology Prevent Kanchenjunga Train Accident?](#)

### **Expansion of Kavach Across Indian Railways**

Since its acceptance, Indian Railways has aggressively expanded Kavach throughout its network. The most recent implementation data include:

- 5,743 kilometers of optical fiber cable deployed, with 540 telecom towers installed.
- 795 locomotives are fitted with Kavach.
- 664 stations equipped with Kavach technology.
- Trackside equipment covers 3,727 kilometers of route.

A plan has been finalized to equip 10,000 additional locomotives, with 69 loco sheds ready for installation, in order to expedite deployment even further.

### **Ashwini Vaishnaw on Kavach**

In addition, Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated in a written response to a question in the Lok Sabha on Wednesday, March 19, that bids for 15,000 km of trackside works of Kavach covering all Golden Quadrilateral, Golden Diagonal, High Density, and identified sections of Indian Railways have been invited. Of these, works of 1865 Rkm have been awarded.

# India Offers the Lowest Railway Fares Among Neighboring Countries Including Pak: Ashwini Vaishnaw

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw claimed that India offers the cheapest rail travel to passengers, charging Rs 121 for a 350-kilometer ride, compared to its neighbouring countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.

During a discussion in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday about the Ministry of Railways' budget for 2025-26, Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated that Western countries charge 10 to 20% more than India.

## No Rise in Railway Fare

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated that there has been no increase in train fares after 2020 and that the Indian Railways offers a 47% subsidy to its passengers. During a discussion in the Rajya Sabha, he highlighted Indian Railways' successes and future goals.

## Railway Fare in India & its Neighbouring Countries

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced in the Lok Sabha on Tuesday, during discussions on the Ministry of Railways' budget for 2025-26, that train fares in India are much lower than in neighboring countries like Pakistan, Bangladesh, and Sri Lanka.

Country	General Class Fare (₹)
India	121
Pakistan	436
Bangladesh	323
Sri Lanka	413

## Ashwini Vaishnaw Speech: Key Highlights

**Fare for a 350 km journey:** Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw stated that the fare in India is 121, while in Pakistan it is 436, in Bangladesh 323, and in Sri Lanka 413.

**Travel cost comparison:** He further told the Rajya Sabha that train travel in India is 5 times cheaper than in European countries.

**Passenger subsidy:** He also said that railway passengers receive a subsidy of 47%, which has now reached 60,000 crore annually.

**General vs. AC coaches:** The railway ministry announced that the number of general coaches will be 2.5 times more than AC coaches soon.

**Railway status:** Vaishnav confirmed that the financial condition of the Indian Railways is strong, and continuous improvements in services are being made.

**ALSO READ:** [India Becomes 4th Country to Achieve Space Docking, Joining US, Russia & China](#)

**ALSO READ:** [Chandrayaan-5 Approved Before Chandrayaan-4 Launch: What Makes It Different?](#)

### **Passengers Get 47% Subsidy on Train Travel**

Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnav shared that the actual cost of travel on Indian Railways is 1.38 per kilometer, but passengers only pay 73 paise per kilometer. This means the government provides a 47% subsidy on train fares. In the financial year 2022-23, the total subsidy given was 57,000 crore, which increased to nearly 60,000 crore in 2023-24.

### **Affordable and Safe Rail Travel for All**

The government is committed to offering affordable and safe train services, especially for the poorest sections of society. To meet this goal, the number of general (non-AC) coaches is being increased to 2.5 times more than AC coaches. As part of this, 17,000 new non-AC coaches are being prepared.

### **Indian Railways' Strong Financial Position**

The Railway Minister assured that Indian Railways is financially stable and continues to improve. He highlighted that Indian Railways is growing as a reliable, strong, and safe transport service on a global level.



# Check Which Indian City has India's First PPP-Model Green Waste Processing Plant

The Union Housing and Urban Affairs Ministry announced on Tuesday that Indore will start India's first PPP-model-based green waste processing plant as part of the Swachh Bharat Mission.

For the past seven years, Indore has been named as the country's cleanest city. In a statement, the ministry stated that the program intends to transform the city's waste management by converting green trash into resources.

## Green Waste Processing Plant in Indore

"The plant will not only treat green garbage but also produce cash, with the Indore Municipal Corporation (IMC) receiving approximately Rs 3,000 per tonne in royalties for supplying wood and branches.

The plant, spread across 55,000 square feet in Bicholi Hapsi, will recycle wood and branches to create wooden pellets. These pellets will be used as a substitute for coal, helping to save energy, according to the announcement.

According to the ministry, huge tree branches will be sent to the municipal forest's green waste processing plant and converted into valuable items.

Furthermore, green waste created on the premises of significant institutions will be collected and transported to the facility, with a fixed charge system in place.

## Indore's Growing Green Waste Output

"Every day, the bustling city of Indore produces around 30 tons of green wastewood, branches, leaves, and flowers. This volume can increase to 60 to 70 tons as the seasons change, particularly in the autumn," it added.

In order to turn the city's green waste into something useful and sustainable, Astronomical businesses Private Limited partnered with the Indore Municipal Corporation to launch an

ambitious project. The resulting fine sawdust might be utilized in a variety of businesses, according to the ministry.

The ministry stated that sawdust may be converted into environmentally beneficial fuel and utilized to create sturdy packing materials.

### **PPP Model for Sustainable Indore**

The remaining infrastructure, such as sheds, electricity, and water facilities, will be brought up by the private enterprise in the interim. Additionally, the private company will supervise the plant's whole installation and management, guaranteeing seamless operation from beginning to end.

Other private companies have established Meghdoot and sub-grade factories spanning 10,000 to 15,000 square feet in Sirpur.

These facilities are designed to processing garden debris, such as leaves and small twigs, collected from the municipal corporation.

### **Eco-friendly Initiatives at Indore**

Composting is also being done as part of this program, in specifically built compost pits positioned in the municipal gardens.

Wooden pellets made from green waste are used in a variety of industries, including the National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC), where they provide an environmentally beneficial alternative for energy generation and other purposes.

# Esports World Cup 2025: Meet the First Indian Club Competing with the World's Best Gamers!

S8UL, an established esports organization in India, has been chosen as a club partner for the 2025 Esports World Cup. The announcement was released on January 17, 2025, by the Esports World Cup Foundation (EWCF).

This is a major achievement for Indian Esports, as S8UL is the first and only Indian team to qualify for one of the world's biggest Esports tournaments.

## Esports World Cup 2025 Participating Teams

For its club partner program, EWCF has announced 40 teams that will compete in the 2025 Esports World Cup. These teams are among the top Esports organizations worldwide, and S8UL is now competing alongside them.

## Esports World Cup 2025 Returns to Riyadh

Esports World Cup 2025 returns to Riyadh this year and promises to be one of the largest esports tournaments in history. Over 1,500 players from 200 teams competed for an unprecedented \$60 million prize pool at EWC 2024, which was watched by 500 million people worldwide. This year's event is predicted to outperform all of these parameters.

## S8UL: First Indian Club at Esports World Cup 2025

S8UL is one of India's more established esports organizations, with a prominent presence in Battlegrounds Mobile India (BGMI) and Pokémon UNITE. They have also extended into games such as VALORANT and Call of Duty: Mobile (COD:M). In the forthcoming Esports World Cup 2025, S8UL will compete in PUBG Mobile and VALORANT.

Being chosen as one of the best global esports companies is no small accomplishment, and S8UL's lineup has certainly proved its worth. Animesh 'Thug' Agarwal, co-founder and CEO of S8UL, reacted to his team's qualifying for EWC 2025, saying it is a historic moment for Indian esports on a worldwide scale.

**ALSO READ: [India Becomes 4th Country to Achieve Space Docking, Joining US, Russia & China](#)**

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### **Future of Esports in India**

An Indian esports company competing in a \$60 million competition will undoubtedly make many people reconsider pursuing a full-time job in gaming and esports. While the youth recognize the potential of the developing esports industry throughout the world and in their own country, the elder generations are sluggish to catch up. This event will make the lives of many ambitious gamers easier as they aspire to compete professionally in their chosen games.

# Scientists Successfully Freeze Light, Turning It into a Solid – Here's How

Italian scientists have made a significant discovery by effectively "frozen" light, proving that it can behave like a supersolid, a rare form of matter that possesses both frictionless flow and a solid-like structure.

The discovery, which was just published in "Nature," is a major turning point in quantum physics and has the potential to transform future uses of optical and quantum computing technology.

