



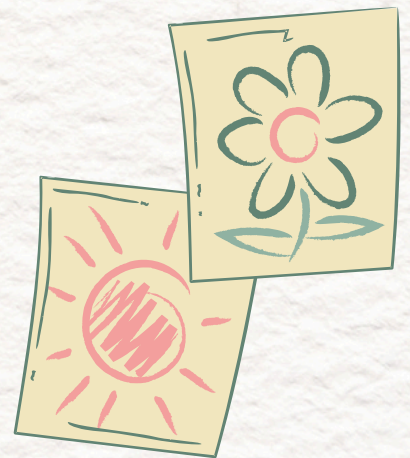
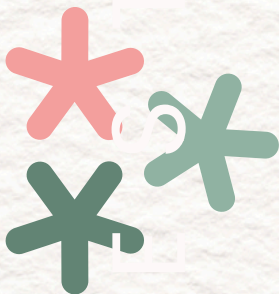
MONTHLY

Current Affairs

One -Liner



GK Digest



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MONTHLY GK DIGEST: DECEMBER 2024

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

REGIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY FORUM IN RIYADH

- The forum brought together around 300 participants, including leaders, policymakers, and experts from social security organizations across the Asia-Pacific region.

- Peer Learning:** Facilitate knowledge sharing and networking among social security leaders and professionals.
- Innovation Showcase:** Highlight innovative practices and solutions in social security.
- Policy Discussions:** Address regional social security challenges and explore ways to enhance coverage and service delivery.
- Collaboration:** Foster cooperation and partnerships among social security institutions.

INTERNATIONAL NEWS-ONE LINER

- On December 2, 2024, **"Brain Rot"** was declared the **Oxford Word of the Year 2024**. This term describes the mental deterioration caused by overconsumption of trivial online content.
- On December 4, 2024, **Nepal and China signed a framework agreement to advance** the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). This agreement aims to enhance economic cooperation and infrastructure projects, marking a significant step towards transforming Nepal from a land-locked to a land-linked country.
- On December 4, 2024, **the Cambridge Dictionary named "manifest" as its Word of the Year 2024**. The term saw a significant rise in lookups and usage due to social media and celebrities attributing their success to manifestation.
- On December 1, 2024, **China's first atmospheric monitoring station in Antarctica, the Zhongshan National Atmospheric Background Station**, became operational. Located in the Larsemann Hills of East Antarctica, it will conduct continuous observations of atmospheric components to support global climate change research.
- On **December 1, 2024, Russian President Vladimir Putin approved a record-breaking military budget for 2025**, allocating \$126 billion (13.5 trillion rubles). This represents 32.5% of total government spending, significantly increasing military expenditure amid the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.
- December 6 has **been declared as the Day of Remembrance for Mahatma Gandhi in the American state of Nebraska**. This recognition was **made by Governor Jim Pillen, who also unveiled a statue of Mahatma Gandhi** at the Nebraska State Capitol in Lincoln.

- The **United Nations General Assembly (UNGA)** declared **December 21 as World Meditation Day** in 2024. This resolution, co-sponsored by India and other countries, recognizes the benefits of meditation for mental, emotional, and physical well-being.
- On December 4, 2024, **UNESCO recognized traditional Japanese sake-making as an Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity**. This honors the age-old brewing process integral to Japanese culture and ceremonies. The designation aims to promote and preserve the craft both domestically and internationally.
- **Merriam-Webster named "polarization" as its 2024 Word of the Year**. The term means division into two sharply distinct opposites. It saw a significant rise in lookups, reflecting societal divides.
- **Switzerland will suspend the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) clause** in its Double Taxation Avoidance Agreement (DTAA) with India starting January 1, 2025. This decision raises the withholding tax on dividends for Indian residents from 5% to 10%.
- On **December 11, 2024, Elon Musk's net worth surpassed \$400 billion**, making him the first person to reach this milestone. This significant increase was driven by gains in the valuations of Tesla and SpaceX. His net worth peaked at approximately \$440 billion following a private share sale at SpaceX.
- On **December 15, 2024, Britain joined the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) as its 12th member**. This is Britain's largest trade deal since Brexit, enhancing trade ties with nations like Japan, Australia, and Canada.
- On December 14, 2024, **South Korean President Yoon Suk Yeol was impeached over his martial law order**. The National Assembly passed the motion with 204 votes in favor and 85 against. Prime Minister Han Duck-soo has taken over presidential duties.
- On **December 18, 2024, Russia announced the development of an mRNA-based cancer vaccine**. This personalized vaccine, using genetic material from a patient's tumor, aims to treat cancer.

NATIONAL MISSION ON CULTURAL MAPPING AND ROADMAP (NMCMR)

- Its goal is to preserve and promote India's rich and diverse cultural heritage.
- The **Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA)** is responsible for implementing this mission, which aims to document cultural resources and assess their potential to rejuvenate rural economies.
- As part of **Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, which commemorates 75 years** of Indian independence, the mission has introduced the **Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD) portal**.
- **This portal seeks to document the cultural heritage of 6.5 lakh villages** across India.
- **By mapping these cultural assets, the initiative** hopes to not only preserve traditions but also foster local economic growth through tourism and cultural activities.

FOREST COVER DATA UPDATED BY THE GOVERNMENT

- The Forest Survey of India (FSI) **updated its base year to 2022-23 from the previous 2011-12**.
- **India's total forest cover now stands at 7,13,789 square kilometers**, which is 21.71% of the nation's geographical area.
- The **latest assessment shows an increase of 7,449 square kilometers** in forest and tree cover since the last assessment in 2017.
- There has **been no loss in forest cover or tree cover, addressing concerns about increased carbon emissions** due to deforestation.

NEW CRIMINAL LAWS LAUNCHED IN INDIA

- These laws—**Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, Bharatiya Nagarik Suraksha Sanhita, and Bharatiya Sakshya Adhinyam**—**aim to modernize India's criminal justice system by replacing colonial-era laws**.
- The initiative focuses on providing timely and fair justice, enhancing citizen safety, and eliminating outdated practices.
- Chandigarh became the first region to fully implement these reforms, showcasing advanced police functions through AI and digital evidence.

NATIONAL NEWS

UNION MINISTER LAUNCHED 'ANNA CHAKRA' TO ENHANCE THE EFFICIENCY OF THE PDS SUPPLY CHAIN

- The initiative has been developed in **collaboration with the World Food Programme and IIT-Delhi**.
- The 'Anna Chakra' uses **advanced algorithms to optimize the movement and distribution** of food grains throughout India.
- This **innovative tool focuses on reducing inefficiencies in the PDS supply chain**, ensuring that food reaches the intended beneficiaries more effectively and on time.
- The **SCAN Portal (Subsidy Claim Application for NFSA) simplifies the subsidy claim process for states**, ensuring seamless submission, scrutiny, and approval of claims.
- It **aims to save the government around Rs 250 crore annually by streamlining** logistics and minimizing waste and delays.

ON HUMAN RIGHTS DAY, THE 'HAMARA SHAUCHALAY: HAMARA SAMMAN' CAMPAIGN CONCLUDED

- **Campaign Duration:** Launched on November 19, 2024 (World Toilet Day) and concluded on December 10, 2024 (Human Rights Day).
- **Organized by:** Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation, Ministry of Jal Shakti.
- The **theme for the 'Hamara Shauchalay: Hamara Samman'** campaign is "Sanitation for Peace"
- **Sanitation and Dignity:** The campaign aimed to link sanitation facilities with human dignity and rights. It stressed that access to clean and functional toilets is a fundamental human right and integral to human dignity.
- **Community Mobilization:** It encouraged community participation in improving and maintaining sanitation facilities across India. The campaign sought to raise awareness about the importance of sanitation in promoting health, dignity, and overall well-being.

WORLD HINDU ECONOMIC FORUM HELD IN MUMBAI

- The forum was **organized by the World Hindu Economic Forum (WHEF) and chaired by Swami Vigyananand**, the founder of the organization.

- The **theme of the forum was "Think in future, for the future"**.
- **Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath emphasized** the principles of Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha, and highlighted the state's economic turnaround.
- **Gujarat Chief Minister Bhupendra Patel discussed the state's initiatives to boost economic growth** and infrastructure development.
- The **forum included sessions on entrepreneurship, wealth creation, and sustainable economic models**, with insights from global leaders and industry experts.

ECO-CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION HACKATHON BY MOEFCC IN NEW DELHI

- **Overwhelming Participation:** The hackathon saw 411,711 participants from across 14 states, with 190,033 innovative ideas submitted.
- **Top Ideas and Recognition:** The top five student ideas were announced and awarded, along with top five teachers and state-level nodal agencies for their support.
- **Showcase of Projects:** The final showcase featured 35 selected projects that demonstrated students' creativity and problem-solving skills in addressing environmental challenges.
- **Key Messages:** Officials emphasized the importance of Mission LiFE as a people-driven initiative and encouraged mindful resource usage.
- The theme for **the hackathon was "Lifestyle for Environment (LiFE)"**, which encourages innovative solutions for promoting sustainable living practices and addressing environmental challenges.

10TH INTERNATIONAL FOREST FAIR INAUGURATED IN BHOPAL BY CM DR. MOHAN YADAV

- **International Participation:** The fair saw participation from countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal, and Australia, enriching its international character.
- **Theme:** This year's theme is "Women Empowerment through Minor Forest Produce", highlighting the significant role of women in managing minor forest produce, which constitutes 50% of the workforce in this sector.

- **Exhibitions and Stalls:** Approximately 300 stalls were set up, showcasing various products and services related to forestry and minor forest produce.
- **Health Services:** The fair included free medical consultations from qualified Ayurveda doctors, promoting holistic health and well-being.
- **Collaboration and Networking:** The event encouraged collaboration among various stakeholders in the forestry sector, including government bodies, NGOs, and private enterprises.
- The fair aims to promote gender equality, support women's contributions to the economy, and encourage sustainable practices in forest management.

DARPG LAUNCHES "PRASHASAN GAON KI ORE" NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN 2024

- This campaign, which will take place in over 700 districts from December 19 to 24, 2024, aims to redress public grievances and improve service delivery at the grassroots level.
- **Theme:** The theme of the campaign is "Effective Governance, Efficient Service Delivery", which underscores the government's commitment to ensuring that public services are accessible, responsive, and accountable.
- The campaign focuses on reaching rural areas, addressing the concerns of villagers, and streamlining processes to enhance the overall governance experience.

NATIONAL NEWS- ONE LINER

- The Uttar Pradesh government has declared the **Maha Kumbh area** in Prayagraj a new district named Maha Kumbh Mela Janpad. This aims to improve management and administration for the Maha Kumbh Mela, scheduled from January 13 to February 26, 2025. The new district includes the Prayagraj tehsils of Sadar, Sohraw, Phoolpur, and Karachhna, along with 67 villages.
- A study by **Oxford University's Saïd Business School** praised the **PRAGATI platform** for its role in accelerating 340 infrastructure projects worth \$205 billion. The study highlighted PRAGATI's impact on improving governance and accountability by fostering collaboration between federal and regional governments.

- The **Ratapani Tiger Reserve in Madhya Pradesh** was officially notified as **India's 57th Tiger Reserve on December 3, 2024**. Covering an area of 1271.4 square kilometers, it includes a core area of 763.8 square kilometers. This move aims to bolster conservation efforts for the tiger population in India.
- The **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (MGNREGS)** provides 100 days of wage employment yearly to rural households' adult members who volunteer for unskilled manual work. Announced on December 3, 2024, it aims to enhance livelihood security for vulnerable rural populations.
- The **Nano Bubble Technology** was launched on **December 3, 2024, at the National Zoological Park** in Delhi by Union Minister Kirti Vardhan Singh. This innovative technology aims to clean and purify pond water by removing algae and other impurities, ensuring the health and well-being of aquatic animals.
- On **December 4, 2024, the Andhra Pradesh government approved the IT & GCC Policy 4.0**. The policy aims to establish co-working and neighborhood working spaces in cities like Tirupati, Visakhapatnam, and Vijayawada.
- On **December 4, 2024, UNESCO declared West Bengal the top destination for heritage tourism**. Chief Minister Mamata Banerjee highlighted the state's efforts in developing heritage and religious tourism sites. The state has enhanced iconic places of worship and improved tourism infrastructure.
- On **December 4, 2024, Uber launched Asia's first water transport service, Uber Shikara**, on Dal Lake in Srinagar. This service allows tourists to book traditional shikara rides through the Uber app. It blends technology with tradition, enhancing the tourism experience in the region.
- The **National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog)** reported that the number of gig and platform workers in India is expected to increase to **23.5 million by 2029-30**. This is a significant rise from **7.7 million in 2020-21**, with the gig workforce projected to constitute 6.7% of the non-agricultural workforce and 4.1% of the total livelihood by 2029-30.
- On **December 5, 2024, the Indian Parliament approved the Indian Airforce Bill 2024, replacing the Aircraft Act, 1934**. This new legislation aims to

simplify aviation regulations, enhance safety standards, and promote ease of doing business in the aviation sector.