## What is Supersolid?

An exotic phase of matter that has both the stiffness of a solid and the fluidity of a superfluid is called a supersolid. Only Bose-Einstein condensates (BECs), a state of matter created when a collection of bosons is cooled to almost absolute zero, causing them to occupy the same quantum state, have up till now shown supersolidity.

But now, a group led by Davide Nigro from the University of Pavia and Antonio Gianfate from CNR Nanotec has shown that light itself may display this odd behavior.

## How did the scientists "frozen" the light?

The researchers created a supersolid state in light using quantum techniques rather than the conventional freezing method, which involves reducing the temperature to change a liquid into a solid. In order to control photons in a way akin to that of electrons in conductors, they employed a semiconductor platform.

In order to create hybrid light-matter particles called polaritons, the scientists used a laser to create a gallium arsenide lattice embedded with nanoscale ridges.

The scientists noticed the development of satellite condensates, a sign of supersolidity, as the photon count rose. These condensates formed a distinct spatial structure that verified the existence of a supersolid state because they had opposite wavenumbers but the same energy.

"Quantum effects appear at temperatures close to absolute zero," the researchers said. "Our understanding of supersolidity in light is only getting started."

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**ALSO READ: [Chandrayaan-5 Approved Before Chandrayaan-4 Launch: What Makes It Different?](#)**

### **Consequences of this finding**

The ramifications of this discovery for quantum technologies are extensive. The development of more stable quantum bits (qubits), which are critical for the development of quantum computing, may be greatly aided by supersolid light.

This kind of light manipulation has the potential to transform not only computing but also photonic circuits, optical devices, and even basic quantum mechanics research. Researchers hope that these methods will be improved in the future, allowing for more stable and regulated supersolid light formations.

# Upper Ganga Canal Expressway: 8-Lane Highway for Smooth Noida-Ghaziabad to Dehradun Connectivity

The Upper Ganga Canal Expressway project began 11 years ago to create a direct highway link between Noida, Greater Noida, and Dehradun. However, after its launch in 2013, the project was halted for a long time. Now, work on the expressway is finally set to resume.

This ambitious eight-lane expressway will connect Greater Noida with Sanauta and Ghaziabad. It will then pass through Meerut and Muzaffarnagar before reaching Purkazi in Dehradun, improving road connectivity in the region.

## Upper Ganga Canal Expressway

The ambitious eight-lane expressway, which first began in 2013 but was abruptly stopped, will finally move forward, connecting Greater Noida with Sanauta and Ghaziabad, as well as passing through Meerut and Muzaffarnagar before arriving at Purkazi, Dehradun.

## Project to be Completed by Nov 2025

According to a media outlet, the government intends to complete the project by November 2025. Additionally, it entails building a 23.5-kilometer Link Expressway that will link South-West Meerut to the DFC terminal facilities and Meerut Airport. In addition, a new 3.5-kilometer motorway will be built next to NH-24, close to Dasna Falls.

## Water Sports at Ganga Canal

The land has been chosen at six important locations along the route to improve transportation and logistics. This will make the canal easier to navigate, encourage tourism, and open up chances for water sports. Additionally, the route will see the expansion and improvement of seven hydroelectric power units.

A budget of Rs 8,700 crore was made available to build 147.8 kilometers of expressway. It will begin at the Sanauta bridge in Bulandshahr run along the Ganga Canal to Purkazi in Muzaffarnagar and conclude at the border between Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand.

## Upper Ganga Canal Expressway Route

The expressway will start at the Sanauta Bridge in Bulandshahr and follow the Ganga Canal to Purkazi in Muzaffarnagar. It will pass through major locations, including:

- **Greater Noida**
- **Sanauta**
- **Ghaziabad**
- **Meerut**
- **Muzaffarnagar**
- **Deoband**
- **Purkazi (Muzaffarnagar)**
- **Ends at the Uttar Pradesh-Uttarakhand border**

This route will enhance connectivity between Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, making travel faster and more efficient.

The expressway is expected to increase communication between the two states, giving commuters a more comfortable journey. Additionally, the motorway will promote residential, commercial, and industrial growth.

# Chandrayaan-5 Approved Before Chandrayaan-4 Launch: What Makes It Different?

The ambitious Chandrayaan-5 mission to investigate the Moon has received approval from the Center, ISRO Chairman V Narayanan announced on Sunday, March 16, 2025.

At a ceremony to celebrate his appointment as the new Chairman of the Indian Space Research Organization, which is based in Bengaluru, Narayanan stated that the Chandrayaan-5 mission would use a 250 kg rover to investigate the Moon's surface, in contrast to the Chandrayaan-3 mission, which used the 25 kg rover known as "Prayagyaan."

## Chandrayaan Mission Goal

The goal of the Chandrayaan mission is to conduct lunar surface research. With its successful 2008 launch, Chandrayaan-1 created maps of the Moon's chemistry, minerals, and photogeology. When the Chandrayaan-2 mission's lunar landing crashed on the moon's surface in 2019, it came to an end.

## From Chandrayaan-2 to Chandrayaan-3's Success

According to Narayanan, who is also the Secretary of the Department of Space, the Chandrayaan-2 orbiter's high-resolution camera sent hundreds of pictures.

A follow-on mission to Chandrayaan-2, Chandrayaan-3 was designed to show that the spacecraft could safely land and roam the lunar surface. On August 23, 2023, the Vikram lander was able to soft-land on the moon's south pole region.

## Chandrayaan-5 Mission Approved

"We received approval for the Chandrayaan-5 mission just three days ago. We will carry out this mission in partnership with Japan," Narayanan stated.

## Chandrayaan-4 Mission

It is anticipated that the Chandrayaan-4 mission will launch in 2027. Its goal is to gather lunar soil

samples from the moon and return them to Earth for additional research.

Chandrayaan-4 will require at least two launches of the LVM-3 rocket. The mission will have five parts, which will be put together in space.

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### **ISRO's Future Missions**

Regarding ISRO's upcoming initiatives, Mr. Narayanan stated that in addition to other missions, such as Gaganyaan, preparations are on to build India's own space station, known as Bharatiya Antariksh Station.

# RBI Wins 2025 Digital Award for Pravaah & Sarthi: What They Are; Details Inside

On Sunday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi praised the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for receiving the Digital Transformation Award 2025, which was given by London's Central Banking. The Prime Minister congratulated the RBI on X, calling it a remarkable achievement highlighting the focus on innovation and efficient governance.

PM Modi further added that digital advancements are strengthening India's financial system and positively impacting many lives.

## RBI Wins Digital Transformation Award 2025

This award was given to the RBI in appreciation of its Pravaah and Sarthi digital projects, which have transformed internal and external procedures by drastically cutting down on paper-based submissions. According to Central Banking's statement, these efforts have been crucial in improving the RBI's efficiency and simplifying procedures.

### What is RBI's Sarthi System?

Named after the Hindi word for "charioteer," the Sarthi system was introduced in January 2023 with the goal of digitizing all of RBI's internal processes. Through reports and dashboards, it improves data analysis and record management by allowing staff members to safely store and exchange information.

### What is RBI Pravaah System?

The Pravaah system, which translates to "smooth flow" in Hindi, was implemented in May 2024 as an extension of this framework. Through a smooth integration with the Sarthi database, this technology enables external users to electronically submit regulatory applications for processing in RBI offices. With the help of centralized cybersecurity and tracking systems, the shift to a fully digital infrastructure has greatly increased efficiency and transparency.

### RBI Recognized for Digital Initiatives

The RBI celebrated the accomplishment on X and praised its internal development team for developing and executing these projects.

The post uploaded by RBI on X read, “RBI was awarded and recognised for its initiatives, including Pravaah and Sarthi systems, that have been developed by in-house developer team. The awards committee noted how these digital initiatives have reduced use of paper-based submissions thus transforming RBI’s internal and external processes.”

# Three-Language Formula: Tamil Nadu Drops Rupee Symbol in State Budget; Replaces with Tamil Letter Ru

In the state budget for 2025–2026, Tamil Nadu Chief Minister MK Stalin replaced the Indian rupee symbol (₹) with the Tamil letter "Ru," derived from "Rubai," which in Tamil means "Rupees." The rupee symbol is being changed due to the ongoing dispute between the ruling DMK party and the central government.

The DMK has resisted the new National Education scheme's three-language scheme because they believe it forces the usage of Hindi.

## Tamil Nadu Budget Emblem Without Rupee Symbol

This action is seen as a powerful declaration of pride in Tamil, particularly in light of the ongoing discussions around the preservation of cultural autonomy and the imposition of Hindi.

Stalin used X to post the state budget's emblem, which lacked the official Indian rupee sign. He explained the logo and stated that the choice was made to "benefit all sections of society" and guarantee growth in Tamil Nadu.

## TN Becomes First State to Reject National Currency Symbol

This is the first time a state has rejected the national currency symbol. The decision was made in the midst of the Tamil Nadu government's opposition to the three-language formula and the National Education Policy (NEP).

## What is Three Language Formula?

According to NEP 2020's three-language formula, students should learn three languages, at least two of which must be indigenous to India. This rule applies to both government and private schools, allowing states to select languages freely without any restrictions.

## Three Language Formula Legally Adopted in 1968

The Education Commission (1964–1966), formally known as the Kothari Commission, was the

first to propose the formula. Under then-prime minister Indira Gandhi, it was legally incorporated into the National Policy on Education (NPE) in 1968. In order to support linguistic variety and national cohesion, the policy was once again reiterated in NPE 1986 under PM Rajiv Gandhi and updated in 1992 by the Congress government of Narasimha Rao.

Three languages were included in the formula: the official language, the mother tongue or regional language, and a contemporary Indian or European language.

***ALSO READ:*** [India Becomes 4th Country to Achieve Space Docking, Joining US, Russia & China](#)

***ALSO READ:*** [US-Canada Tariff War: Canada Plans Counter-Tariffs on American Goods](#)

### **Why is Tamil Nadu in Opposition to Three Language Formula?**

The three-language formula has long been resisted by the state of Tamil Nadu. The Madras government, led by C Rajagopalachari at the time, made Hindi mandatory in schools in 1937. Dravidian leaders like Periyar and the Justice Party staged massive rallies in response to this action. The policy was canceled in 1940, but opposition to Hindi continued.

Tamil Nadu resisted the 1968 introduction of the three-language formula because they believed it was a ploy to impose Hindi. The state implemented a two-language policy under Chief Minister C N Annadurai, teaching only English and Tamil. The only state that has never used the three-language model is Tamil Nadu, which prioritizes English over Hindi and other regional languages.

# Champions Trophy 2025 Winner Shubman Gill Named ICC Player of the Month

After leading India to victory in the Champions Trophy 2025, Shubman Gill was honored as the ICC Men's Player of the Month for February 2025, recognizing his exceptional batting performances. Gill showcased outstanding form, scoring a total of 406 runs in 5 ODIs, maintaining an impressive batting average of 101.50 and a strike rate of 94.19. His remarkable performances were crucial in India's ODI series against England and later in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025, where he played key innings to guide the team to success.

In the women's category, Australia's Alana King received the ICC Women's Player of the Month award for February 2025. She was recognized for her brilliant bowling performances, playing a vital role in her team's success during the month.

## ICC Player of the Month: Shubman Gill

Shubman Gill delivered an outstanding performance in February 2025, scoring a total of 406 runs in 5 ODIs with an impressive average of 101.50 and a strike rate of 94.19. He played a key role in India's victories, showcasing brilliant batting in the ODI series against England and later in the ICC Champions Trophy 2025.

More accolades for No.1 ranked ODI batter Shubman Gill as the India opener claims a third ICC Men's Player of the Month award for his efforts in February 2025 <https://t.co/CfNvJFOe5e>

— ICC (@ICC) [March 13, 2025](#)

## Gill's Best Innings Against England

- **First Match (Nagpur):** Scored 87 runs
- **Second Match (Cuttack):** Scored 60 runs
- **Third Match (Ahmedabad):** Played a stunning knock of 112 runs off 102 balls, hitting 14 fours and 3 sixes

His century in Ahmedabad earned him the **Player of the Match** award, and for his consistent performances throughout the series, he was also named **Player of the Series**.

**ALSO READ:** [India Becomes 4th Country to Achieve Space Docking, Joining US, Russia & China](#)

**ALSO READ: [US-Canada Tariff War: Canada Plans Counter-Tariffs on American Goods](#)**

### **Strong Start in Champions Trophy 2025**

- **Unbeaten 101 runs** in the first match against Bangladesh
- **Crucial 46 runs** against Pakistan

Gill's brilliant batting helped India win both their opening matches, setting the stage for their ultimate **Champions Trophy 2025 victory**.

### **Third Time Winning This Prestigious Award**

Shubman Gill has now won the **ICC Men's Player of the Month Award** three times in his career:

- **January 2023**
- **September 2023**
- **February 2025**

### **ICC Women's Player of the Month – Alana King**

In the women's category, **Australia's Alana King** won the **ICC Women's Player of the Month (February 2025)** for her outstanding bowling performance against England in the **Ashes Test**.

A big honour for Alana King as the Australian spinner collects the ICC Women's Player of the Month award for February 2025 <https://t.co/U7WtV4pdmb>

— ICC (@ICC) [March 12, 2025](#)

# India Becomes 4th Country to Achieve Space Docking, Joining US, Russia & China

ISRO announced the successful undocking of its Space Docking Experiment (SpaDex) today, paving the way for upcoming missions like Chandrayaan-4 and others.

ISRO described the steps that led to the successful experiment in a post on X. These steps included the SDX-2 extension, the planned release of capture lever 3, the disengagement of the SDX-2 capture lever, and the issuance of a de-capture command for both spacecraft.

## Minister Praises ISRO's Achievement

Union Minister of Science and Technology, Dr. Jitendra Singh, congratulated ISRO on X, calling the SPADEX satellite de-docking a proud moment for India. He highlighted that this success will support future missions like the Bharatiya Antriksha Station, Chandrayaan-4, and Gaganyaan, crediting Prime Minister Narendra Modi's leadership for boosting morale.

## India's Successful Space Docking

The Space Docking Experiment (SpaDeX) mission was launched from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre on December 30, 2024. On January 16, ISRO successfully docked two satellites—SDX01 and SDX02, known as Chaser and Target.

## India Joins Elite Group in Space Docking

With this success, India has become the fourth country in the world to achieve space docking, following China, Russia, and the United States.

## Future Docking Experiments Planned

ISRO chairman V. Narayanan earlier informed PTI that additional space docking experiments will begin on March 15. "We have a plan in place and will start actual experiments from March 15," he said.

He added that the unified satellite is currently in an elliptical orbit. Every two months, there will be a 10 to 15-day window to conduct further studies.

## **Cost-Effective Space Docking Technology**

ISRO stated that SpaDeX is a budget-friendly project using two small spacecraft launched by a PSLV rocket. This technology can be useful when multiple rocket launches are needed for a shared mission objective.

# US-Canada Tariff War: Canada Plans Counter-Tariffs on American Goods

According to Bloomberg, Canada is set to announce counter-tariffs on approximately C\$30 billion (\$20.8 billion) worth of US-made goods on Wednesday, after the Donald Trump administration's imposition of duties on Canadian steel and aluminum imports.

Donald Trump raised duties on Canadian metal imports after the province of Ontario put a tax on its energy shipments to the United States.

## Higher Tariffs on Canada by Trump

Trump wrote on his Truth Social platform, "I have directed my Secretary of Commerce to impose an additional 25% tariff, up to 50%, on all steel and aluminum entering the United States from Canada, one of the highest tariffing nations anywhere in the world."

The tariffs came into force on March 12, 2025,

Trump has imposed substantial tariffs on important US trading partners, such as China, Canada, and Mexico, since taking office again. He promised new taxes to go into place on April 2, even though some reductions were made for neighboring countries.

## Impact of Tariffs on Canada

According to a recent analysis by Gregory Daco, chief economist at EY, Canada is projected to be severely impacted by the new tariffs because it provides around 50% of the US's imports of aluminum and 20% of its imports of steel.

Additionally, Donald Trump has threatened to raise car tariffs in the US, causing Canada to close its auto manufacturing facility.

Trump warned that if Canada does not remove other unfair long-term tariffs, he will raise tariffs on cars entering the U.S. on April 2, which could permanently harm Canada's automobile industry.

## US Warning to Canada

Meanwhile, U.S. Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick stated that President Donald Trump will

include copper in his trade safeguards and that nothing would stop his increased 25% tariffs on steel and aluminum until domestic production in the United States is enhanced.

Lutnick said the goal is to get on the same page, understand each other, and then start negotiations with all of Canada.

In addition, Donald Trump had questioned US defense contributions to Canada, threatening to halt them unless Canada became the 51st state in the union.