- India has **expanded the world's largest grain storage scheme in the cooperative sector, with** storage units of 9,750 metric tonnes at PACS in 11 states. Over 500 additional PACS are identified for further enhancement. This scheme aims to reduce food grain wastage, enhance food security, and provide better storage facilities for farmers.
- Union Health Minister Jagat Prakash Nadda **launched a 100-day intensive TB elimination campaign in Panchkula, Haryana, on December 7, 2024. The campaign** covers 347 districts across 33 states and Union Territories, targeting high-risk groups to enhance TB detection, reduce diagnostic delays, and improve treatment outcomes as part of the National Strategic Plan for Tuberculosis Elimination.
- The 4th **Mekong-Ganga Dhamma Yatra started in New Delhi on December 7, 2024. This pilgrimage aims to strengthen cultural ties between the Mekong and Ganga civilizations and promote the enduring message** of the Dhamma globally.
- On December 6, 2024, the Indian government launched PM e-Vidya DTH Channel No. 31, dedicated to Indian Sign Language (ISL). This 24x7 channel provides educational content for hearing-impaired students, special educators, and interpreters.
- On **December 4, 2024, the Telangana government signed an agreement with Google** to establish the Google Safety Engineering Centre (GSEC) in Hyderabad. This center will focus on AI-driven security solutions and cybersecurity research. It is the first of its kind in the APAC region and the fifth globally. The GSEC aims to enhance cybersecurity capabilities in India.
- On December 4, 2024, **the Assam government announced a ban on the public consumption of beef. The ban extends to restaurants, hotels, public functions, and community spaces across the state. This decision aims to promote community harmony and respect religious sentiments.**
- Sugamya **Bharat Abhiyan, launched in 2015, completed 9 years on December 3, 2024.** The initiative aims to enhance accessibility for persons with disabilities by improving public places, transport, and digital platforms.
- **At the age of 74, Wisdom, the oldest known wild bird, has laid her first egg in four years** at the Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge in Hawaii. Tagged in 1956, Wisdom continues to inspire with her resilience and longevity.
- India **has become the most targeted nation for mobile malware attacks, accounting for 28% of global incidents between June 2023 and May 2024. This surpasses the United States (27.3%) and Canada (15.9%).** The rise in attacks highlights the urgent need for On December 7, 2024, Google DeepMind unveiled GenCast, an advanced AI model for weather prediction. GenCast provides faster, more accurate forecasts up to 15 days ahead, using probabilistic ensemble forecasting for detailed weather insights.
- The Ashtalakshmi Mahotsav 2024 was held from November 6 **to 8, 2024, at the Bharat Mandapam in New Delhi. The theme was celebrating** the cultural heritage and economic potential of Northeast India. The aim was to showcase the region's vibrant crafts, textiles, and GI products while promoting economic opportunities and cultural exchange.enhanced cybersecurity measures in India.
- On December 10, 2024, **the Rajasthan government announced that** Pravasi Rajasthani Diwas will be celebrated every year on December 10th to honor the contributions of the Pravasi Rajasthani community to the state's development.
- On **December 6, 2024, IIT Madras completed India's first Hyperloop test track, spanning 410 meters.** This project, led by the Avishkar Hyperloop team and TuTr, aims to achieve speeds of up to 1,100 km/h, potentially reducing Mumbai-Pune travel time to 25 minutes.
- On December 10, 2024, **the Supreme Court of India directed the central government to grant** permanent commissions to woman army officers. This ensures that women officers receive the same benefits as their male counterparts, promoting equality and fairness in the Indian Army.
- According to the **National Family Health Survey-5 (2019-21), India has achieved a Total Fertility Rate (TFR) of 2.0.** This aligns with the targets set by the National Population Policy 2000 and the National Health Policy 2017.
- On December 10, 2024, **IIT Ropar's iHub AWaDH launched a cost-effective Bluetooth Low Energy (BLE) Gateway and Node System.** This innovation

enables seamless real-time data transmission for applications in agriculture, logistics, and smart cities.

- The Lok Sabha passed the Railways **(Amendment) Bill, 2024 on December 11, 2024. The bill aims to enhance the functioning** and independence of the Railway Board by amending the Railways Act of 1989. Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw **assured that the bill will not lead to the privatization of the national carrier.**
- **The BBC 100 Women List 2024 was released on December 3, 2024.** It features three Indian women: Aruna Roy (social activist), Vinesh Phogat (wrestler and politician), and Pooja Sharma (performing last rites for unclaimed bodies). They were recognized for their significant contributions and inspiring work.
- On December 13, **2024, Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the Kumbh Sahayak chatbot** for the Mahakumbh 2025. This AI-powered chatbot, developed by Krutrim AI, helps visitors with navigation, parking, accommodation, and more.
- Union Minister **H.D. Kumaraswamy unveiled the Green Steel Taxonomy** for India on December 12, 2024, in New Delhi. This initiative defines and promotes green technologies in steel production, setting emission intensity thresholds and a star rating system to incentivize low-carbon steel production.
- The 7th **Smart India Hackathon (SIH) took place from December 11 to December 12, 2024**, at 51 centers nationwide. Organized by the Ministry of Education and AICTE, it engaged over 86,000 teams in solving real-world problems across 17 themes, incl
- Bauma **CONEXPO INDIA 2024 is an international trade fair for the construction, mining, and infrastructure sectors.** It runs from December 11 to December 14, 2024, at the India Expo Centre in Greater Noida. The event features over 1,000 exhibitors and 20,000 products, focusing on innovations and sustainable technologies. The theme is "Banayenge Viksit Bharat", highlighting India's development goals.
- Arunachal Pradesh Chief Minister **Pema Khandu unveiled the new logo for the 4th Edition of the Eaglenest Bird Festival** on December 10, 2024. The festival is scheduled to be held from January 17 to 19, 2025, at Khellong and Thongre villages in West Kameng District.

- The Disaster Management **(Amendment) Bill, 2024 was passed** by the Lok Sabha on December 12, 2024. It aims to strengthen the disaster management system by enhancing roles of the National and State Disaster Management Authorities and introducing Urban Disaster Management Authorities.
- On December 11, **2024, BEML (Bharat Earth Movers Limited)** secured a Rs 136 crore contract from the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to supply indigenously designed High Mobility Vehicles (HMs) 8x8. These HMs will be deployed for the Battlefield Surveillance System (BFSS) project, enhancing India's defence capabilities and supporting the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative.
- On December 8, **2024, Chhattisgarh Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai launched the Nikshay Niramay Chhattisgarh Abhiyan.** This 100-day campaign aims to eradicate tuberculosis, malaria, and leprosy in the state, featuring mobile medical units and awareness vehicles.
- On December **17, 2024, the Indian Council of Medical Research (ICMR) and the Madras Diabetes Research Foundation (MDRF) established India's first diabetes biobank in Chennai.** This biobank aims to facilitate advanced diabetes research by collecting, processing, storing, and distributing biological samples.
- On December 13, 2024, **the National Highways Authority of India (NHAI) announced the introduction of advanced Route Patrolling Vehicles (RPVs) called Rajmarg Saathi.** Equipped with AI-powered dashboard cameras, these RPVs aim to enhance highway safety by detecting road hazards and improving emergency response.
- On December **16, 2024, C-DOT and Trois Infotech signed an agreement to develop "Face Recognition Using Drone" technology under the Telecom Technology Development Fund (TTDF) scheme.** This innovation aims to enhance aerial surveillance for traffic management, emergency response, defense, and environmental monitoring.
- On **December 15, 2024, Northern Coalfields Limited (NCL) launched the CHARAK initiative** in Singrauli to provide free treatment for life-threatening diseases to economically weaker sections. It covers diseases like malignancy, TB, HIV, and cardiovascular disorders for families with an annual income below Rs. 8 lakhs.

- On **December 11, 2024, BMW Group and UNICEF partnered to empower** 100,000 children in rural India through STEM education and gender equality initiatives in Assam, Jharkhand, Tamil Nadu, and West Bengal. This is part of a global effort to reach over 10 million children annually.
- On December 7, **2024, Uttar Pradesh became the first state in India to fully adopt** the Government e-Marketplace (GeM) platform. This initiative replaces over 33 old procurement rules and aims to enhance transparency and efficiency, potentially saving the state over Rs 2,000 crore annually.
- On December 9, 2024, **Punjab became the first state in India to enact the Development and Promotion of Sports Act 2024.** This legislation aims to adopt best practices for sports development, ensure fair player selection, and enhance transparency in sports associations.
- On December 10, 2024, **Rajasthan Chief Minister Bhajan Lal Sharma announced** that December 10 will be celebrated as Pravasi Rajasthani Divas every year to honor the contributions of the Rajasthani diaspora.
- On **December 9, 2024, Uttarakhand became the first state in India** to implement a dedicated yoga policy. This initiative aims to integrate Ayurveda and Yoga into the healthcare sector, promoting wellness and holistic health.
- On **December 16, 2024, Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil inaugurated Gujarat's** first semiconductor assembly and testing plant in Surat. Established by Suchi Semicon, this facility spans 30,000 square feet and aims to produce up to 3 million semiconductor chips daily. This plant is part of the Atmanirbhar Bharat initiative to boost domestic semiconductor manufacturing.
- On December 6, **2024, the Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) and the Department of Posts (DoP)** renewed their MoU in New Delhi. This aims to enhance the Post Office Passport Seva Kendra (POPSK) services, expanding the network to 600 centres by 2028-29 and increasing the annual customer base from 35 lakh to 1 crore.
- On December 17, 2024, Dr. Jitendra Singh, Union Minister of State for Science and Technology, launched Kisan Kavach, India's first **anti-pesticide bodysuit. Developed by BRIC-inStem and Sepio Health Pvt. Ltd.,** it protects farmers from harmful pesticide exposure using advanced fabric technology.
- On December 15, 2024, **Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar inaugurated India's first Geo Science Museum** in Gwalior, Madhya Pradesh. Located in the Victoria Market Heritage Building, the museum showcases rare geological specimens and interactive exhibits, highlighting Earth's geological wonders and evolution.
- **The Ministry of Ports, Shipping, and Waterways (MoPSW) organized the inaugural** India Maritime Heritage Conclave 2024 on December 11-12, 2024, at Yashobhoomi, Dwarka, New Delhi. The event celebrated India's rich maritime legacy and its contributions to global trade and culture. Key participants included Union Ministers Sarbananda Sonowal, Mansukh Mandaviya, and Gajendra Singh Shekhawat.
- The Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT) has **extended the Import Management System (IMS) for IT hardware products until December 31, 2025.** This extension aims to address the ongoing supply-demand imbalance in the IT hardware market, covering products like laptops, tablets, all-in-one PCs, ultra-small form factor computers, and servers.
- On December 11, **2024, Union Minister Nitin Gadkari unveiled the SWITCH** Eiv12 and SWITCH E1 electric buses. The Eiv12 is designed for the Indian market, while the E1 targets the European market, both emphasizing sustainable urban mobility.
- NLC India **Limited partnered with UPRVUNL to launch its** first supercritical power plant, the 1980 MW Ghatampur Thermal Power Plant (GTPP), in Uttar Pradesh. The plant, developed through their joint venture Neyveli Uttar Pradesh Power Limited (NUPPL), **began commercial operations on December 12, 2024.**
- **Google partnered with the National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT)** to launch YouTube channels in 29 Indian languages on December 12, 2024. The launch took place in India, aiming to make quality educational content accessible to students, parents, and teachers across the nation.
- Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) **extended its partnership with Telenor Denmark (TnDK) for another five years on December 12, 2024.** TCS will continue to provide ITIS managed services, ensuring uninterrupted business continuity and enhancing

digital assets through advanced automation solutions.

- The **Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA)** reimposed the **Protected Area Regime (PAR)** in Manipur, Mizoram, and Nagaland on December 19, 2024. This decision, driven by security concerns over the influx of foreigners from neighboring countries, mandates that foreign nationals must obtain Protected Area Permits (PAP) to visit these states.
- The **first-ever tagging of a Ganges river dolphin was conducted in Assam on December 18, 2024**. This initiative, part of Project Dolphin, aims to study the dolphins' migratory patterns and habitat utilization. It was led by the Wildlife Institute of India (WII) with **the Assam Forest Department and Aaranyak, funded** by the National CAMPA Authority.
- The **Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI)** **successfully implemented a framework** on December 11, 2024, ensuring the traceability of all commercial SMS. This initiative mandates the use of blockchain-based Distributed Ledger Technology (DLT) for message transmission paths, enhancing transparency and reducing spam.
- India partnered with **France to set up the Yuga Yugeen Bharat National Museum** on December 19, 2024. This collaboration aims to transform New Delhi's historic North and South Blocks into a world-class museum celebrating India's 5,000-year history.
- **Masali Village in Gujarat's Banaskantha district became India's first solar border village** on December 18, 2024. The village, located about 40 kilometers from the Pakistan border, achieved 100% solar power generation, providing more than enough electricity for its 800 residents.

BANKING

GST COLLECTION INCREASED BY 8.5% TO MORE THAN 1.82 LAKH CRORE RUPEES IN NOVEMBER 2024

- This increase reflects a healthy economic activity and robust compliance.
- The collection figures were boosted by a **9.4% rise in domestic GST revenue and a 5.9% increase** in revenue from imports.

- The GST collection data was released on **December 1, 2024**, indicating positive trends in tax compliance and revenue growth,
- which are critical for the government's fiscal health and its ability to fund various developmental projects and initiatives.

NATIONAL MISSION ON CULTURAL MAPPING AND ROADMAP (NMC MR)

- Its goal is to preserve and promote India's rich and diverse cultural heritage.
- The Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts (IGNCA) is responsible for implementing this mission, which aims to document cultural resources and assess their potential to rejuvenate rural economies.
- As part of Azadi Ka Amrit Mahotsav, which commemorates 75 years of Indian independence, the mission has introduced the Mera Gaon Meri Dharohar (MGMD) portal.
- This portal seeks to document the cultural heritage of 6.5 lakh villages across India.
- By mapping these cultural assets, the initiative hopes to not only preserve traditions but also foster local economic growth through tourism and cultural activities.

REVISED INSTRUCTIONS ON INOPERATIVE ACCOUNTS / UNCLAIMED DEPOSITS IN BANKS

- **Reduction of Inoperative Accounts:** Banks are urged to reduce the number of inoperative or frozen accounts. These are accounts that have not been operated for a long period (usually 10 years or more).
- **Quarterly Progress Reports:** Banks are required to report their progress in reducing inoperative accounts every quarter. This helps ensure that banks are actively working to manage these accounts.
- **Seamless KYC Updates:** To make the process of reactivating accounts smoother, banks should enable seamless KYC (Know Your Customer) updates. This can be done through mobile or internet banking, non-home branches, and video customer identification processes.
- **Special Campaigns:** Banks are encouraged to organize special campaigns to help customers reactivate their accounts. These campaigns can also be used to facilitate the updating of Aadhaar details for customers.

- **Annual Review:** Banks are advised to conduct an annual review of accounts with no customer-induced transactions for more than a year. This helps identify accounts that may become inoperative in the future and allows banks to take proactive measures.
- These measures **aim to reduce the quantum of unclaimed deposits and return** such deposits to their rightful owners.
- By making the process more customer-friendly and efficient, the RBI hopes to minimize the number of inoperative accounts and ensure that customers have access to their funds.

DPIIT RELEASED THE FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) REPORT FOR INDIA

- The report highlighted a significant **45% increase in FDI inflows, amounting to \$29.79 billion**, compared to the same period in the previous year.
- **Singapore** emerged as the **largest contributor**, accounting for **50% of the total FDI inflows** with \$7.53 billion, followed by Mauritius, the Netherlands, the US, and the UAE.
- Key sectors attracting substantial investments included services, computer software, telecom, and pharmaceuticals.
- State-wise, **Maharashtra received the highest FDI inflows**, followed by Karnataka, Telangana, and Gujarat.
- The report also noted a **28% increase in total FDI**, which includes equity inflows, reinvested earnings, and other capital, totaling \$42.1 billion in the first half of the fiscal year, up from \$33.12 billion in the previous year.

INDIA AND ADB SIGN \$50 MILLION LOAN FOR CLIMATE-ADAPTIVE WATER HARVESTING PROJECT IN MEGHALAYA

- **Water Access:** Constructing 532 climate-resilient water-storage facilities to ensure reliable access to water for rural areas.
- **Agricultural Productivity:** Developing 3,000 hectares for reliable irrigation, which will help in boosting agricultural output.
- **Climate Resilience:** Implementing systems that can withstand climate variability and support sustainable water management.

WORLD BANK INTERNATIONAL DEBT REPORT 2024

- This comprehensive report provides an analysis of the external debt situation for low- and middle-income countries, including India.

REPORT HIGHLIGHTS:

- **India's External Debt:** The report states that India's total external debt increased by \$31 billion to \$646.79 billion in 2023.
- **Interest Payments:** Interest payments on this debt rose from \$15.08 billion in 2022 to \$22.54 billion in 2023.
- **Debt Composition:** Long-term debt stocks increased by 7% to \$498 billion, while short-term debt stocks slightly declined to \$126.32 billion.
- **Export Metrics:** The external debt stock as a percentage of exports was 80%, and debt servicing accounted for 10% of exports in 2023.

CENTRE LAUNCHES EMAAP PORTAL FOR FAIR TRADE AND CONSUMER PROTECTION

- **Centralized Database:** Combines state legal metrology departments into a unified system for better coordination and efficiency.
- **Licensing and Verification:** Simplifies the process for issuing licenses and conducting verifications, reducing bureaucratic hurdles.
- **Consumer Protection:** Enhances the accuracy of measurements and weights in trade, protecting consumers from potential fraud.
- **Transparency and Accountability:** Promotes greater transparency in trade practices and holds businesses accountable for compliance.

BANKING LAWS (AMENDMENT BILL, 2024) HAS BEEN PASSED BY LOK SABHA

- **Nominees for Bank Accounts:** The bill allows account holders to nominate up to **four nominees** for their bank accounts. This provision aims to ensure smoother transfer of funds in case of the account holder's demise, providing better security and flexibility for account holders.
- **Redefining 'Substantial Interest':** The bill redefines the thresholds for what constitutes 'substantial interest' in a banking company. This change is intended to align with international best practices and to enhance transparency in the ownership structures of banks. **Regulatory Reporting Deadlines:** The bill modifies the deadlines for various regulatory reports that banks are required to submit. This amendment aims to streamline the reporting

process and ensure that banks can comply with regulatory requirements promptly without compromising the accuracy of the information provided.

- **Strengthening Governance:** The bill includes provisions to strengthen the governance framework of banks, ensuring better oversight and management practices. This includes measures to enhance the accountability of bank executives and board members.

LENDING RESTRICTIONS ON NBFC NAVI FINSERV HAVE BEEN REMOVED BY RBI

- Initially, these restrictions were imposed on October 17, 2024, due to concerns over the company's excessive loan pricing and other regulatory non-compliance issues.
- **Restrictions Imposed:** The RBI imposed lending restrictions on Navi Finserv to address issues such as high loan interest rates and failure to comply with regulatory norms.
- **Compliance Measures:** Navi Finserv was required to take corrective actions, including revamping its loan pricing strategy and ensuring full compliance with RBI guidelines.
- **Lifting of Restrictions:** After Navi Finserv demonstrated significant improvements in its processes and compliance standards, the RBI decided to lift the lending restrictions.
- **Ongoing Adherence:** Navi Finserv committed to maintaining adherence to regulatory guidelines to prevent future issues and ensure transparent and fair lending practices.

INTEREST RATE CEILINGS ON FCNR (B) DEPOSITS HAVE BEEN INCREASED BY RBI

- This move is aimed at attracting more foreign currency deposits into Indian banks.
- **Here's how it works:**
 - **New Interest Rate Ceilings:** For deposits of 1-3 years, the new ceiling is the Overnight Alternative Reference Rate (ARR) plus 400 basis points.
 - For deposits of 3-5 years, it is ARR plus 500 basis points.
- **Effective Period:** These revised interest rate ceilings are effective until March 31, 2025.
- **Purpose:** The increase in ceilings aims to encourage more NRIs to deposit their foreign currency earnings

in Indian banks, thus boosting the country's foreign exchange reserves.

SBI REPORT REVEALS INDIA'S GDP TO DROP BELOW 6.5% IN FY25

- **GDP Growth Forecast:**
 - a) The report forecasts that India's GDP growth will drop below **6.5%** for the fiscal year 2025.
 - b) This is a downward revision from the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) projection of **6.6%**.
- **Reasons for the Slowdown:**
 - a) The primary reason cited for the lower growth forecast is a slowdown in the industrial sector.
 - b) Factors contributing to this slowdown include decreased industrial output, lower investment levels, and supply chain disruptions.
- **Impact on the Economy:**
 - a) The report highlights potential impacts on employment, consumer spending, and overall economic stability.
 - b) A slower GDP growth rate may lead to reduced economic opportunities and challenges in achieving fiscal targets.

ICRA ESG RATINGS REPORT: INDIA RANKS 6TH WITH 127 COMPANIES

- **India ranks 6th globally with 127 companies** committed to net-zero targets under the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi).
- Despite contributing about **7% of global emissions**, India's ranking highlights its growing corporate commitment to sustainability.
- Sectors like power, energy, and cement still face challenges in adopting net-zero goals.
- The **United Kingdom** leads the ranking, holding the 1st position with the highest number of companies committed to such targets.

BIMA SAKHI YOJANA LAUNCHED BY PRIME MINISTER MODI TO EMPOWER WOMEN AGED 18 TO 70 YEARS

- **Objective:** To empower women by enhancing their understanding of financial products and insurance.
- **Target Audience:** Women aged **18 to 70 years**.

- **Implementation:** The scheme will recruit **200,000 women** as volunteer insurance agents over the next three years. These volunteers will receive comprehensive training and a stipend, equipping them to educate and promote financial literacy in underserved communities.
- **Benefits:**
 - a) Women participating in the scheme will gain valuable knowledge about financial planning and insurance, fostering economic independence and security.
 - b) The initiative aims to increase insurance penetration in rural and underserved areas, ensuring more women and their families are covered by insurance policies.

THE MATERIAL COST UNDER THE PRADHAN MANTRI POSHAN SHAKTI NIRMAN (PM POSHAN)

- This increase took effect from December 1, 2024.
- **Here are the revised rates:**
 - **Primary and Bal Vatika Classes:** From **Rs.5.45 to Rs.6.19** per meal.
 - **Upper Primary Classes:** From **Rs.8.17 to Rs.9.29** per meal.
- The central government will bear the additional cost of **Rs.425.62 crore in FY 2024-25** due to this enhancement.
- The new rates are applicable across all states and Union Territories (UTs), although states and UTs are free to contribute more than their prescribed share.

ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK (ADB) HAS APPROVED A \$350 MILLION POLICY-BASED LOAN TO ASSIST INDIA

- This financial support is aligned with India's PM Gati Shakti plan and the National Logistics Policy.
- **These initiatives aim to:**
 - **Improve Infrastructure:** Enhance transportation networks, including highways, railways, and ports, to facilitate smoother and faster movement of goods.
 - **Streamline Processes:** Simplify and harmonize regulatory procedures to reduce bottlenecks and inefficiencies in the supply chain.
 - **Integrate Digital Technologies:** Implement advanced technologies to improve logistics management, tracking, and efficiency.

- The loan will help bolster India's logistics capabilities, making the supply chain more efficient and competitive on a global scale.

REVENUE SECRETARY SANJAY MALHOTRA APPOINTED AS THE NEW GOVERNOR OF RBI

- Malhotra, a 1990-batch Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer from the **Rajasthan cadre, brings over 33 years** of experience across finance, taxation, power, information technology, and mining.
- He holds degrees in Computer Science Engineering from **IIT Kanpur** and a **Master's degree** in Public Policy from Princeton University.
- Malhotra will serve a three-year term starting from December 11, 2024

CRISIL: ASSET GROWTH OF NBFCS TO SHARPLY DECLINE TO 15-17% IN FY25 AND FY26

- **Growth Projections:** The report predicts a decline in asset growth for non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) to 15-17% in FY25 and FY26, down from 23% in FY24.
- **Factors:** The slowdown is attributed to regulatory changes, asset quality concerns, and funding challenges.
- **Segments Affected:** Unsecured loans and microfinance segments are expected to be most impacted.
- **Strategic Recalibration:** NBFCs will need to recalibrate their growth strategies due to intensified regulatory compliance requirements and weakening asset quality metrics.

RBI'S 5TH BI-MONTHLY MONETARY POLICY OF FY25

- **Repo Rate Unchanged:** The RBI kept the benchmark repo rate unchanged at 6.5% for the 11th consecutive meeting.
- **Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR):** The CRR was reduced by 50 basis points (bps) to 4% to improve liquidity.
- **GDP Growth Forecast:** The GDP growth forecast for FY25 was revised downward to 6.6% from the previous estimate of 7.2%.
- **Inflation Forecast:** The RBI raised the inflation forecast for FY25 to 4.8% from 4.5%, with Q3 at 5.7% and Q4 at 4.5%.

- **Policy Stance:** The monetary policy stance remains neutral, focusing on durable alignment of inflation with the target while supporting growth.

BOB UNVEILS TWO NEW MSME OFFERINGS: BARODA MAHILA SWAVALAMBAN AND BARODA SMART OD

- **Baroda Mahila Swavalamban:**
 - This scheme is designed specifically for women entrepreneurs.
 - It offers competitive interest rates starting at **9.15%**, with loan amounts ranging from **Rs.20 lakh to Rs.7.5 crore**.
 - The scheme includes relaxed margin requirements and a 50% rebate on processing charges.
 - Loans up to **Rs.5 crore** can be availed without additional collateral if secured by the Credit Guarantee Fund Trust for Micro and Small Enterprises (CGTMSE).
- **Baroda Smart OD:**
 - This is a digital overdraft facility targeting GST-registered MSMEs.
 - It provides quick and easy access to short-term working capital finance, with overdraft amounts ranging from **Rs.50,000 to Rs.25 lakh**.
 - The interest rate starts at **10% per annum**, and the facility uses technology-driven credit assessments based on GST returns and banking activity.

MUKHYAMANTRI MAHILA SAMMAN SCHEME HAS BEEN LAUNCHED BY THE DELHI GOVERNMENT

- **Objective:** To provide financial support to women in Delhi.
- **Financial Assistance:** Eligible women will receive **Rs.1,000 per month**. If the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) returns to power, the amount will increase to Rs.2,100 per month.
- **Eligibility:** Women aged 18 and above with an annual family income of up to Rs.3 lakh.
- **Impact:** The scheme aims to empower women financially and support their families.
- This initiative is part of the government's efforts to promote gender equality and support women's welfare in Delhi.

SIXTEENTH CONFERENCE OF PARTIES (COP16) WAS HELD IN RIYADH, SAUDI ARABIA

- It was organized by the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) and chaired by **Mr. Ibrahim Thiam**, Executive Secretary of UNCCD.
- The theme was "**Our Land. Our Future.**"
- The aim was to address urgent global crises of land degradation, desertification, and drought, focusing on sustainable land management and drought resilience.
- **Land Degradation and Forced Migration:** The summit emphasized the severe consequences of land degradation, which affects **40% of global agricultural land**. Speakers highlighted how desertification disrupts ecosystems, forces migration, and fuels conflicts.
- **Global Action and Funding Gaps:** The summit called for global action to restore degraded land through initiatives like the Great Green Wall. However, funding gaps remain a significant barrier to achieving sustainable solutions.
- **India's Efforts:** Union Minister Bhupender Yadav outlined India's efforts in land restoration and drought resilience, emphasizing the country's commitment to restoring 26 million hectares of degraded land by 2030.
- **Diriyah's Sustainability Projects:** Diriyah Company showcased its pioneering projects aimed at sustainability and environmental preservation, including over 6.5 million indigenous trees planted and comprehensive sewage treatment facilities.

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS SUSTAINABILITY 2025

- In these rankings, **IIT Delhi** stood out among Indian universities, securing the **171st position globally**.
- At the top of the global list was the **University of Toronto from Canada**.
- Other notable highlights include ETH Zurich in second place, and Lund University in third. IIT Delhi showed significant improvement, climbing **255 places from last year**.
- Other Indian institutions like **IIT Kharagpur** and **IIT Bombay** were also featured, ranking 202nd and 234th respectively.
- This year's rankings emphasized the progress made by institutions in promoting sustainability, with

universities across the globe being assessed on various sustainability metrics.

INDIA WITNESSED A SIGNIFICANT RISE IN WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR FORCE

- The report detailing this rise is titled "**Female Labour Force Participation Rate: An Observational Analysis of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) from 2017-18 to 2022-23**".
- The report was released by the **Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM)** on December 11, 2024.
- Rural female labour force participation rate (LFPR) **surged from 24.6% to 41.5%**.
- Urban female LFPR rose modestly from **20.4% to 25.4%**.
- Government schemes like **Mudra loans, Drone Didi programme, and self-help groups (SHGs) under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana** played a significant role in this increase.
- The report also discusses how **factors like age, marital status, and household composition influence women's participation** in the workforce.