# No Actress or Politician—This Businesswoman Is India's Richest Woman

Roshni Nadar Malhotra is set to become India's third-richest person after inheriting a 47% stake in HCL Corporation and Vama Delhi from her father, Shiv Nadar, the founder of HCL Group, as part of a succession plan.

With the signing of two gift documents on March 6, Shiv Nadar formally transferred his 47% ownership of Vama Sundari Investments (Delhi) Private Limited and HCL Corporation Private Limited to his daughter, Roshni Nadar Malhotra.

## Roshni Nadar Malhotra Richest Woman in India

With this stake transfer, Roshni Nadar Malhotra becomes the biggest shareholder in HCL Corp and Vama, giving her majority control over HCLTech and HCL Infosystems.

Malhotra will also be able to vote on HCL Corp's 49.94% and Vama Delhi's 12.94% shares in HCL Infosystems. In addition, another promoter company, Vama Sundari Investment, owns a 44.71% stake in HCLTech, which is worth Rs 186,782 crore.

## Mukesh Ambani Remains India's Richest Person

With a net worth of \$88.1 billion, Mukesh Ambani continues to be the richest person in India. Gautam Adani comes in second with \$68.9 billion. According to Bloomberg Billionaires data, Shiv Nadar, who is presently placed third with \$35.9 billion, will fall in the standings after selling his shares to Malhotra.

**ALSO READ:** [Airtel Partners with Elon Musk's SpaceX to Bring Starlink Internet to India](#)

**ALSO READ:** [E-Shram Registration Latest Report: This Indian State is in the Lead with Over 8.38 Crore Workers Registered](#)

## Exemption from Open Offer Requirement

Roshni Nadar Malhotra, the chairman of HCLTech, was given permission by capital markets regulator Sebi in November of last year to avoid making an open offer for her intended indirect

purchase of shares and voting rights in the business.

Since the share transfer is a non-commercial transaction between members of the immediate family and complies with takeover legislation's inter-transfer standards, an open offer is not necessary, therefore the exemption.

### **Roshni Nadar's Leadership in HCL**

Vama Delhi has the second-highest promoter stake in terms of value among IT companies listed on the BSE. In terms of market capitalization, it is ranked ninth out of the top 30 midcap companies.

Since 2020, Malhotra has served as HCLTech's chairperson, replacing her father as its boss. With an MBA from the Kellogg School of Management and a Northwestern University degree, she has been leading the company's strategic direction for the last four years.

# Airtel Partners with Elon Musk's SpaceX to Bring Starlink Internet to India

Airtel recently signed an arrangement with SpaceX to bring Starlink's satellite broadband to India. The agreement is dependent upon authorities granting SpaceX permission to offer Starlink services in the nation.

As per the news statement released by Airtel, SpaceX and Airtel will explore opportunities to collaborate as part of this relationship.

## **Airtel and SpaceX Partnership**

Airtel may provide Starlink's services to companies and sell Starlink devices in its retail locations. Additionally, they intend to employ Starlink to provide internet access to remote locations, health facilities, and rural schools. Additionally, Airtel and SpaceX will investigate how SpaceX may utilize Airtel's infrastructure in India and how Starlink might assist Airtel's network.

For satellite internet, Airtel already collaborates with Eutelsat OneWeb. By adding Starlink, Airtel would be able to reach more places with poor or nonexistent internet service. Additionally, there will be more possibilities for high-speed internet for communities and businesses in remote areas.

## **Elon Musk's Starlink**

Starlink, a satellite internet constellation owned by SpaceX, aims to provide mobile broadband worldwide. With the aid of the most sophisticated internet system in the world, even the most remote places can benefit from streaming, video calls, online gaming, remote working, and more.

## **Next-Gen Satellite Connectivity in India**

Gopal Vittal, Managing Director and Vice Chairman of Bharti Airtel stated, "This partnership with SpaceX to provide Starlink to Airtel customers in India is a significant milestone and further demonstrates our commitment to next-generation satellite connectivity."

"This partnership strengthens our capacity to deliver top-notch high-speed broadband to even the most isolated regions of India, guaranteeing dependable internet access for every person, company, and community. In order to guarantee dependable and reasonably priced broadband

for our Indian clients wherever they reside and work, Starlink will supplement and improve Airtel's product line," he continued.

**[ALSO READ: India's First Hydrogen Train to Launch Soon: A Big Step Towards Green Railway](#)**

**[ALSO READ: E-Shram Registration Latest Report: This Indian State is in the Lead with Over 8.38 Crore Workers Registered](#)**

### **Jio's Dominance in India's Broadband Market**

Mukesh Ambani's Reliance Jio is the leader in India's broadband market, with over 14 million wired subscribers and nearly 500 million mobile internet users. Airtel also has around 300 million broadband users. However, both companies worry that after investing over \$20 billion in spectrum auctions, they could lose customers to Elon Musk's Starlink as satellite internet technology improves.

# Yet Another Accolade for PM Modi: Mauritius Awards India's PM with Its Highest Civilian Honour

**NEW DELHI:** On Tuesday, Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam of Mauritius declared that Prime Minister Narendra Modi would receive the Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean (GCSK), the nation's highest civilian honor.

With this distinction, PM Modi is the first Indian to be granted the highest honor in Mauritius. It also makes it the 21st time a foreign country has given him this honor, adding to his already impressive array of international honors.

## PM Modi Receives Mauritius' Highest Honor

"The Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean is very fitting for you, Prime Minister," stated Mauritius Prime Minister Navinchandra Ramgoolam during the announcement. Only five foreign dignitaries, including Nelson Mandela, who was honored in 1998, have received the medal since Mauritius became a republic, he continued.

The declaration was made during an Indian community function where PM Modi and PM Ramgoolam were present and the national anthems of Mauritius and India were played.

## PM Modi's Visit to Mauritius

PM Modi thanked them, saying, "I respectfully and humbly accept this decision. It is a tribute to the longstanding relationship between Mauritius and India." He expressed gratitude to the Mauritius government and people for the esteemed honor.

Prime Minister Modi, who is on a two-day visit to Mauritius, was the primary guest at the country's National Day celebrations, highlighting the close cultural and diplomatic relations between the two countries.

**ALSO READ:** [Airtel Partners with Elon Musk's SpaceX to Bring Starlink Internet to India](#)

**ALSO READ:** [E-Shram Registration Latest Report: This Indian State is in the Lead with](#)

## Over 8.38 Crore Workers Registered

### India-Mauritius Relations

- **OCI Cards Issued:** During his visit, PM Modi gave OCI (Overseas Citizenship of India) cards to Mauritius President Dharambeer Gokhool and his wife, the First Lady.
- **New OCI Eligibility:** In March 2024, India allowed Mauritian citizens with up to seven generations of Indian ancestry to apply for an OCI card. Currently, there are 13,198 OCI cardholders and 22,188 Indian nationals in Mauritius.
- **Official Luncheon:** The President of Mauritius hosted a special lunch in PM Modi's honor. Modi thanked the host for the warm hospitality and emphasized India's commitment to strengthening its partnership with Mauritius.

# India's First Hydrogen Train to Launch Soon: A Big Step Towards Green Railway

India will soon launch its first hydrogen-powered train, marking a significant milestone in the country's railway industry. The railway is expected to start running on the Jind-Sonipat route in Haryana by March 31, 2025. This innovative project is in line with India's goals of adopting cleaner energy sources, cutting carbon emissions, and promoting sustainable mobility.

Hydrogen trains represent the future of environmentally friendly modes of transportation, which runs on hydrogen fuel cells. The only products of these cells are heat and water. These trains are a cleaner option for passenger transport because they drastically reduce carbon emissions and noise pollution in comparison to traditional diesel trains.

## India Hydrogen Train Key Features

With a number of remarkable features, the future hydrogen-powered train will rank among India's most cutting-edge trains.

- **Maximum speed:** To ensure efficient travel, the train can reach a maximum speed of 110 km/h.
- **Passenger capacity:** It can hold 2,638 people, making it suitable for a large number of commuters.
- **Engine power:** The train will have a 1,200 horsepower engine, making it the world's largest hydrogen-powered train.

**ALSO READ:** [New vs Old Toll System: Expected Toll Price Reduction & Benefits](#)

**ALSO READ:** [YouGov India Value Rankings 2025: Amul Becomes India's Top Brand](#)

## India Hydrogen Train Route

The train will travel a considerable distance with several stops to accommodate commuters on the Jind-Sonipat route in Haryana. Haryana was selected as the launch state because of its strong railroad network and rising demand for environmentally friendly transportation options.