RBI INCREASES COLLATERAL-FREE AGRICULTURAL LOAN LIMIT FROM RS.1.6 TO RS.2 LAKH

- This move aims to address the rising input costs faced by farmers and provide them with enhanced financial access.
- **Effective Date:** The new limit will be effective from January 1, 2025.
- **Beneficiaries:** Over **86%** of farmers in India, who are small and marginal landholders, will directly benefit from this decision.
- **Waiving Collateral and Margin Requirements:** Banks across the country are instructed to waive collateral security and margin requirements for agricultural loans up to Rs.2 lakh per borrower.
- **Swift Implementation:** Banks have been directed to implement the revised guidelines swiftly to ensure timely financial assistance to the farming community.
- **Widespread Awareness:** Banks are instructed to provide widespread publicity to these changes to ensure maximum outreach and awareness among farmers and stakeholders.

SEBI ANNOUNCED EXPANSION OF T+0 SETTLEMENT CYCLE FOR TOP 500 STOCKS

- **Phased Implementation:** The rollout will begin with the bottom 100 companies and gradually include the next 100 companies each month until all 500 stocks are covered.
- **Differential Brokerage:** Stock brokers can charge different brokerage fees for T+0 and T+1 settlements, within regulatory limits.
- **Block Deal Window:** A separate block deal window for T+0 settlements will operate from 8:45 AM to 9:00 AM daily.
- **Qualified Stock Brokers (QSBs):** QSBs must set up systems for seamless participation, and newly designated QSBs will have three months to comply with these requirements.
- **Market Infrastructure:** Exchanges, clearing corporations, depositories, and custodians must develop infrastructure to enable institutional investors to participate in T+0 settlements.

ICICI BANK SIGNS MOU WITH CBA TO STRENGTHEN AUSTRALIA-INDIA TRADE RELATIONS

- The agreement focuses on facilitating **trade, investment, and cross-border payments between** the two nations.
- The partnership **aims to provide comprehensive banking services** and guidance to businesses engaged in cross-border trade, making it easier for companies to navigate financial transactions between Australia and India.
- Additionally, it offers support to individuals migrating between the two countries, ensuring they have access to necessary banking solutions.

SEBI MANDATED MF COMPANIES TO PROCESS CANCELLATIONS OF SIP IN 2 DAYS

- **Systematic Investment Plan (SIP):** A SIP allows investors to invest a fixed amount regularly in mutual funds, usually monthly.
- **Cancellation Process:** Previously, the time taken to process SIP cancellations varied across different mutual fund companies, often taking longer.
- **New Rule:** SEBI's mandate standardizes the cancellation process, ensuring it is completed within 2 working days. This speeds up the process and makes it more uniform across the industry.

- **Impact on Investors:** This change benefits investors by providing a quicker response to their cancellation requests, improving convenience and operational efficiency.

CREDIT GUARANTEE SCHEME LAUNCHED BY THE GOVT. TO FACILITATE CREDIT ACCESS FOR FARMERS THROUGH E-NWR

- This initiative, with a corpus of **Rs 1,000 crore**, aims to provide farmers with easier access to credit by allowing them to secure loans using electronic negotiable warehouse receipts (e-NWRs).
- **Key Points:**
 - **Purpose:** To reduce distress selling by farmers and improve their access to credit.
 - **Mechanism:** Farmers can pledge their crops stored in Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA)-registered warehouses to obtain loans.
- **Benefits:**
 - Encourages scientific storage of produce.
 - Provides financial support, reducing the need for immediate sale of produce.
 - Promotes **better price realization** for farmers.
 - The scheme is expected to help farmers manage their finances more effectively and ensure better storage and marketing of their produce.

WORLD BANK DPIIT SIGNS MOU WITH HDFC BANK TO STRENGTHEN STARTUP ECOSYSTEM AND FOSTER INNOVATION DEBT REPORT 2024

- **Purpose:**
 - To provide knowledge sharing and mentorship to startups.
 - To offer customized **financial products and services** tailored to the needs of startups.
 - To create a robust ecosystem that encourages innovation and growth.
- **Benefits**
 - **Enhanced Support:** Startups will receive guidance and mentorship from experts at DPIIT and HDFC Bank, helping them navigate challenges and scale their businesses.

- **Financial Products:** HDFC Bank will offer financial products specifically designed for startups, addressing their unique financial needs.
- **Innovation and Growth:** The collaboration aims to foster a culture of innovation, encouraging startups to develop new ideas and solutions.

INDIA PROMOTES AYUSH SYSTEMS GLOBALLY WITH NEW CHAIRS IN FIVE COUNTRIES

- This initiative led to the establishment of AYUSH academic chairs in five countries: **Bangladesh, Australia, Mauritius, Latvia, and Malaysia.**
- **Purpose and Goals:**
 - **Promote AYUSH Systems:** The initiative aims to increase awareness and interest in AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) practices globally.
 - **Academic Collaboration:** These academic chairs will foster collaboration, research, and knowledge exchange between India and the host countries.
 - **Strengthen Global Presence:** The goal is to integrate AYUSH systems into the healthcare frameworks of these countries, promoting holistic and traditional healthcare practices.

INDIA HAS BECOME THE THIRD-LARGEST SMARTPHONE EXPORTER IN THE WORLD

- This rapid ascent from the **23rd rank in 2019** was largely driven by the success of the Production-Linked Incentive (PLI) scheme.
- This scheme encouraged local manufacturing and attracted major smartphone brands to set up or expand their production facilities in India.
- As a result, in November 2024, India's smartphone exports surpassed **₹20,000 crore in a single month**, with companies like **Apple and Samsung leading the charge.**

SEBI TIGHTENS NORMS FOR INVESTMENT ADVISORS

- **Qualification and Certification Changes:**
 - **Reduced Qualifications:** SEBI has lowered the minimum educational qualification for investment advisors to a graduate degree. This change aims to make it easier for individuals to enter the profession.

- **Elimination of Experience Requirement:** The requirement for prior work experience to register as an investment advisor has been removed, simplifying the registration process.
- **Certification Requirements:** While initial NISM (National Institute of Securities Markets) certifications are required to become an investment advisor, SEBI has removed the need for periodic re-examinations. This helps to reduce the compliance burden on advisors.
- **AI Tool Disclosure:**
 - Investment advisors who utilize artificial intelligence (AI) tools in their advisory services must now disclose this usage to their clients. This measure ensures transparency and helps clients understand the technology behind the advice they receive.
 - **Data Privacy:** Advisors are required to ensure that any AI tools they use comply with data privacy regulations, safeguarding client information.
- These tightened norms are intended to streamline the regulatory framework, promote greater professionalism in the investment advisory industry, and protect investors by ensuring that advisors meet a standard level of competency and transparency.

MOF: GNPA OF PSBS DECLINED FROM 14.58% IN MAR. 2018 TO 3.12% IN SEPT. 24

- The GNPA ratio declined from **14.58% in March 2018 to 3.12%** in September 2024.
- This improvement is attributed to the government's **4R strategy**:
 - **Recognition:** Identifying and acknowledging NPAs in banks' balance sheets.
 - **Recapitalisation:** Infusing capital into banks to strengthen their financial positions.

- **Resolution:** Implementing measures to resolve stressed assets.
- **Reform:** Enacting structural reforms to prevent future NPAs and enhance banking sector efficiency.

- This strategy has helped reduce the burden of bad loans, improving the overall health of public sector banks and contributing to financial stability in the banking sector.

INDIA AND ADB SIGN \$42M LOAN FOR COASTAL PROTECTION IN MAHARASHTRA

- This project is designed to **enhance the resilience of coastal communities by mitigating the impacts of climate change**, such as rising sea levels and increased storm activity.
- It will involve the construction of coastal defenses, restoration of natural ecosystems like mangroves, and community-based initiatives to boost **local adaptive** capacities.
- The primary goal is to protect lives, property, and livelihoods in coastal areas, ensuring sustainable development and improved quality of life for the residents.

DARPG LAUNCHES "PRASHASAN GAON KI ORE" NATIONWIDE CAMPAIGN 2024

- This campaign, which will take place in **over 700 districts from December 19 to 24, 2024**, aims to **redress public grievances** and improve service delivery at the grassroots level.
- **Theme:** The theme of the campaign is **"Effective Governance, Efficient Service Delivery"**, which underscores the government's commitment to ensuring that public services are accessible, responsive, and accountable.
- The campaign focuses on reaching rural areas, addressing the concerns of villagers, and streamlining processes to enhance the overall governance experience.

NITI AAYOG RELEASES REPORT ON "S.A.F.E. ACCOMMODATION: WORKER HOUSING FOR MANUFACTURING GROWTH"

- The report emphasizes the importance of **Secure, Affordable, Flexible, and Efficient**

(S.A.F.E.) accommodations for industrial workers to boost India's manufacturing sector.

- **Key points from the report include:**
 - **Public-Private Partnership (PPP)**
Model: The initiative will be executed under a PPP model with Viability Gap Funding (VGF) support and commitments from anchor industries.
 - **Regulatory Reforms:** The report suggests reclassifying land near manufacturing units as residential and providing GST exemptions for qualifying accommodations.
 - **Workforce Strategy:** Addressing housing challenges is crucial for achieving India's long-term vision of becoming a global manufacturing hub under initiatives like Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- The goal is to elevate the manufacturing sector's contribution to **GDP from 17% to 25% by 2047.**

AMAZON & DPIIT SIGNS MOU TO BOOST INDIA'S GLOBAL MANUFACTURING & EXPORTS

- This partnership aims to enhance **India's global** manufacturing and exports.
- Amazon has committed **\$120 million from its Smbhav Venture Fund** to invest in startups that focus on digitizing consumer goods manufacturing in India.
- This investment will support the growth of Indian startups by leveraging Amazon's technology and global reach.
- Furthermore, Amazon aims to achieve **\$80 billion in cumulative exports from India by 2030.**
- This initiative will boost India's manufacturing sector, promote innovation, and increase India's presence in the global market.

GOI SIGNED RS.3044 CRORE LOAN AGREEMENT WITH KFW GERMANY FOR BENGALURU METRO RAIL PH- 2

- This funding is specifically allocated for Phase 2 of the Bangalore Metro Rail Project.

- The agreement was formalized in the presence of officials from both India and Germany, marking an important milestone for the project.
- This loan agreement ensures that the Bangalore Metro Rail Phase 2 has achieved 100% financial closure.
- The total approved senior debt for this phase of the metro project stands at Rs. 12,141.14 crore.
- Prior to this agreement, Rs. 9,096.60 crore had already been secured through other funding agencies.
- This financial closure signifies a robust backing for the metro expansion, aiming to enhance urban transportation and connectivity in Bengaluru.

AS OF DECEMBER 17, GROSS DIRECT TAX REVENUE FOR 2024-25 HAD INCREASED BY 20.32% YEAR

- This growth reflects a significant improvement in **tax collection efficiency and economic** activity.
- The increase in revenue is attributed to enhanced compliance measures, a broader tax base, and overall economic growth.
- Additionally, net direct tax collections also saw a rise of **16.45%, amounting to Rs.15.82 lakh crore**, while tax refunds increased by 42.49% to Rs.3.38 lakh crore.

UNION MINISTER BHUPENDER YADAV RELEASES INDIA STATE OF FOREST REPORT 2023

- The report, prepared by the **Forest Survey of India (FSI)**, provides a detailed assessment of India's forest and tree resources.
- **Increase in Forest Cover:** The report shows an increase of 1,445 square kilometers in forest and tree cover since 2021, bringing the total forest cover to 25.17% of India's geographical area.
- **State-wise Distribution:** The report provides a breakdown of forest cover across different states, with Madhya Pradesh having the largest forest area, followed by Arunachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.
- **Forest Density:** The classification of forest density is detailed, with categories such as very dense, moderately dense, and open forests.
- **Forest Carbon Stock:** There has been an increase in the estimated carbon stock, indicating positive contributions towards carbon sequestration.

- **Biodiversity:** The report highlights efforts to conserve biodiversity, protect endangered species, and promote sustainable forest management practices.

WORLD BANK APPROVES USD 325 MILLION LOAN TO BOOST AGRICULTURE IN UTTAR PRADESH

- **Enhance Crop Productivity:** Improving farming practices and adopting modern agricultural technologies to increase crop yields.
- **Climate-Resilient Practices:** Introducing techniques that help farmers adapt to climate change, ensuring sustainable farming in the long term.
- **Strengthen Market Linkages:** Connecting farmers with markets more effectively, ensuring they get better prices for their produce and improving their overall economic stability.
- This initiative is expected to benefit one million farmers, contributing to the overall development and sustainability of agriculture in Uttar Pradesh.

CBIC LAUNCHES NEW TAXPAYER SERVICES INITIATIVES

- **Revised Citizen's Charter:** This updated document outlines the CBIC's commitment to provide efficient and transparent tax services. It includes updated service standards to better serve taxpayers.
- **Citizen's Corner Portal:** An improved online portal where taxpayers can access a wide range of tax-related information and resources, making it easier for them to find the information they need.
- **Ease of Doing Business Tab:** This feature invites taxpayer suggestions for simplifying procedures and policies, fostering a more business-friendly environment.
- **Digital CBIC Archives:** A digital repository that showcases the history of indirect taxes in India, offering insights into the evolution of the tax system.

THE 55TH MEETING OF THE GST COUNCIL TOOK PLACE AT JAISALMER, RAJASTHAN

- The aim was to discuss and recommend changes to the GST framework, including tax rates on various goods and services.
- **Key Highlights of the 55th GST Council Meeting:**
- **Formalization of Special Cess for Disaster Relief:** The Council approved a formal procedure for states to levy a special cess to raise funds for disaster relief. This decision came after Andhra Pradesh sought permission to impose a 1% cess on goods and

services in the highest tax bracket (28%) to recover from flood-related losses.

- **GST Rate on Used Electric Vehicles:** The Council increased the GST rate on the sale of all old and used vehicles (including electric vehicles) from 12% to 18%. However, this rate will only apply to businesses and not individual sellers.
- **GST Rates on Popcorn:** The Council clarified the GST rates on different types of popcorn:
 - **Plain, unpacked popcorn:** 5% GST
 - **Pre-packed and labeled ready-to-eat popcorn:** 12% GST
 - **Caramelized popcorn:** 18% GST
- **Other Decisions: The Council also made several other decisions, including:**
 - Exempting gene therapy treatments from GST
 - Reducing GST on fortified rice kernels supplied through the Public Distribution System (PDS)
 - Exempting certain inspection equipment for the International Atomic Energy Agency from IGST
 - Clarifying the GST treatment of sponsorship services by corporates
 - Revising the definition of "pre-packaged and labeled" to cover a wider range of products

RESERVE BANK OF INDIA (RBI) RELEASED ITS ANNUAL REPORT ON TREND AND PROGRESS OF BANKING IN INDIA 2023-24

- **Profitability:** The profitability of Indian banks improved for the sixth consecutive year. The Return on Assets (RoA) stood at 1.4%, and the Return on Equity (RoE) was 14.6%. This improvement in profitability is attributed to higher net interest income and lower provisions for bad loans.
- **Asset Reconstruction Companies (ARCs):** The report highlights that the book value of assets acquired by ARCs has crossed ₹10 lakh crore as of March 31, 2024. This indicates a significant growth in the volume of distressed assets being managed by ARCs.
- **Asset Quality:** The Gross Non-Performing Assets (GNPA) ratio declined to a 13-year low of 2.7% by the end of March 2024. This reduction in bad loans is a positive sign of the improving health of the banking sector.
- **Credit Growth:** There was robust credit growth across various segments, with a notable increase in retail loans, particularly housing and vehicle loans. This growth reflects the rising demand for credit in the economy.

- **Capital Adequacy:** Banks maintained strong capital positions with adequate buffers to absorb potential shocks. The Capital to Risk-weighted Assets Ratio (CRAR) remained well above the regulatory requirement.
- **Technological Advancements:** The report highlighted the increased adoption of digital banking and technological innovations. This shift towards digital platforms has enhanced customer experience and operational efficiency.
- **Policy Measures:** The RBI implemented various policy measures to support the banking sector, including liquidity infusion, regulatory relaxations, and measures to strengthen risk management practices.
- **India's current account deficit (CAD) declined slightly to 1.2% of GDP in the second quarter** of fiscal year 2024-25 (Q2 FY25), down from 1.3% in the same quarter last year.

JAGO GRAHAK JAGO APP, JAGRITI APP, AND JAGRITI DASHBOARD LAUNCHED BY THE GOVERNMENT

- These initiatives **aim to empower consumers and protect them against** deceptive online practices known as "dark patterns."
- **Jago Grahak Jago App:** This app alerts users about potentially unsafe URLs while they are browsing online. It helps consumers stay informed and cautious about fraudulent websites.
- **Jagriti App:** Through this app, consumers can directly report suspicious online practices, known as dark patterns. This enables users to take immediate action against deceptive tactics.
- **Jagriti Dashboard:** This dashboard provides a comprehensive view of consumer complaints and their resolutions. It offers transparency and helps monitor the effectiveness of consumer protection measures.

WORLD BANK: INDIA EMERGED TOPMOST RECIPIENT OF REMITTANCES AMONG LMICS

- The report highlights that India emerged as the top recipient of remittances among LMICs, with an estimated inflow of **USD 129 billion in 2024**.
- **Top Recipient:** India received the highest remittances, followed by Mexico, China, the Philippines, and Pakistan.

- **Growth Rate:** Remittances to LMICs grew by 5.8% in 2024, compared to 1.2% in 2023.
- **Total Inflows:** Officially recorded remittances to LMICs are expected to reach USD 685 billion in 2024.
- **Economic Impact:** Remittances have outpaced other financial flows like Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and are crucial for poverty reduction, financing health and education, and improving access to capital markets.
- **Regional Growth:** South Asia saw the highest increase in remittance flows, driven by strong inflows to India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

THE FOUNDATION STONE OF THE KEN-BETWA RIVER LINK PROJECT LAID BY PM MODI ON DECEMBER 25

- This ambitious project aims to transfer water from the **Ken River to the Betwa River**.
- The primary objectives are to provide irrigation to 1.08 million hectares of land, supply drinking water to approximately **6.2 million people**, and generate **103 MW** of hydropower and 27 MW of solar power.
- The project, which spans the states of **Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh**, is expected to significantly boost agriculture, alleviate water scarcity in drought-prone regions, and enhance the overall socio-economic development of the area.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE 208TH MEETING OF THE SEBI BOARD

- The aim of the meeting was to introduce several key regulatory changes to enhance compliance, improve investor protection, and streamline market operations.
- **Stricter Norms for SME IPOs:**
 - **Eligibility Criteria:** Issuers must now demonstrate an operating profit of at least ₹1 crore in two of the past three financial years to be eligible for an IPO.
 - **Offer for Sale (OFS) Restrictions:** Selling shareholders in SME IPOs are limited to 20% of the total issue size, and individual sales are capped at 50% of their holdings.
 - **Lock-in Period Adjustments:** Lock-in provisions for promoters' excess holdings have been modified to allow for a phased release.
 - **Allocation for Non-Institutional Investors (NIIs):** The NII allocation methodology for SME IPOs has been aligned with that of main board IPOs.

- **Cap on General Corporate Purpose (GCP)**
Funds: GCP amounts in SME IPOs are capped at 15% of the issue size or ₹10 crore, whichever is lower.
- **Restriction on Repayment of Promoters'**
Loans: SME IPO proceeds cannot be used to repay loans taken by promoters, promoter groups, or related parties.

TATA POWER AND CANARA BANK PARTNER FOR ROOFTOP SOLAR LOANS

- This partnership aims **to promote the adoption of rooftop solar systems under the PM Surya Ghar Scheme.**
- The agreement outlines the **terms and conditions for providing affordable financing options to households for installing rooftop solar systems.**
- Loans of up to **Rs 2 lakh for systems up to 3 kW and Rs 6 lakh for systems between 3 kW and 10 kW** are available. These loans come with competitive interest rates and do not require any collateral.
- The collaboration is **expected to make clean energy solutions more accessible and support** India's sustainability goals.

FEDERAL BANK PARTNERS WITH ECOFY TO PROVIDE SOLAR INSTALLATIONS FOR MSMEs

- **Aim:** To provide innovative financing solutions for MSMEs investing in commercial rooftop solar installations.
- **Important Highlights:**
- **Annual Target:** Finance 3,600 kW of rooftop solar installations.
- **Environmental Impact:** Reduction of over 2,500 tons of CO2 emissions each year.
- **Benefits for MSMEs:** Reduced electricity costs, easier access to financing, and contribution to environmental sustainability.
- **Global Goals Alignment:** Supports global sustainability goals and promotes a more eco-friendly business environment

IRDAI REPORT: CLAIMS RATIO OF NON-LIFE INSURERS DECLINES TO 82.5% IN FY24

- Here are some key highlights:
- **Claims Ratio:** The claims ratio for non-life insurers declined slightly to 82.52% in FY24, compared to 82.95% in FY23.

- **Insurance Penetration:** Insurance penetration in India was 3.7% in FY24, down from 4% in FY23.
- **Premium Growth:** The non-life insurance sector saw a 12.76% growth in direct premiums, reaching Rs 2.90 lakh crore.
- **Profitability:** The sector turned profitable with a combined net profit of Rs 10,119 crore in FY24, compared to a net loss of Rs 2,566 crore in FY23.

IFSCA RELEASED REVISED FRAMEWORK FOR ITFS PLATFORMS IN GIFT CITY

- The revised **framework includes several key changes:**
- **Rationalized Net Worth Requirements:** The net worth requirements have been streamlined, making it easier for more entities to participate.
- **Expanded Scope:** Overseas companies can now factor receivables, and the list of eligible financiers has been broadened to include factors registered under the Factoring Registration Act, 2011.
- **On-Tap Registration Process:** A new on-tap registration process has been introduced, replacing fixed application timelines.
- **Permissible Activities:** The scope of permissible activities now includes secondary market transactions and clearing and settlement of funds.
- **Eligible Participants:** Payment service providers are now included, enabling easier access for participants to facilitate currency exchange and receive payments in their local currency.

PNB AND FCAOI SIGN MOU TO ENHANCE AGRICULTURAL INFRASTRUCTURE

- The primary **aim of this MoU is to enhance agricultural infrastructure and cold chain** development across India, thereby reducing post-harvest losses and improving market access for farmers.
- **Important Highlights**
- **Financial Support:** PNB will provide financial assistance to develop and upgrade cold storage facilities.
- **Reduction of Post-Harvest Losses:** Improved cold storage infrastructure will help minimize losses of perishable agricultural products.
- **Enhanced Market Access:** Farmers will gain better access to markets, both domestic and international, by maintaining the quality and freshness of their produce.

- **Support for Farmers:** The collaboration includes providing financial solutions and technical support to enhance farmers' productivity and profitability.

BANKING- ONE LINER

- On December 2, 2024, it was announced that the **Unified Payments Interface (UPI) processed a record 16.58 billion transactions in October 2024, totaling ₹23.49 lakh crore.** This reflects a 45% year-on-year growth and underscores UPI's key role in India's digital payment ecosystem.
- The State Bank of India's new initiative, "**Har Ghar Lakhpati**", aims to boost deposit accretion by helping depositors grow their savings to ₹1 lakh through recurring deposit (RD) schemes. This strategy is part of SBI's efforts to enhance deposit growth and promote financial inclusion.
- Due to **weaker investor bids, the RBI devolved the auction of the new** On November 30, 2024, the RBI conducted an auction for new Sovereign Green Bonds (SGrB), aimed at funding environmental projects. Due to weaker demand and lower-than-expected bid prices, the RBI devolved some bonds to primary dealers (PDs) instead of selling all directly to investors.
- Tata Electronics agreed to **acquire a 60% stake in Pegatron's iPhone manufacturing plant** in Tamil Nadu on November 18, 2024. This joint venture positions Tata to manage daily operations, while Pegatron retains a 40% stake and provides technical support, enhancing India's role in iPhone production.
- The **National Payment Corporation of India (NPCI) approved Phi Commerce's UPI Switch** on November 20, 2024. This certification allows Phi Commerce to offer UPI Switch to enterprise clients, enabling high transaction volumes and faster onboarding of new customers.
- On December 3, 2024, the **Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved MUFG Bank, Ltd.'s acquisition of certain shareholding in Shiprocket Private Limited.** The deal includes involvement from KDT Venture Holdings, LLC, a Koch Group subsidiary. This approval marks a significant move in the logistics and financial sectors.
- On **December 3, 2024, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the subscription to optionally convertible debentures of GMR Infra Enterprises Private Limited by Platinum Stone A**

- 2014 Trust (via its trustee, Platinum Rock B 2014 RSC Limited).
- On December 4, 2024, the **yield on the 10-year Indian government bond dipped** to 6.6886%, its lowest level in nearly three years. This decline was due to expectations of policy easing by the RBI and India's economic slowdown, with GDP growth falling to 5.4% in the September quarter.
- The 13th round of **Foreign Office Consultations between India and Egypt was held in** New Delhi on December 5, 2024. Co-chaired by Arun Kumar Chatterjee from India and Ambassador Ahmed Shaheen from Egypt, the discussions focused on strengthening bilateral relations and addressing regional and global issues.
- On December 6, 2024, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) kept the policy repo rate unchanged** at 6.50% for the 11th consecutive time to manage inflation. The RBI also cut the GDP growth forecast for 2024-25 to 6.6% from 7.2% and reduced the Cash Reserve Ratio (CRR) to 4% from 4.5% to support economic growth.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) **increased the UPI Lite transaction limit to Rs 1,000 per transaction and the wallet limit to Rs 5,000** on December 4, 2024. This update aims to make digital payments more convenient, especially for low-value transactions and areas **with poor internet connectivity.**
- Federal Bank launched the **Esteem Savings Account for senior citizens on December 3, 2024.** This account is designed for individuals aged 55 and above, offering complimentary insurance cover, airport lounge access, and special family benefits.
- The Trade and **Economic Partnership Agreement (TEPA) between India and the European Free Trade Association (EFTA)** covers 99.6% of Indian exports. This agreement offers significant market access to EFTA countries, enhancing trade and economic ties. It aims to boost Indian exports, diversify markets, and promote economic cooperation.
- In the past five **years, India's Ministry of Corporate Affairs has shut down over 2.33 lakh shell firms.** These actions aim to enhance corporate transparency and prevent financial crimes such as money laundering and tax evasion.
- Between April and November 2024, the compensation cess collection under **the GST**

mechanism increased by 6.5%. This growth rate exceeded the Budget Estimate growth rate of 4.1%.

- In October 2024, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) led global gold purchases by adding 27 tonnes** to its reserves. This brought its total gold purchases for the year to 77 tonnes, a five-fold increase from 2023. Other central banks, like those of Turkey and Poland, also significantly increased their gold reserves.
- On December 5, 2024, the **Ministry of Labour and Employment announced India's** unemployment rate fell to 3.2%. This reflects data from the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) covering July 2023 to June 2024. The improvement is due to strong economic growth and job creation.
- On December 2, 2024, Razorpay partnered with the **Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) and the Indian Cyber Crime Coordination Centre (I4C)** to enhance digital payments security in India. This collaboration aims to educate businesses and end customers on protecting themselves against digital fraud.
- According to SIPRI, Indian arms makers recorded a **combined revenue of USD 6.7 billion in 2023, marking a 6% increase** from the previous year. The three Indian companies in the top 100 are Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL), Bharat Electronics Limited (BEL), and Mazagon Dock Shipbuilders Ltd (MDL).
- Goldman Sachs reports that **women-centric welfare schemes in nine Indian states** account for 0.5% of India's GDP in FY25, with a combined allocation of \$18 billion. Maharashtra leads with an allocation of \$5.4 billion. These schemes aim to support women's welfare and have significant economic and social implications.
- The **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) introduced podcasts on December 8, 2024, to disseminate** useful information to the public. This initiative aims to enhance transparency and engage a wider audience, especially the younger generation.
- On **December 5, 2024, Axis Bank launched the ARISE Women's Savings Account** to empower women financially. This account offers tailored financial services, healthcare benefits, and lifestyle perks, such as access to women financial experts and discounts on health and wellness services.
- Between April 2000 and **September 2024, foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows** into India surpassed the \$1 trillion mark, totaling \$1,033.40 billion. This

milestone highlights India's appeal as a key global investment destination.