## Benefits of Hydrogen Train

India's railway network benefits greatly from the installation of hydrogen-powered trains, including

**Zero carbon emissions:** These trains only release water vapor, which lowers pollution levels compared to diesel locomotives.

**Energy efficiency:** Compared to conventional fuels, hydrogen fuel cells offer a more energy-efficient option.

**Long-term cost-effectiveness:** Long-term fuel savings and environmental advantages make it a financially feasible choice, despite the potential high initial costs.

**Noise reduction:** Passenger comfort is improved by hydrogen trains' quieter operation.

### **Indian Railway's Goal of Net Zero Emission**

The Modi government has been actively promoting energy-efficient and sustainable transportation through its "Hydrogen for Railways" initiative. This project is part of a bigger plan to make Indian Railways completely free of carbon emissions by 2030.

With the successful deployment of hydrogen-powered trains, India will be able to follow in the footsteps of nations that have previously embraced hydrogen rail technology, such as China, Germany, and the United Kingdom.

With this historic move, Indian Railways will revolutionize passenger transport and support international efforts to tackle climate change.

# E-Shram Registration Latest Report: This Indian State is in the Lead with Over 8.38 Crore Workers Registered

The number of workers from the unorganized sector registering on the e-Shram portal is increasing rapidly. So far, a total of 30.68 crore workers have signed up on the platform. The significant highlight is that women account for a larger share of these registrations, making up 53.68% of the total.

The information on the e-Shram portal registration was given as an answer to a question in Lok Sabha by the Minister of State for Labour and Employment, Shobha Karandlaje on March 10, 2025.

## e-Shram Portal Gender-wise Report

Out of all the registered workers at the e-Shram portal, 16.47 crore are women, while 14.42 crore are men. This shows a strong participation of women in the workforce within the unorganized sector, highlighting their growing presence in various industries.

## e-Shram Portal State-wise Report

Among all the states, Uttar Pradesh has the highest number of workers registered on the e-Shram portal. Over 8.38 crore workers from the state have signed up. Bihar comes next, with more than 2.97 crore workers registered on the platform.

On the other hand, Lakshadweep has the lowest number of registrations on the central government's e-Shram portal.

## What is e-Shram Portal?

The Ministry of Labour and Employment inaugurated the e-Shram—"One-Stop-Solution" on October 21, 2024, in accordance with the budget announcement's goal of creating e-Shram as a one-stop-solution for unorganized workers to have access to numerous social security programs.

The goal of the "e-Shram—One-Stop-Solution" is the integration of various social security

programs at a single portal. This makes it possible for unorganized workers who have registered on e-Shram to view the benefits they have already received and access social security programs.

### **Benefits of e-Shram Portal**

The e-Shram portal is now connected to the National Career Service and Skill India Digital Portal, helping workers find better job opportunities and improve their skills.

So far, 13 schemes from various central ministries and departments have been linked to the e-Shram portal. These include Pradhan Mantri Street Vendors Atmanirbhar Nidhi (PM-SVANidhi), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), National Family Benefit Scheme (NFBS), Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana – Gramin (PMAY-G), and Ayushman Bharat, among others.

It is also linked to the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Yojana, providing additional benefits to workers. To make it easier for them to access government schemes, the portal has been integrated with the MyScheme platform, ensuring they don't have to struggle to avail the benefits they are entitled to.

**ALSO READ: [YouGov India Value Rankings 2025: Amul Becomes India's Top Brand](#)**

**ALSO READ: [PM Internship Scheme 2025: Over 28,000 Students Secured Internships till Now](#)**

### **e-Shram Portal in Multiple Languages**

The Ministry of Labour and Employment used the Bhashini platform to introduce multilingual capabilities on the e-Shram portal on January 7 in an effort to improve accessibility. In a written response, the minister stated that this improvement improves accessibility and fosters inclusion for all by enabling employees to engage with the e-Shram platform in 22 Indian languages.

# Kedarnath Ropeways Approved: Reach Kedarnath in Just 36 Minutes

On Wednesday, March 5, the central government authorized the 4,081 crore Kedarnath ropeway project. This important project is anticipated to reduce the 8–9 hour travel time from Sonprayag to Kedarnath to just 36 minutes.

According to a statement from the government, the Kedarnath ropeway project would be created using the Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Transfer (DBFOT) method, with a total capital expenditure of 4,081.28 crore.

## Hemkund Pilgrim in Just 36 Minutes!

The Hemkund Sahib ropeway project, which will be 12.4 km long and cost Rs 2,730 crore, was also approved by the cabinet. At the moment, getting to the Hemkund Sahib Ji from Govindghat is a strenuous 21-kilometer ascent that can be done on foot, on ponies, or in palanquins. The 12.9-kilometer ropeway project could be a blessing for pilgrims who spend hours walking to Kedarnath because it will just take them about 36 minutes to get there.

The proposed ropeway will guarantee all-weather last-mile connectivity between Govindghat and Hemkund Sahib Ji and will be convenient for pilgrims and visitors to Hemkund Sahib Ji as well as tourists visiting the Valley of Flowers.

## Kedarnath Ropeway under Parvatmala Pariyojana

The Kedarnath ropeway project is being built as part of the Parvatmala Pariyojana, a National Ropeways Development Program.

With approval from the Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA), a 12.9-kilometer ropeway project will be built from Sonprayag to Kedarnath. The project will be built using the Design, Build, Finance, Operate, and Transfer (DBFOT) methodology. The project, which intends to increase tourism in isolated highland places, was first announced in October 2022 as part of the "Parvatmala Pariyojana" program.

## Ropeway to be Built Under PPP

The ropeway is expected to be built in a public-private partnership, according to a PIB official release. It will be built using the most cutting-edge Tri-cable Detachable Gondola (3S) technology, which has a design capacity of 1,800 passengers per hour per direction (PPHPD), or 18,000 passengers per day.

# PM Internship Scheme 2025: Over 28,000 Students Secured Internships till Now; Second Phase Registration Begins

The registration procedure for the PM Internship Scheme 2025 has begun, according to the Ministry of Corporate Affairs. Applicants must first register in order to apply for the internship program. The deadline to register for the PM Internship is March 12, 2025. Interested candidates can register themselves on the official website, [pminternship.mca.gov.in](http://pminternship.mca.gov.in).

According to the Ministry, each intern would receive 5,000 in financial aid each month, in addition to 6,000 in one-time funding.

## PM Internship Scheme 2025 Registration Begins

As per the official website notice, "The internship application round is now open until March 12th. Register, create your profile, and apply for opportunities across different sectors. There are no registration or application fees. Apply now."

## How Many Students Benefitted from PM Internship Scheme?

The program was first introduced in the Union Budget for 2024–2025 in July, but the pilot phase began in October.

Out of the 1.27 lakh internships that 280 firms listed in the first phase, 60,866 candidates received internship offers from 82,077 partner companies. According to a Ministry of Corporate Affairs response to the Lok Sabha on February 3, 28,141 of these applicants accepted offers to begin the internship as of January 29, 2025.

According to media sources, just roughly 8,000 applicants have signed up for the internship program's first phase.

## What is PM Internship Scheme?

Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman announced this scheme in her Budget speech on July 23, 2024. It started on October 3, 2024. So far, 28,141 candidates have received internship

opportunities, as stated by Minister of State for Corporate Affairs Harsh Malhotra in the Lok Sabha. The internships will last for 12 months, with at least half of the time spent on practical work experience.

### **PM Internship Scheme Registration Fees**

No application or registration fee is required. A résumé will be immediately created based on the candidate's supplied information, enabling each student to apply for up to five positions that fit their interests.

Interns will develop practical skills by working in real-world company environments. During the internship, the stipend will assist interns in covering their essential costs. Their employability will increase after gaining experience from this opportunity, opening up new career options. In addition to a one-time payment of Rs 6,000, each intern would get Rs 5,000 each month in financial aid.

### **PM Internship Scheme 2025 Eligibility Criteria**

Candidates must check the eligibility criteria for the PM Internship Scheme 2025 before applying for the same:

**Nationality:** Must be an Indian citizen.

**Age limit:** 21 to 24 years.

**Education:** At least 10th pass, 12th pass, or a diploma/UG degree. Graduates from top institutes (such as IITs and IIMs) and those with professional qualifications (like CA or CMA) are not eligible.