- On December 6, 2024, the **RBI released its Survey of Professional Forecasters (SPF)** on Macroeconomic Indicators, which lowered the Real GDP growth forecast for FY25 to 6.80% from the previous estimate of 6.90%.
- The **Unified Payments Interface (UPI), launched on April 11, 2016** by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), has significantly boosted equitable economic growth and expanded financial inclusion across India.
- On December 6, 2024, the **Reserve Bank of India (RBI) unveiled MuleHunter.ai, an AI/ML-based** model developed by the RBI Innovation Hub to combat digital frauds involving mule accounts. This tool helps banks detect and mitigate fraudulent activities more effectively.
- On December 9, 2024, **Deutsche Bank AG, India provided a 91 million Euros** sustainability-linked loan to SMFG India Credit. This loan supports small businesses and women entrepreneurs in semi-urban areas, promoting financial inclusion and sustainable development.
- On December 9, 2024, **IDFC FIRST Bank launched India's first AI-powered** holographic digital avatar of Amitabh Bachchan. This innovative initiative, using Holographic Extended Reality (HXR) technology, allows customers to interact with Bachchan's digital avatar for information on various banking products and services.
- HSBC India launched the **HSBC Privé Credit Card on December 9, 2024**, for its global private banking clients. The card offers premium benefits like exclusive travel perks, access to private clubs and lounges, Michelin-star dining experiences, and premium workspaces at over 150 locations worldwide.
- On December 8, 2024, the **Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) launched the Golden Jubilee Scholarship Scheme 2024** to support economically weaker students. The scholarship provides financial assistance for higher education courses, including medicine, engineering, graduation, diploma programs, and vocational courses.
- On December 15, 2024, the Centre **disbursed ₹71,889 crore to states for FY 2024-25 under various** heads. These allocations were based on the

recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission (XV-FC). The funds were distributed for disaster relief, local body grants, health, and fire service modernization.

- On December 14, 2024, the **Finance Ministry announced that nearly 48 crore** people have enrolled in the Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY), securing ₹2 lakh accident insurance coverage.
- On December 15, 2024, the **Department of Expenditure permitted states to** borrow an additional ₹9.40 lakh crore for FY 2024-25, based on the recommendations of the 15th Finance Commission (XV-FC). This increase aims to support states in managing their fiscal requirements effectively.
- Public Sector Banks (PSBs) in India **earned their highest-ever total net profit** of ₹1.41 lakh crore in FY24. This record profit reflects improved asset quality, operational efficiency, and a stronger capital base. The achievement was announced on December 15, 2024.
- On December 10, 2024, **Edelweiss Mutual Fund launched India's first ETF** focused on the capital markets and insurance sectors. The ETF, named Edelweiss BSE Capital Markets & Insurance ETF, aims to provide diversified exposure to these sectors by tracking the BSE Capital Markets & Insurance Total Return Index.
- On December 13, **2024, BOBCARD launched the TIARA Credit Card**, a women-centric card offering a range of rewards and benefits. Key features include complimentary vouchers, travel perks, lifestyle discounts, health packages, and financial incentives, aiming to empower women's financial autonomy.
- On December 6, 2024, **BharatPe launched the Shield fraud protection plan** to protect users from digital transaction frauds. It covers risks like computer fraud, phishing, and unauthorized transactions due to phone loss. The plan offers 30 days of free protection for the first UPI transaction, with subsequent coverage costing ₹19 per month.
- The second edition of IDFC FIRST Private Banking and Hurun India's 'India's Top 200 Self-made Entrepreneurs of the Millennia 2024' was **released on December 18, 2024. This report** celebrates entrepreneurs who have significantly reshaped

India's business landscape with their ventures launched after 2000.

- On December 17, 2024, it was **announced that under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli** Yojana scheme, the states with the most rooftop solar installations are Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Uttar Pradesh. This scheme aims to promote the use of solar energy and provide **free electricity to households through rooftop solar** installations.
- On December 11, 2024, Shriram **Finance sold an 84.44% stake in Shriram Housing Finance Limited (SHFL)** to Warburg Pincus for Rs 3,929 crore. This move aligns with Shriram Finance's strategic focus on its core business segments and growth areas.

APPOINTMENTS

Name of the Person	Designation
Jay Shah	Chairman of the International Cricket Council
Rupam Roy	General Secretary of AISBOF
Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah	Namibia's first female president
BJP leader Devendra Fadnavis	Chief Minister of Maharashtra
Justice Murdu Nirupa Bindushini Fernando	48th Chief Justice of Sri Lanka
Shambhu S Kumaran	Chairperson of CND
Shammi Silva	Asian Cricket Council
Burkina Faso's Military Junta	Prime Minister
Mohamed Al-Bashir	Syria's caretaker Prime Minister
John Dramani Mahama	President of Ghana
Bhavesh Jain	MD & CEO of TransUnion CIBIL
Vaibhav Chaturvedi	Ex-officio member of the (IBBI)
Rajeev Mehta	Secretary General of the (FCA)
Jayen Mehta's	Managing Director of GCMMF
Francois Bayrou	Prime Minister of France
Preeti Lobana	Country Manager and Vice President for India
Deepak Sood	Secretary General of the (ASSOCHAM)
Mikheil Kavelashvili	President of Georgia
Rama Mohan Rao Amara	Managing Director of (SBI)
Dr. Shankar Prasad Sharma	Nepal's Ambassador to India
R Subramaniakumar	Managing Director and CEO for a New Term of Three Years
Manish Jain	Executive Director of YES Bank
Justice Manmohan	Supreme Court Judge

Suman Berry	Chairman of the Economic Advisory Council
Justice Madan Lokur	Former Supreme Court judge
V. Ramasubramanian	Chairperson of the (NHRC).
GS Sandhawalia	Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court
Sriram Krishnan	Senior Policy Advisor for Artificial Intelligence
Arunish Chawla	Revenue Secretary
Amitava Chatterjee	Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer
Aisake Valu Eke	Prime Minister of Tonga
Dr. Sandip Shah	Chairperson of the (NABL)
BFI Chief Ajay Singh	Board member of the newly formed interim Asian body
Kristrún Mjöll Frostadóttir	Iceland's new Prime Minister
Sanjay Malhotra	Governor of (RBI)
Ajay Kumar Bhalla	Governor of Manipur
Arif Mohammed Khan	Governor of Bihar
Rajendra Vishwanath Arlekar	Governor of Kerala
General (Retd.) Vijay Kumar Singh	Governor of Mizoram
Dr. Hari Babu Kambhampati	Governor of Odisha
Vitul Kumar	Director General of the Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF)
Justice Gurmeet Singh Sandhawalia	Chief Justice of the Himachal Pradesh High Court
Justice Narendar G	Chief Justice of the Uttarakhand High Court.
Cherukumalli Srinivasa Rao	Director of the Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI)
Sanjiv Ranjan	Secretary General of the Indian Ocean Rim Association

INDEX AND RANKING

QS WORLD UNIVERSITY RANKINGS SUSTAINABILITY 2025

- In these rankings, IIT Delhi stood out among Indian universities, securing the 171st position globally.
- At the top of the global list was the University of Toronto from Canada.
- Other notable highlights include ETH Zurich in second place, and Lund University in third. IIT Delhi showed significant improvement, climbing 255 places from last year.

- Other Indian institutions like IIT Kharagpur and IIT Bombay were also featured, ranking 202nd and 234th respectively.
- This year's rankings emphasized the progress made by institutions in promoting sustainability, with universities across the globe being assessed on various sustainability metrics.

INDIA MEN'S HOCKEY TEAM MOVES TO 5TH IN LATEST FIH RANKINGS FOR 2025

- The Netherlands retained the top spot, followed by Belgium in the 2nd place, and Australia in the 3rd position.
- This improvement for India reflects their consistent performance in recent international tournaments and matches, highlighting their strong presence in the global hockey arena.
- These rankings are crucial for determining seedings in future tournaments and signify the ongoing progress and status of national teams worldwide.

INDIA RANKS 39TH IN TRAVEL AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT INDEX 2024

- This marks an improvement from its previous rank of 54th in 2021, which was later adjusted to 38th due to changes in WEF's methodology.
- The top position is held by Singapore.
- Key highlights include:
 - Improved infrastructure and government policies.
 - Growth in medical and cultural tourism.
 - Enhanced international travel post-pandemic.
- India's rise in the ranking reflects its increasing appeal as a travel and tourism destination, supported by significant developments in various sectors contributing to this growth.

AWARDS AND HONOURS

Awardee	Awards
33 exemplary individuals and institutions	National Awards for Empowering Persons with Disabilities
Nurse Maria Victoria Juan	Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award
Jasleen Kaur	Turner Prize 2024
Employees' Provident Fund Organization	ISSA Good Practice Award

Abathsahayeswarar Temple Conservation Project	Award of Distinction
BJPCI Conservation Project	Award of Merit
Former Chilean President Veronica Michelle Bachelet Jeria	Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development 2024
Filmmaker Shaji N Karun	JC Daniel Award 2023
Indian film "The Kumbaya Story"	Transforming Society Short Film category
Chief Ashok Raj Sigdel	Honorary General of the Indian Army
Satin Creditcare Network Limited	Microfinance Organization of the Year Award
Karnataka State Police	FICCI Drone Award
Acclaimed filmmaker Ang Lee	Directors Guild of America (DGA) Lifetime Achievement Award
Aryna Sabalenka	WTA Player of the Year 2024 Award
Suryabala	34th Vyas Samman
Ayodhya Ram Temple project	"Sword of Honour"
Javier Milei	Italian Citizenship
Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, Chairperson of Biocon Group	Jamsetji Tata Award
Vinicius Jr	Men's Player of the Year
Aitana Bonmati	Women's Player of the Year
Carlo Ancelotti and Emma Haye	Men's and Women's Coaches of the Year
Alejandro Garnacho	Puskas Award for Best Goal.
Air India	Good Design Award Australia
Hollywood star Tom Cruise	US Navy's highest civilian honor
21 writers and poets	Sahitya Akademi Awards 2024
Caitlin Sandra Neil	Miss India USA
Arun Kapur	Bura Marp
Renowned tabla maestro Pt. Swapan Choudhary	2023 National Tansen Samman
Sanand Nyas	Raja Mansingh Tomar Samman
Prime Minister Narendra Modi	Kuwait's highest civilian award
Minister S. Jaishankar	Sri Chandrasekarendra Saraswathi National Eminence Award
Amantya Technologies	TTDF Grant
ESIC	RSSF Asia-Pacific Awards
Christopher Nolan and Emma Thomas	Knighthood and Damehood
Afcons Infrastructure	Most Innovative Knowledge Enterprise (MIKE) Award 2024
REC Limited	Golden Peacock Award 2024

101 Railway Officials	Ati Vishisht Rail Seva Puraskar
aditya Vijay Bramhane (Bravery), Anushka Pathak (Art & Culture), Suhani Chauhan (Innovation), and Aryan Singh (Science & Technology).	PM Rashtriya Bal Puraskar
Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited (RINL)	Gold Award
Dr. Ravi Pillai	Bahrain's Medal of Efficiency (First Class)
Steel Authority of India Limited (SAIL)	Great Place to Work Certification
Diksha and Dyal Singh Public School Team	NASA Recognition
HSL Triumphs	3rd PSU Transformation Awards 2024
Madhav Gadgil (India), Sonia Guajajara (Brazil), Gabriel Paun (Romania), Amy Bowers Cordalis (USA), Lu Qi (China), Sekem (Egypt)	Champions of the Earth
SAIL	National awards

MOUS SIGNED

Signed Between	Date Signed	Purpose
CSC e-Governance Services India Ltd with the Confederation of All India Traders	5th December 2024	To enroll traders and citizens in social security schemes, empowering them with better financial security.
ISA & USAID	6th December 2024	To Boost Renewable Energy Connectivity
Puducherry with Karmayogi Bharat and the Capacity Building Commission	6th December 2024	For Civil Service Training Initiative
(GSI) and the Research Institute for Geo-Hydrological Protection	6th December 2024	To enhance landslide forecasting and early warning systems to international standards.
NMDFC and the Dalit Indian	7th December 2024	To promote entrepreneurship

Chamber of Commerce and Industry		among marginalized communities
DPIIT inks with Flipkart	9th December 2024	To invest in and mentor Indian startups
Gujarat Government with Thailand for Buddhist Heritage Conservation	10th December 2024	Focus on preserving Buddhist heritage sites in Gujarat and promoting them as cultural and tourist attractions.
(TCGL)with the BodhiGaya Vijjalaya 980 Institute	10th December 2024	To conserve and promote Buddhist heritage sites in Gujarat and globally promote the state's Buddhist circuit.
Amazon & DPIIT	10th December 2024	To enhance India's global manufacturing and exports.
ICICI Bank with CBA	11th December 2024	To Strengthen Australia-India Trade Relations
(CENJOWS) and (NDMA)	11th December 2024	To strengthen research and innovation in disaster management
India and Nicaragua	11th December 2024	To implement Quick Impact Projects
(CSC) with (IFFCO)	12th December 2024	To provide essential agricultural inputs to 10,000 Farmer Producer Organizations under the Central Sector Scheme.
IEPFA and ACCA	12th December 2024	To Empower Financial Literacy Across India
Premier Explosives Limited and Global Munition Limited	13th December 2024	To establish a joint venture for manufacturing defence and aerospace products, enhancing India's

		self-reliance in these sectors.
India and UAE	13th December 2024	To enhance academic partnerships, operations, and capacity development in these fields.
Gati Shakti Vishwavidyalaya and the Indian Navy	16th December 2024	Focuses on logistics-related education, research, and training,
NCERT Partners with Flipkart	16th December 2024	To Ensure Affordable Access to Educational Publications
DPIIT with HDFC Bank	17th December 2024	To provide knowledge sharing and mentorship to startups.
(DPIIT)with Tally Solutions Pvt Ltd	17th December 2024	To mentor manufacturing startups by providing training in financial management
CII, AICTE	17th December 2024	To boost industry-oriented skill development
Bluj Aero with Blade India	17th December 2024	To enhance regional air mobility and logistics in India
Uttar Pradesh and Manipur	19th December 2024	To implement the 'Ek Bharat Shreshtha Bharat' programme.
PNB and FCAOI	19th December 2024	To Enhance Agricultural Infrastructure
(SIA-India) with (GSSTI)	20th December 2024	To enhance collaboration in satellite communications and space technology
India and Kuwait	22nd December 2024	To institutionalize bilateral cooperation

UP government with Japan's Yamanashi Prefecture	24th December 2024	To enhance economic and cultural cooperation between the two regions, leveraging their historical and strategic ties.
NeGD and IPA	24th December 2024	for digital transformation in India's maritime sector

5th December 2024	International Volunteer Day	Theme: "Volunteer for an Inclusive Future"
6th December 2024	Mahaparinirvan Diwas	Theme: "Remembering Dr. B.R. Ambedkar: Champion of Social Justice and Equality."
7th December 2024	International Civil Aviation Day	Theme: "Advancing Innovation for Global Aviation".
7th December 2024	Armed Forces Flag Day	Theme: "Saluting the Valour and Dedication of Our Armed Forces,"
8th December 2024	Bodhi Day	Theme: "Embracing the Noble Eightfold Path"
8th December 2024	57th Submarine Day	Theme: "Silent Guardians of the Deep Sea,"
8th December 2024	SAARC Charter Day	Theme: "Strengthening Regional Cooperation for Sustainable Development"
9th December 2024	International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide 2024	Theme: "A Living Force in World Society: The Legacy of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide".
9th December 2024	International Anti-Corruption Day	Theme: "Uniting with Youth Against Corruption: Shaping Tomorrow's Integrity".
10th December 2024	World Human Rights Day	Theme: "Our Rights, Our Future, Right Now".
11th December 2024	78th UNICEF Foundation Day	Theme: "Listen to the Future",
11th December 2024	International Mountain Day	Theme: "Mountain solutions for a sustainable future – innovation, adaptation, and youth".
11th December 2024	Gita Jayanti 2024	Theme: "Dharma, Bhakti, Jnana, Karma".

IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme
1st December 2024	World AIDS Day 2024	Theme: "Equal Access to HIV Prevention and Treatment" .
1st December 2024	60th Raising Day	Theme: "Guardians of India's Borders: Six Decades of Valor and Dedication."
1st December 2024	International Day for the Abolition of Slavery	Theme: "Fighting slavery's legacy of racism through transformative education".
2nd December 2024	National Pollution Control Day	Theme: "Clean Air, Green Earth: A Step Towards Sustainable Living".
3rd December 2024	World Computer Literacy Day	Theme: "Empowering Women and Children through Digital Skills".
3rd December 2024	International Day of Persons with Disabilities	Theme: " Amplifying the leadership of persons with disabilities for an inclusive and sustainable future."
4th December 2024	Indian Navy Day 2024	Theme: "Strength and Power through Innovation and Indigenisation."
4th December 2024	International Day of Banks	Theme: "Empowering Sustainable Development Through Finance".
5th December 2024	World Soil Day 2024	Theme: "Caring for Soils: Measure, Monitor, Manage".

12th December 2024	International Day of Neutrality	Theme: "Promote peace and avoid violence: war is not the answer to any challenging situation."
12th December 2024	Universal Health Coverage Day	Theme: "Health: It's on the Government!".
14th December 2024	National Energy Conservation Day	Theme: "Powering Sustainability: Every Watt Counts"
15th December 2024	Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel as the Iron Man of India	Theme: "Unity and Integrity in Nation-Building" underlines his legacy.
16th December 2024	Vijay Diwas	Theme: "Celebrating Courage and Valor," honors the bravery and sacrifices of the Indian Armed Forces.
17th December 2024	Pensioners Day	Importance of social welfare for retired officials.
18th December 2024	International Migrants Day	Theme: "Honouring the Contributions of Migrants and Respecting Their Rights".
18th December 2024	Minorities Rights Day	Theme: "Embracing Diversity: Protecting Rights, Preserving Cultures".
18th December 2024	UN Arabic Language Day	Theme: "Arabic and Artificial Intelligence: Stimulating Innovation and Preserving Cultural Heritage".
19th December 2024	Goa Liberation Day	Theme: "Celebrating Freedom, History, and Culture", honoring the sacrifices made during Operation Vijay.
20th December 2024	International Human Solidarity Day	Theme: "Celebrating Unity in Diversity,"
21st December 2024	World Meditation Day	Theme: "Meditate for a Better Tomorrow"
22nd December 2024	National Mathematics Day	Theme: "Mathematics: The Bridge to

		Innovation and Progress".
23rd December 2024	National Farmers' Day	Theme: "Empowering Farmers through Technology"
24th December 2024	National Consumer Day	Theme: "Consumer Rights in the Digital Age".
24th December 2024	(DMRC) Foundation day	Theme: -
25th December 2024	Good Governance Day	Theme: "Empowering Citizens Through Digital Governance".
26th December 2024	Veer Bal Diwas 2024	Theme: "Valour and Building New Minds".
26th December 2024	Boxing Day	Theme:-
27th December 2024	International Day of Epidemic Preparedness 2024	Theme: "Strengthening Global Health Systems for Future Crises."
28th December 2024	Birthday of Ratan Tata	Theme:-
21st December 2024	World Basketball Day	Theme: "Teamwork and Unity",

GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

URJAVEER SCHEME HAS BEEN LAUNCHED BY THE UNION MINISTER MANOHAR LAL

- This initiative focuses on training local electricians to promote and sell energy-efficient appliances.
- The scheme is designed to create awareness about the benefits of using energy-efficient products, reduce energy consumption, and support environmental sustainability.
- By empowering local electricians, the scheme also helps create job opportunities and foster economic growth in the energy sector.

BIMA SAKHI YOJANA LAUNCHED BY PRIME MINISTER MODI TO EMPOWER WOMEN AGED 18 TO 70 YEARS

- To empower women by enhancing their understanding of financial products and insurance.
- Women aged 18 to 70 years.
- The scheme will recruit 200,000 women as volunteer insurance agents over the next three

years. These volunteers will receive comprehensive training and a stipend, equipping them to educate and promote financial literacy in underserved communities.

- Women participating in the **scheme will gain valuable knowledge about financial planning and insurance, fostering economic independence** and security.
- The initiative **aims to increase insurance penetration in rural and underserved** areas, ensuring more women and their families are covered by insurance policies.

THE MATERIAL COST UNDER THE PRADHAN MANTRI POSHAN SHAKTI NIRMAN (PM POSHAN)

Current Context: The Union Education Ministry announced an enhancement of the Material Cost under the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) scheme by 13.70%.

- The **Material Cost under the Pradhan Mantri Poshan Shakti Nirman (PM POSHAN) enhanced** by 13.70%
- This **increase took effect from December 1, 2024.**
- **Primary and Bal Vatika Classes:** From ₹5.45 to ₹6.19 per meal.
- **Upper Primary Classes:** From ₹8.17 to ₹9.29 per meal.
- The **central government will bear the additional cost of ₹425.62 crore in FY 2024-25** due to this enhancement.
- The **new rates are applicable across all states and Union Territories (UTs), although** states and UTs are free to contribute more than their prescribed share.

MUKHYAMANTRI MAHILA SAMMAN SCHEME HAS BEEN LAUNCHED BY THE DELHI GOVERNMENT

- **Objective:** To provide financial support to women in Delhi.
- **Financial Assistance:** Eligible women will receive Rs 1,000 per month. If the Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) returns to power, the amount will increase to Rs 2,100 per month.
- **Eligibility:** Women aged 18 and above with an annual family income of up to Rs 3 lakh.

- **Impact:** The scheme aims to empower women financially and support their families.
- This initiative is **part of the government's efforts to promote gender equality and support** women's welfare in Delhi.

SIX NEW SCHEMES HAVE BEEN LAUNCHED BY THE HIMACHAL PRADESH GOVERNMENT

- **Natural Farming Promotion Scheme:** Encourages farmers to adopt natural farming practices, reducing reliance on chemical fertilizers and pesticides for healthier, sustainable farming.
- **Small Farmers Support Scheme:** Provides financial and technical assistance to small and marginal farmers to boost their productivity and income.
- **Rural Income Enhancement Scheme:** Aims to diversify and increase sources of income in rural areas through various agricultural and non-agricultural activities.
- **Healthcare Access Improvement Scheme:** Focuses on improving healthcare facilities and making them more accessible, particularly in remote and rural areas.
- **Rural Infrastructure Development Scheme:** Initiates projects to develop and upgrade rural infrastructure, including roads, irrigation systems, and community facilities.
- **Educational Initiatives Scheme:** Launches new educational programs and scholarships to support the education and skill development of youth in the state.
- These **schemes are designed to improve the overall quality of life for the people** of Himachal Pradesh, focusing on sustainability, economic growth, and access to essential services.

CREDIT GUARANTEE SCHEME LAUNCHED BY THE GOVT. TO FACILITATE CREDIT ACCESS FOR FARMERS THROUGH E-NWR

- This initiative, **with a corpus of Rs 1,000 crore, aims to provide farmers with easier access** to credit by allowing them to secure loans using electronic negotiable warehouse receipts (e-NWRs).
- **Purpose:** To reduce distress selling by farmers and improve their access to credit.

- **Mechanism:** Farmers can pledge their crops stored in Warehousing Development and Regulatory Authority (WDRA)-registered warehouses to obtain loans.
- **Encourages scientific storage** of produce.
- **Provides financial support**, reducing the need for immediate sale of produce.
- **Promotes better price realization** for farmers.
- The scheme is **expected to help farmers manage their finances more effectively** and ensure better storage and marketing of their produce.

INDIA PROMOTES AYUSH SYSTEMS GLOBALLY WITH NEW CHAIRS IN FIVE COUNTRIES

Current Context: On December 17, 2024, the Ministry of AYUSH launched a central sector scheme to promote international cooperation for AYUSH systems of medicine.

- India **Promotes AYUSH Systems Globally with New Chairs in Five Countries**
- This **initiative led to the establishment of AYUSH academic chairs in five countries:** Bangladesh, Australia, Mauritius, Latvia, and Malaysia.
- **Promote AYUSH Systems:** The initiative aims to increase awareness and interest in AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy) practices globally.
- **Academic Collaboration:** These academic chairs will foster collaboration, research, and knowledge exchange between India and the host countries.
- **Strengthen Global Presence:** The goal is to integrate AYUSH systems into the healthcare frameworks of these countries, promoting holistic and traditional healthcare practices.

DR. AMBEDKAR SAMMAN YOJANA

- The **primary aim of this scheme is to provide financial assistance to Dalit students** who aspire to pursue higher education abroad.
- **Financial Coverage:** The scheme covers the entire cost of education, including tuition fees, travel expenses, and other associated costs, ensuring that talented students from marginalized communities do not face financial barriers in achieving their academic goals.
- **Eligibility:** The scheme is specifically designed for Dalit students, aiming to uplift and support students

from these communities who have demonstrated academic excellence and potential.

- **Objective:** The initiative seeks to empower Dalit students by providing them with opportunities for advanced education, thereby contributing to their personal and professional growth. It also aims to promote social justice and equality by addressing the educational disparities faced by marginalized communities.
- **Implementation:** The scheme is implemented by the Delhi government, with a streamlined application process to ensure that eligible students can easily access the benefits. The government collaborates with educational institutions and other stakeholders to facilitate the smooth execution of the scheme.

SPORTS

SYED MODI 2024: SINDHU, LAKSHYA END DROUGHT; TREESA-GAYATRI MAKE HISTORY

- This tournament, officially known as the **Syed Modi India International Super 300, is part of the BWF World Tour** and offers a total prize money of \$210,000.
- PV Sindhu **won the women's singles title, defeating China's Wu Luo Yu 21-14, 21-16.**
- Lakshya Sen **clinched the men's singles title with a dominant 21-6, 21-7 victory** over Singapore's Jia Heng Jason Teh.
- Treesa Jolly and **Gayatri Gopichand made history by winning the women's doubles title, defeating China's Bao Li Jing and Li Qian 21-18, 21-11.**

REPORTS

DPIIT RELEASED THE FOREIGN DIRECT INVESTMENT (FDI) REPORT FOR INDIA

- The report **highlighted a significant 45% increase in FDI inflows, amounting to \$29.79 billion, compared to the same period in the previous year.**
- Singapore emerged as the **largest contributor, accounting for 50% of the total FDI inflows with \$7.53 billion**, followed by Mauritius, the Netherlands, the US, and the UAE.
- Key sectors **attracting substantial investments included services, computer software**, telecom, and pharmaceuticals.

- State-wise, Maharashtra **received the highest FDI inflows, followed by Karnataka, Telangana, and Gujarat.**
- The report **also noted a 28% increase in total FDI, which includes equity inflows, reinvested earnings, and other capital, totaling \$42.1 billion in the first half of the fiscal year, up from \$33.12 billion in the previous year.**

IN REGIONS MOST VULNERABLE TO CLIMATE AND ENVIRONMENTAL HAZARDS. SBI REPORT REVEALS INDIA'S GDP TO DROP BELOW 6.5% IN FY25

- **Key Points of the Report:**
- The **report forecasts that India's GDP growth will drop below 6.5% for the fiscal year 2025.**
- This is a **downward revision from the Reserve Bank of India's (RBI) projection of 6.6%.**
- The **primary reason cited for the lower growth forecast is a slowdown in the industrial sector.**
- Factors **contributing to this slowdown include decreased industrial output, lower investment levels, and supply chain disruptions.**
- The **report highlights potential impacts on employment, consumer spending, and overall economic stability.**
- A **slower GDP growth rate may lead to reduced economic opportunities and challenges in achieving fiscal targets.**

ICRA ESG RATINGS REPORT: INDIA RANKS 6TH WITH 127 COMPANIES

- **India ranks 6th globally with 127 companies committed to net-zero targets** under the Science-Based Targets initiative (SBTi).
- **Despite contributing about 7% of global emissions, India's ranking highlights its growing corporate commitment to sustainability.**
- Sectors **like power, energy, and cement still face challenges in adopting net-zero goals.**
- The **United Kingdom leads the ranking, holding the 1st position with the highest number of companies committed to such targets.**

NITI AAYOG LAUNCHED "TRADE WATCH QUARTERLY" FOR Q1FY25 IN NEW DELHI

- **Overview of Trade Performance:** The report provides a comprehensive overview of India's trade performance for the first quarter of the financial year 2024-25 (April to June).
- **Global Demand-Supply Perspectives:** It includes insights into global demand and supply trends affecting India's trade.
- **Sector-wise Performance:** The report highlights the performance of key sectors, identifying areas of growth and challenges.
- **Emerging Trade Opportunities:** It identifies emerging trade opportunities for India, helping stakeholders to capitalize on new markets.
- **Key Findings:** The report reveals a 5.45% year-on-year growth in total trade, with merchandise exports increasing by 5.95% and imports by 8.40%

CRISIL: ASSET GROWTH OF NBFCS TO SHARPLY DECLINE TO 15-17% IN FY25 AND FY26

- **Growth Projections:** The report predicts a decline in asset growth for non-banking financial companies (NBFCs) to 15-17% in FY25 and FY26, down from 23% in FY24.
- **Factors:** The slowdown is attributed to regulatory changes, asset quality concerns, and funding challenges.
- **Segments Affected:** Unsecured loans and microfinance segments are expected to be most impacted.
- **Strategic Recalibration:** NBFCs will need to recalibrate their growth strategies due to intensified regulatory compliance requirements and weakening asset quality metrics.