**Employment Status:** Should not have a part-time or full-time job.

**Income Criteria:** People from households earning more than Rs 8 lakh a year are not eligible. Those who come from households with government workers are also not eligible.

# Current Affairs One Liners 06 March 2025: Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji Ropeway Project

One-liner current affairs are presented in a new style. These updates are highly important from an exam perspective and will be helpful for your preparation. Today's highlights include topics related to the **Uttarakhand Winter Tourism Program** and the **Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji Ropeway Project**.

1. **In which state did PM Modi participate in the Winter Tourism Program?** – Uttarakhand
2. **Who has been recently appointed as the CEO of the e-Marketplace (GeM)?** – Ajay Bhadu
3. **Which Australian cricketer recently announced retirement from ODI cricket?** – Steve Smith
4. **Who inaugurated the second edition of 'Vividhta Ka Amrit Mahotsav'?** – President Droupadi Murmu
5. **Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji Ropeway Project has been approved by the Centre; in which state is it located?** – Uttarakhand
6. **Which legendary Indian table tennis player recently announced retirement from professional table tennis?** – Achanta Sharath Kamal
7. **Which two teams will play the final of the ICC Champions Trophy 2025?** – India vs New Zealand
8. **Who has been recently appointed as the new Executive Director (ED) of RBI?** – Dr. Ajit Ratnakar Joshi
9. **How much amount has the central government allocated for the Govindghat to Hemkund Sahib Ji Ropeway Project?** – 2,730.13 crore

## ALSO READ:

[Donald Trump to Impose Reciprocal Tariffs on India and China; Aim to Make America Great](#)

# Current Affairs One Liners 04 March 2025: Khelo India Winter Games 2025

Under **One-Liner Current Affairs**, key topics such as **Vantara Animal Rescue Centre**, the **7th meeting of the National Board for Wildlife**, and **Khelo India Winter Games 2025** have been covered, which are crucial from an exam perspective. Read all these updates in a new style!

1. Who chaired the 7th meeting of the National Board for Wildlife in Gir, Gujarat? – **PM Narendra Modi**
2. When will the Ideal Women-Friendly Gram Panchayat Initiative be launched at the National Conference in New Delhi? – **5 March 2025**
3. In which state did PM Modi inaugurate the Vantara Animal Rescue Centre? – **Gujarat**
4. Which company was awarded Navratna status along with IRCTC? – **IRFC**
5. Who recently set a new national record in Women's Indoor Shot Put? – **Krishna Jayashankar**
6. Who was recently elected as the Chairman of the Bar Council of India? – **Manan Kumar Mishra**
7. Where will the second phase of Khelo India Winter Games 2025 be held? – **Gulmarg**
8. Which country's institution recently signed an agreement with IIFT to strengthen trade and logistics education? – **Belgium**
9. Who inaugurated the workshop on "Sustainability and Circularity in the Dairy Sector" in New Delhi? – **Union Home Minister Amit Shah**

## **ALSO READ:**

[04 March 2025: Test Your Knowledge with the Daily Current Affairs Quiz!](#)

[PM Modi Inaugurates Vantara: A Safe Haven for 2,000+ Endangered Animals](#)

# Donald Trump to Impose Reciprocal Tariffs on India and China; Aim to Make America Great

President Donald Trump of the United States announced Wednesday that reciprocal tariffs on China and India will begin on April 2. According to him, businesses that do not manufacture their goods in the United States will be subject to a tariff under the Trump administration, often a hefty one.

"That's reciprocal, back and forth," Trump stated during the major announcement. "We will tax whatever it is that they tax us."

## India, China, and South Korea's High Tariffs

Donald Trump stated that India imposes auto tariffs above 100%, while China charges double the tariffs on American products compared to what the US charges them. Citing China's alleged involvement in the production of fentanyl, the US also increased duties on Chinese goods on Tuesday, going from 10% to 20%. Additionally, he mentioned that South Korea's tariffs are four times higher than those of the US.

## High Taxes on US from Various Countries

Trump named a number of nations, including India, that he claimed imposed "tremendous" taxes on the US. "Have you heard of the European Union, China, Brazil, India, Mexico, and Canada on average? Additionally, Trump said that many other countries impose tariffs on us that are far higher than ours.

## US Imposes 25% Tariffs on Canada and Mexico

The declaration follows the United States' decision on Tuesday to implement its punitive 25% tariffs on its neighbors and two of its largest trading partners, Canada and Mexico.

Furthermore, Donald Trump claimed that it was "very unfair" that Mexico and Canada also pay greater tariffs from the US than they do.

## Retaliation from Canada

Washington was hit with retaliatory tariffs after imposing 25% tariffs on Canada and Mexico. However, US Commerce Secretary Howard Lutnick previously told Fox Business that Trump would soon announce a trade agreement with Canada and Mexico.

Trump explained the reasoning behind reciprocal tariffs, saying that although they would cause "little disturbance," the goal is to restore America's wealth and greatness.

# Universal Pension Scheme for All; Traders, Businessman to Benefit

**New Delhi:** The government is planning a Universal Pension Scheme (UPS) to offer social security for everyone.

The Union Ministry of Labour and Employment is developing the suggested plan, which would enable voluntary contributions and post-retirement pension payments.

## No Government Contribution to the New Pension Plan

According to a ministry official, self-employed and unorganized sector workers can also participate in the planned system and contribute funds because it is available to everyone.

However, the government is unlikely to make any financial contributions to the new plan.

According to the official, the government anticipates that a wide range of people will profit from the program, including independent contractors, workers in the unorganized sector, gig workers, dealers, and anyone over the age of 18 who wishes to receive pension payments after reaching 60.

## Merging Existing Pension Schemes

It is probable that the new plan will incorporate current pension plans such as the Atal Pension Yojana, the National Pension Scheme for Traders and Self-Employed (NPS-Traders), and the Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan (PM-SYM).

## What is Universal Pension Scheme (UPS)?

The Universal Pension Plan will be a voluntary, contributory pension plan. Since it would be accessible to all citizens over the age of 18, it would be especially helpful to traders, self-employed individuals, and those working in the unorganized sector, who typically do not have access to traditional pension plans. By combining all current pension plans under one roof, the program seeks to increase participant accessibility and benefits.

## Involvement of State Governments

In order to boost pension benefits and prevent beneficiary duplication, the government will begin talks to persuade state governments to combine their pension plans with this new effort, the official stated.

### **Social Security for Individuals**

Many nations have adequate social security programs. Currently, the provident fund system is the primary foundation of India's social security system.

Other programs, such as health insurance and old-age pensions, are specifically designed for people who are below the poverty level.

According to the source, the planned UPS intends to increase coverage and establish a more inclusive pension system for the nation's workers.

# New vs Old Toll System: Expected Toll Price Reduction & Benefits

The good news for commuters is here! Highway travel in India will soon become smooth and hassle-free if all goes according to plan. According to reports, the Indian government is thinking of introducing lifetime and annual toll permits to provide regular commuters with an affordable and easy option to travel on national highways. In addition to offering a cost-effective substitute for the current toll payment system, the project seeks to ease traffic at toll plazas.

The government introduced yearly and lifetime toll passes primarily to make the experience more affordable for private vehicle owners. This project will improve road travel efficiency and save time by simplifying the process and minimizing the need for frequent toll booth stops. If effectively executed, it has the potential to drastically change toll collecting in India by giving commuters a quicker and more seamless travel experience.

Furthermore, the system supports long-term growth and progress by guaranteeing a steady and sustainable revenue stream that can be used to fund the nation's road infrastructure construction and upkeep.

## How will New Toll System Work?

According to media sources, this plan is currently being reviewed by the Ministry of Road Transport & Highways. Commuters will have two options under the new system:

- **Toll Pass for the year:** This pass, which costs INR 3,000 one-time, entitles users to unlimited travel on national highways and expressways for a full year.
- **Lifetime Toll Pass:** The 15-year-valid Lifetime Toll Pass would eliminate the need for regular toll payments by requiring a one-time payment of INR 30,000.

These passes will reportedly be integrated into the current FASTag system, facilitating a seamless changeover without requiring additional equipment or expenses.

## Current Toll System Vs. New Toll System

Currently, a monthly toll pass costs about INR 340, while an annual pass costs INR 4,080 for highway users. For frequent passengers, these passes are less convenient because they are only good for one toll plaza. The proposed yearly and lifetime toll passes would become more feasible

if this restriction were removed, enabling smooth and unhindered access to all toll roads nationwide.

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### **New Toll Tax Price Reduction**

The Ministry of Road Transport & Highways is thinking of cutting toll prices per kilometer and implementing options like annual and lifetime passes in order to lessen the financial burden on highway users. Union Road Transport Minister Nitin Gadkari recently told the media that the administration has finished researching toll-related issues and is currently creating a thorough plan to allay public worries. In order to fund infrastructure and keep tolls reasonable for commuters, he underlined the necessity of a sustainable and balanced system.

Millions of everyday commuters in India could benefit from more economical and efficient highway travel if these policies are put into place.

# PM Modi Inaugurates Vantara: A Safe Haven for 2,000+ Endangered Animals

Prime Minister Narendra Modi officially inaugurated the Vantara animal rescue and rehabilitation center in Jamnagar on Sunday during his three-day visit to Gujarat. PM Modi also toured the facility, a vast wildlife rescue, rehabilitation, and conservation facility that houses over 1.5 lakh rescued, endangered, and threatened animals from over 2,000 species

During the visit, PM Modi gained an understanding of the facility's all-encompassing approach to treating wildlife.

## Advanced Wildlife Hospital at Vantara

PM Modi saw the cutting-edge veterinary care offered at the state-of-the-art wildlife hospital, which has MRI, CT, and intensive care unit facilities. The facility also has specialized departments for internal medicine, cardiology, nephrology, endoscopy, dentistry, and wildlife anesthesia. Additionally, he saw a leopard have life-saving surgery following a car accident and an Asiatic lion undergo an MRI.

## PM Modi's Heartwarming Moments at Vantara

During his visit, the prime minister had several touching encounters with the center's resident animals. He nursed and played with Asiatic Lion cubs, a White Lion cub that was born at Vantara after its mother was rescued, and a rare Clouded Leopard cub. The center's Caracal breeding program, which is essential to the survival of this dwindling species, was also explained to him.

## Recognizing Vantara's Wildlife Protection Efforts

PM Modi's tour of Vantara demonstrated the facility's dedication to emulating natural environments, which is demonstrated by the spacious enclosures. He engaged with magnificent animals such as Snow Leopards, Golden Tigers, and four Snow Tiger brothers who had been saved from a circus. Aside from petting an Okapi, having a walk among zebras, and feeding a giraffe, and a rhino calf that was left an orphan when her mother passed away at the institution, he also spent time with rescued chimps, a playful orangutan, and a submerged crocodile. In addition, he spotted a two-headed turtle, a big python, and a rare two-headed snake.

## Focus on Elephant Welfare

The Prime Minister also saw elephants using hydrotherapy pools to treat arthritis and foot problems, highlighting Vantara's commitment to animal care. He visited the world's largest elephant hospital and watched the release of rescued parrots back into the wild.

PM Modi's tour came to an end with conversations with the committed physicians, employees, and workers that run Vantara. His visit demonstrated India's dedication to preserving its natural heritage by highlighting Vantara's vital role in wildlife protection.

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## Vantara: A Sanctuary for Endangered Species

Vantara is home to over 2,000 species and more than 1.5 lakh rescued, endangered, and threatened animals. Prime Minister Narendra Modi interacted with several rehabilitated animals during his visit.

The sanctuary houses rare species like Clouded Leopard cubs and Caracals. Under a special breeding program, Caracals are raised and later released into the wild to support their conservation.

The rescued animals live in environments that closely resemble their natural habitats. Key conservation efforts at Vantara include programs for the Asiatic Lion, Snow Leopard, and One-Horned Rhinoceros.

# 7 Out of 26 Navratna Companies Are from Railways; Check the Names Here

**NEW DELHI:** Indian Railway Finance Corporation and Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation were granted Navratna PSU status by the Central government on March 2, 2025. This action gives these companies more flexibility while conducting their operation. The decision has also placed seven listed government-owned businesses under the state transporter's charge under the tag.

Out of the twelve railway CPSEs, Concor, RVNL, IRCON, RITES, and RailTel were previously categorized under different statuses. According to railway minister Ashwini Vaishnaw, "all seven (listed) railway CPSEs got upgraded to Navratna status after 2014." Concor was the first to be listed in July 2014.

## IRCTC and IRFC Join Navratna List

On Monday, the Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation (IRCTC) and IRFC were granted Navratna status, bringing the total number of Central Public Sector Enterprises (CPSEs) with this designation to 26. The Department of Public Enterprises made this announcement. Following this, IRCTC's stock also rose by 0.7% to 680.7 on the BSE.

## IRFC Stock Rises After Navratna Status Approval

After receiving Navratna status from the Indian government, Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) saw its shares rise by 3.7% to 115.25 on the BSE on Tuesday.

**ALSO READ:** [How Maharatna, Navaratna and Miniratna Status Granted to CPSEs?](#)

**ALSO READ:** [Latest List of Maharatna and Navratna Companies in India 2024](#)

## IRFC's Financial Performance

As per government data, IRFC, a subsidiary of the Ministry of Railways, reported:

- **Annual turnover:** 26,644 crore
- **Profit after tax:** 6,412 crore (FY 2023–24)
- **Net worth:** 49,178 crore

Despite this, IRFC's stock has declined:

- **6.8% in the last week**
- **15.9% in the last month**
- **35.5% in the last six months**

### **Government May Reduce Stake in IRFC**

To comply with the Minimum Public Shareholding (MPS) rule, the government might sell some of its stake in IRFC. As of the December quarter, the government held an 86.36% stake in the railway financier.

### **Navratna Status and Investment Benefits**

Navratna companies can independently invest up to 1,000 crore or 15% of their net worth.

### **IRCTC's Financial Performance**

IRCTC, which manages railway ticket booking and catering services, recorded:

- **Revenue:** 4,270 crore
- **Profit after tax:** 1,111 crore
- **Net worth:** 3,230 crore

The Railway Ministry highlighted that all railway CPSEs are making profits, with their combined profit rising from 7,015 crore in FY21 to 11,780 crore in FY24.

# Delhi Budget 2025: BJP to Present Its First Budget in 27 Years – Date and Time Inside

**Delhi Budget 2025:** Delhi Chief Minister Rekha Gupta stated Monday that the state budget for 2025–2026 is expected to be presented between March 24 and 26. Following the Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) 27-year electoral victory last month, this budget will be the BJP's first budget for the NCR.

Rekha Gupta cited the aspirations of the populace and stated that the budget would prioritize developing Delhi in accordance with the election pledge.

## Delhi Budget: Fulfilment of BJP's Manifesto

She mentioned the poll promises (to provide poor women with 2,500 per month), hospital expansion, transportation services, Yamuna cleaning, and senior citizen benefits, and stated that their goal is to create a budget that keeps its promises. Delhi CM Gupta announced in front of the media stating, "We will ask for the public's suggestions and incorporate them into the budget."

## Public Participation in Delhi Budget 2025

Gupta urged individuals to submit their budgetary proposals to the provided email address ([viksitdelhibudget-25@delhi.gov.in](mailto:viksitdelhibudget-25@delhi.gov.in)) and a phone number (9999962025). She also mentioned a website solely dedicated to Delhi citizens' suggestions and advice to the government.

Gupta said she will hold multiple meetings before the budget starts on March 5, including a meeting with women's organizations.

According to the BJP representative, recommendations would be gathered from all facets of society in order to fulfill the promises that were made in the manifesto, including improving education, lowering air pollution, increasing public transit options, expanding health infrastructure, and providing financial assistance to women.

**ALSO READ: [SC Ruling: Visually Impaired Can Now Be Judges, Strikes Down MP Judicial Service Rule](#)**

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## Language

### **Key Aspects of the Delhi Budget 2025**

The administration would also prioritize senior citizen welfare, cleaning the Yamuna, delivering on its promises to implement other public welfare programs, and providing nutritious food to the impoverished at reduced prices.

According to the chief minister, more than 5,000 women from various associations have been invited to the Delhi Assembly to provide feedback on the budget. "On March 6, we have invited a number of other people from various sectors, including education, rural development, farmers, and young people from all over the city, to present written recommendations to the Delhi Vidhan Sabha. Additionally, our MLAs will visit the public to solicit recommendations from all groups, including those residing in unapproved colonies," she stated.

"We will fulfill all the promises made in the manifesto. Every single promise will be fulfilled," promised Rekha Gupta in front of the news media.

# SC Ruling: Visually Impaired Can Now Be Judges, Strikes Down MP Judicial Service Rule

**New Delhi:** On Monday, the Supreme Court overturned a Madhya Pradesh Judicial Services regulation, ruling that individuals with visual impairments are qualified to serve as judges. According to a bench consisting of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan, no applicant should be excluded from the judicial services recruiting process due to a disability.

A Supreme Court bench of Justices J.B. Pardiwala and R. Mahadevan ruled on multiple petitions, including a suo motu case about the lack of reservations for certain candidates in judicial services. Here's what this important verdict means.

## No Discrimination, Equal Opportunities – SC

"The state must take affirmative action to guarantee that people with disabilities are included in the judicial system and that they are not subjected to any form of discrimination." The Supreme Court bench ruled that no candidate may be excluded from such an opportunity due to a disability.

The top court was considering a case challenging the Madhya Pradesh Judicial Services Rules (6A), which prohibited visually handicapped individuals from taking part in the hiring process for judicial positions. A woman whose visually impaired son wanted to be a judge but was unable to attend the screening process contested the rule. She sent a letter to DY Chandrachud, the former Chief Justice of India, which sparked a public interest lawsuit brought by the court.

## Visually Impaired Judges Have Been Appointed Before

The Supreme Court had earlier confirmed that visually impaired individuals can serve as judges, even in the Supreme Court. Following this, Tamil Nadu and Rajasthan have appointed visually impaired judges. In 2009, T. Chakkaravarthy became Tamil Nadu's first visually impaired judicial officer.

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### **Major Step Towards Equality**

The Supreme Court declared that in order to uphold fundamental equality, any indirect discrimination that leads to the exclusion of individuals with disabilities—whether through cutoffs or procedural barriers—must be prohibited, invalidating the Madhya Pradesh Judicial Services Rules.

This Supreme Court decision promotes inclusion in judicial services, ensuring equal opportunities for visually impaired candidates. It also reinforces their rights under the Rights of Persons with Disabilities Act, 2016.

# Project Lion: PM Modi Announces National Wildlife Health Centre in Gujarat

A National Referral Centre for Wildlife (NRC-W) will be established in Gujarat's Junagadh district as part of Project Lion. As per the official sources, the project has received a budget of 2,927.71 crore from the Union government.

Construction of a boundary wall has already begun on the 20.24 hectares of land in New Pipaliya that the Gujarat forest department has set aside for the facility.

## 60% Infectious Diseases Caused by Animals

According to one of these officials, the Central Zoo Authority, a nodal agency of the Union Ministry of Environment, Forests, and Climate Change, plans to establish this center to enhance the capacity to monitor diseases in wildlife, particularly in relation to pathogens that can spread to humans, a phenomenon known as zoonosis.

The official, who wished to remain anonymous, continued, "Wildlife health is an important and often overlooked component of conservation efforts." "60% of all infectious diseases that affect humans are spread by animals, and zoonoses account for sixty percent of newly discovered infectious diseases worldwide."

## Why is Disease Monitoring Centre Needed?

The need for such a centre is urgent, as evidenced by recent wildlife health emergencies. In 2019, over 18,000 migratory birds perished from avian botulism. 24 lions died as a result of the 2018 Asiatic lion outbreak in Gir Forest. About 400 monkeys died in 2015 due to an outbreak of Kyasanur Forest sickness, according to another official.

The four guiding concepts of the NRC-W will be preparedness, prevention, response, and surveillance. Disease research, a national wildlife disease surveillance program, emergency response, wildlife professional training, and policy formation are all part of its mission.

## Natural Environment for the Lions

Existing natural elements, such as ponds, streams, and contours, will be preserved on campus.

Four departmental buildings for administration, training, informatics and analytics, and wildlife health management are part of the plan.

Additionally, Project Lion builds a state-of-the-art veterinary clinic and monitoring center in Sasan to keep an eye on Gir's wildlife.

### **What is Project Lion?**

On August 15, 2020, Prime Minister Narendra Modi introduced Project Lion, which prioritizes technology-driven conservation, human-lion conflict reduction, and community engagement.

According to 2020 statistics, there are 674 Asiatic lions spread across 53 talukas in 9 districts, occupying nearly 30,000 square kilometers in Gujarat. The 10-year project intends to protect these animals.

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### **Barda Wildlife Sanctuary: A Second Home for Lions**

According to a forest department official, Barda Wildlife Sanctuary has become a "second home" for lions as a result of this effort, and it currently houses 17 lions, including 6 adults and 11 cubs.

Authorities built 11,000 machans to lessen confrontation between humans and wildlife, parapet barriers around 55,108 open wells to avoid wildlife falls, deployed 92 rescue vehicles for wildlife crises and hired 237 beat guards in 2024 to bolster conservation efforts.

# Historic Move by US President Trump: English Declared America's Official Language

Donald Trump, the president of the United States, declared English to be the nation's official language. President Trump claimed that this decision would bring the immigrant-shaped nation together.

In an executive order released on Saturday, March 1, Trump stated that it was "long past time" for the country to legally recognize English as its official language.

## US National Language

"A nationally designated language is at the core of a unified and cohesive society, and the United States is strengthened by a citizenry that can freely exchange ideas in one shared language," the order stated.

A presidential mandate that was put in place in the 1990s under then-President Bill Clinton and mandated federal agencies and organizations that received government funds to help non-English speakers was repealed by the order. The new rule, however, gives agencies latitude in determining the extent of their multilingual assistance.

## Agencies to Have Flexibility in Multilingual Assistance

The letter said that "nothing in this order... requires or directs any change in the services provided by any agency," and that department heads will determine what is required "to fulfill their respective agencies' mission and efficiently provide Government services to the American people."

While acknowledging that there are more than 350 languages spoken in the US, the White House maintained that English has been the primary language "since the founding of our Republic." The decree also pointed out that important historical texts were written in English, such as the US Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

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### **America's Multilingual Population**

- More than **350 languages** are spoken in the U.S.
- Around **68 million Americans** speak a language other than English at home.
- Over **40 million people** speak Spanish at home.
- Other widely spoken languages include **Chinese, Vietnamese, and Native American languages**.

As president, Trump has issued numerous executive orders since he came into office. But many of his orders were challenged in court, especially those that dealt with government funds.

# Tuhin Kanta Pandey to Replace Madhabi Puri Buch as SEBI Chairperson

Tuhin Kanta Pandey, India's finance secretary, has been named the Securities and Exchange Board of India's (SEBI) eleventh chairperson, for a three-year term. He will take over for Madhabi Puri Buch, who will step down as SEBI's first female chairperson on February 28, 2025.

The Cabinet has authorized the appointment of Pandey, IAS (OR: 1987), Finance Secretary, and Secretary, Department of Revenue to the position of SEBI chairperson, per a notification issued by the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) on Thursday, February 27. The original term of Pandey's appointment is three years from the date of his assumption of leadership.

## Pandey Takes Charge Amid Market Challenges

Pandey takes over while the Indian stock market is under bearish pressure as a result of foreign institutional investors' (FIIs') ongoing withdrawals. In 2025, foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) took out more over Rs 1.13 lakh crore.

## Who is Tuhin Kanta Pandey?

Pandey is an Odisha cadre IAS officer who was drafted in 1987 and has held important government posts. In September 2024, he was named Finance Secretary, taking over from TV Somanathan, who had been promoted to Cabinet Secretary. Prior to that, he oversaw the Department of Investment and Public Asset Management (DIPAM) and the Department of Public Enterprises (DPE).

**[ALSO READ: India's First Semiconductor Chip to be ready by 2025; Top Companies Tata, Micron in the Race](#)**

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## Pandey's Key Contributions

Major economic choices, such as the historic sale of Air India and the public listing of LIC, were significantly influenced by him.

In his capacity as Finance Secretary, Pandey played a critical role in overseeing the ministry's functioning and providing policy advice to the Finance Minister. He played a key role in forming India's fiscal and economic policies while representing the ministry before the Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee.

With his extensive background in financial management and governance, Pandey now leads SEBI, ushering in a new era in his remarkable career.

### **Tuhin Kanta Pandey Educational Background**

Pandey has an MBA from the UK and an MA in Economics from Punjab University in Chandigarh. Throughout his career, he has held important administrative positions in both the central and state governments of Odisha.

In addition to holding a number of jobs in industries like health, transportation, and commercial taxation, he was the Deputy Secretary in the Ministry of Commerce and the District Collector of Sambalpur.

Prior to his leadership position at DIPAM, where he oversaw significant disinvestment activities, he served as Joint Secretary at the Planning Commission. In 2021, he also served for a short time as Secretary in the Ministry of Civil Aviation.