INDIA WITNESSED A SIGNIFICANT RISE IN WOMEN'S PARTICIPATION IN THE LABOUR FORCE

- The report detailing **this rise is titled "Female Labour Force Participation Rate: An Observational Analysis of the Periodic Labour Force Survey (PLFS) from 2017-18 to 2022-23".**
- The report **was released by the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) on December 11, 2024.**
- **Rural female labour force participation rate (LFPR) surged from 24.6% to 41.5%.**

- **Urban female LFPR rose modestly** from 20.4% to 25.4%.
- **Government schemes like Mudra loans, Drone Didi programme, and self-help groups (SHGs)** under the Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana played a significant role in this increase.
- There were notable **variations across states, with rural areas in Jharkhand and Bihar experiencing substantial growth.**
- The report also discusses **how factors like age, marital status, and household composition influence women's participation** in the workforce.

WORLD MALARIA REPORT 2024: INDIA ACHIEVES 69% DROP IN MALARIA CASES

- **Global Progress:** The report provides a comprehensive assessment of global efforts to control and eliminate malaria, highlighting both progress and gaps.
- **Reduction in Cases:** It mentions that malaria cases have been reduced significantly worldwide, with 2.2 billion cases and 12.7 million deaths averted since 2000.
- **Regional Focus:** The report emphasizes the need for more inclusive and effective responses, particularly in high-risk regions like the WHO African Region.
- **Vulnerable Populations:** A dedicated chapter focuses on reaching populations most vulnerable to malaria, including children under 5, women and girls, Indigenous Peoples, migrants, people with disabilities, and those in remote areas.

NITI AAYOG RELEASES REPORT ON "S.A.F.E. ACCOMMODATION: WORKER HOUSING FOR MANUFACTURING GROWTH"

- The report emphasizes **the importance of Secure, Affordable, Flexible, and Efficient (S.A.F.E.) accommodations** for industrial workers to boost India's manufacturing sector.
- **Public-Private Partnership (PPP) Model:** The initiative will be executed under a PPP model with Viability Gap Funding (VGF) support and commitments from anchor industries.
- **Regulatory Reforms:** The report suggests reclassifying land near manufacturing units as residential and providing GST exemptions for qualifying accommodations.

- **Workforce Strategy:** Addressing housing challenges is crucial for achieving India's long-term vision of becoming a global manufacturing hub under initiatives like Make in India and Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- The goal is **to elevate the manufacturing sector's contribution to GDP from 17% to 25% by 2047.**

UNION MINISTER BHUPENDER YADAV RELEASES INDIA STATE OF FOREST REPORT 2023

- The report, **prepared by the Forest Survey of India (FSI), provides a detailed assessment** of India's forest and tree resources.
- **Increase in Forest Cover:** The report shows an increase of 1,445 square kilometers in forest and tree cover since 2021, bringing the total forest cover to 25.17% of India's geographical area.
- **State-wise Distribution:** The report provides a breakdown of forest cover across different states, with Madhya Pradesh having the largest forest area, followed by Arunachal Pradesh and Chhattisgarh.
- **Forest Density:** The classification of forest density is detailed, with categories such as very dense, moderately dense, and open forests.
- **Forest Carbon Stock:** There has been an increase in the estimated carbon stock, indicating positive contributions towards carbon sequestration.
- **Biodiversity:** The report highlights efforts to conserve biodiversity, protect endangered species, and promote sustainable forest management practices.

WORLD BANK: INDIA EMERGED TOPMOST RECIPIENT OF REMITTANCES AMONG LMICS

- The report highlights that India **emerged as the top recipient of remittances among LMICs**, with an estimated inflow of USD 129 billion in 2024.
- **Top Recipient:** India received the highest remittances, followed by Mexico, China, the Philippines, and Pakistan.
- **Growth Rate:** Remittances to LMICs grew by 5.8% in 2024, compared to 1.2% in 2023.
- **Total Inflows:** Officially recorded remittances to LMICs are expected to reach USD 685 billion in 2024.
- **Economic Impact:** Remittances have outpaced other financial flows like Foreign Direct Investment (FDI)

and are crucial for poverty reduction, financing health and education, and improving access to capital markets.

- **Regional Growth:** South Asia saw the highest increase in remittance flows, driven by strong inflows to India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh.

India-Philippines Maritime Dialogue	Ministry of External Affairs (MEA)	Manila, Philippines	Theme: "Enhancing Maritime Cooperation for Mutual Growth and Global Well-being".
21st CII Annual Health Summit	Confederation of Indian Industry (CII)	New Delhi	Theme: "Transforming Healthcare for 2047".

SUMMITS AND CONFRENCES

Name of Summit	Organized/ Led By	Venue	Aim/Theme
Sixteenth Conference of Parties	UNCCD chaired by Mr. Ibrahim Thiam	Riyadh, Saudi Arabia	Theme: "Our Land. Our Future"
Asia-Oceania Meteorological Satellite Users' Conference	(IMD) under the Ministry of Earth Sciences.	New Delhi	Theme: "Utilizing Satellite Data for Weather and Climate Studies".
World Maritime Conference 2024	Institute of Marine Engineers	Chennai	Theme: "Navigating the Future: Sustainable Shipping and Maritime Technology"
Rising Rajasthan Global Investment Summit	Government of Rajasthan.	Sitapura	Theme: 'Replete, Responsible, Ready'.
India Internet Governance Forum	(MeitY) and the (NIXI)	New Delhi	Theme: "Innovating Internet Governance for India"
9th India-Thailand Defence Dialogue	Ministry of Defence	New Delhi	Theme: "Enhancing Bilateral Defence Cooperation",
Global Inclusive Finance Summit	ACCESS Development Services	New Delhi	Theme: "Advancing Financial Inclusion",
4th National Conference of Chief Secretaries	Prime Minister Narendra Modi	New Delhi	Theme: "Promoting Entrepreneurship, Employment, and Skilling"
10th World Ayurveda Congress and Arogya Expo	World Ayurveda Foundation	Dehradun	Theme: "Digital Health: An Ayurveda Perspective",

ECONOMY- ONE LINER

- On December 2, 2024, **the government withdrew the windfall tax** on Aviation Turbine Fuel (ATF), crude oil, petrol, and diesel. This decision came in response to stabilizing global crude oil prices. It aims to relieve oil companies like Reliance Industries and ONGC, **aThe Indo-Russian joint venture Kinet Railway Solutions announced the establishment of three depots for the Vande Bharat Sleeper project. These depots will be at the Marathwada Rail Coach Factory in Latur, Maharashtra, and two other strategic locations.**
- On December 4, 2024, **the Rajya Sabha passed the Boilers Bill, 2024, replacing the century-old Boilers Act, 1923.** The new bill aims to improve boiler safety, decriminalize minor offences, and promote ease of doing business. **allowing them to improve their profit margins.**
- Morgan Stanley revised **India's GDP growth projection for FY25 from 6.7% to 6.3% on December 4, 2024, due to a slowdown in the July-September quarter. They anticipate a rebound later in the fiscal year, driven by increased government spending, improved rural demand, and easing financial conditions.**
- Foreign direct investment (FDI) inflows to India surged by 45% year-on-year to USD 29.79 billion in the second quarter from April to **September 2024. This growth was driven by strong inflows in sectors such as services, computer software and hardware, telecom, and pharmaceuticals.**
- The 10-year **government bond yield in India dipped to a 3-year low on December 4, 2024, reaching 6.6886%.** This decline was influenced by expectations of the RBI easing monetary policy, consistent foreign inflows, and slower-than-expected economic growth.

- The Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) raised India's FY25 growth forecast to 6.8% on December 4, 2024. This adjustment reflects strong investment and agricultural output, with public infrastructure spending and private consumption expected to sustain growth.
- Retail inflation for farm workers and rural laborers eased to 5.96% and 6% in October 2024, respectively, down from 6.36% and 6.39% in September. This was reported by the Labour Ministry on December 9, 2024.
- India's industrial output grew by 3.5% year-on-year in October 2024, as reported on December 11, 2024. This growth was driven by strong performances in the manufacturing (4.1%), electricity (2%), and mining (0.9%) sectors.
- Retail inflation in India decreased from 6.2% in October 2024 to 5.48% in November 2024. This decline was mainly due to lower food prices, especially vegetables, following the arrival of fresh produce. The drop was reported on December 12, 2024.
- In November 2024, Systematic Investment Plans (SIPs) saw inflows surpass Rs 25,000 crore for the second consecutive month, reaching Rs 25,320 crore. This indicates strong and consistent investor confidence in the Indian mutual fund market.
- The cumulative overall exports during April-November 2024 are estimated at USD 536.25 billion, showing a growth of 7.61% compared to USD 498.33 billion in the same period in 2023. This increase indicates positive momentum in India's export sector.
- The total exports for November 2024 were reported on December 14, 2024. These exports amounted to \$67.79 billion, showing a 9.59% increase over the exports from November 2023. This growth was driven by significant increases in exports of electronic goods, engineering goods, rice, marine products, and ready-made garments.
- For the fiscal year 2023-24, India's pharmaceutical market is valued at USD 50 billion. Out of this, domestic consumption accounts for USD 23.5 billion, while exports are valued at USD 26.5 billion.
- On December 13, 2024, Fitch Ratings lowered India's GDP growth forecast for FY25 to 6.4%, down from the previous estimate of 7%. This revision

aligns with the RBI's recent reduction from 7.2% to 6.6%. Despite the downgrade, Fitch remains optimistic about India's economic recovery, driven by strong domestic demand and policy support.

- On December 16, 2024, the Ministry of Commerce and Industry announced that wholesale food inflation declined from a 25-month high of 11.6% in October to 8.9% in November 2024. This decrease was largely due to a significant drop in vegetable prices, although potato prices continued to rise sharply.
- In the fiscal year 2023-2024, India exported cotton textiles valued at \$12,258 million. This represents a significant portion of India's textile exports, despite a decline in export values compared to previous years.
- Over the past decade, the annual funding for the agricultural sector has increased nearly sixfold, demonstrating the government's commitment to boosting productivity, supporting farmers, and ensuring food security.

OBITUARY- ONE LINER

- Brigadier **Raj Manchanda, the "Old Fox" of Indian squash**, passed away at age 80 on December 1, 2024. A six-time National champion and Arjuna Awardee, he was known for his resilience and ability to outlast opponents.
- Neale Fraser, **an iconic Australian tennis player and Davis Cup legend**, passed away at 91 on December 2, 2024. He won three Grand Slam singles titles and led Australia to four Davis Cup victories as team captain.
- **Somanahalli Mallaiah Krishna, former Karnataka Chief Minister** and External Affairs Minister, passed away at 92 on December 10, 2024. Renowned for transforming Bengaluru into India's Silicon Valley, he was awarded the Padma Vibhushan.
- **Renowned poet and civil rights activist Nikki Giovanni passed away** on December 9, 2024, at the age of 81. Known for her powerful voice in the Black Arts Movement, she authored over 30 books exploring themes of race, politics, and love.
- **Purushottam Upadhyay, a legendary Gujarati singer**, passed away at the age of 90 on December 11, 2024. Known for his timeless compositions and melodious voice, he left behind a cherished legacy.
- **On December 16, 2024, Zakir Hussain, the legendary tabla maestro and four-time Grammy**

Award winner, passed away at the age of 73 in San Francisco due to complications from idiopathic pulmonary fibrosis.

- On December 16, 2024, **Tulsi Gowda, the "Encyclopedia of Forests", passed away** at age 86 in Honnali, Karnataka. She was an environmentalist known for planting over 30,000 trees. She was honored with the Padma Shri in 2021 for her contributions to environmental conservation.
- On **December 16, 2024, renowned classical singer and harmonium artist Pandit Sanjay Ram Marathe** passed away at age 68 in Thane, Maharashtra, due to a severe heart attack. He was celebrated for his contributions to Indian classical music and theatre, and he leaves behind a rich legacy.
- **Om Prakash Chautala, former Chief Minister of Haryana**, passed away at the age of 89 on December 20, 2024. He succumbed to a cardiac arrest at his residence in Gurugram.
- **Meena Ganesh** passed away on December 19, 2024, at the age of 81. She was undergoing treatment at a **private hospital in Ottappalam, Kerala**, after suffering a stroke. Meena Ganesh was a prolific Malayalam actress and theatre artist.
- **Rohan Mirchandani, co-founder of Epigamia**, passed away on December 21, 2024, at the age of 42 due to a sudden cardiac arrest. He played a key role in transforming Epigamia into a leading yogurt brand in India.
- **Jodhaiya Bai, a renowned Baiga tribal artist and Padma Shri awardee**, passed away on December 15, 2024, at the age of 86 in Lodha, Umariya district, Madhya Pradesh. Her significant contributions brought international recognition to Baiga art.
- **Former Time Warner CEO Richard Parsons** passed away on December 27, 2024 at his Manhattan home. He was 76 years old and had been battling multiple myeloma since 2015.
- **Dr. Pierre-Sylvain Filliozat**, a renowned **French Indologist and Padma Shri awardee**, passed away on December 31, 2024 in Paris. He was celebrated for his contributions to Sanskrit studies, literature, and grammar.
- **Renowned filmmaker Shyam Benegal** passed away on December 23, 2024, at the age of 90. He was a **pioneer of the Indian parallel cinema movement** and made iconic films like Ankur, Nishant, and Manthan.
- **Former World Snooker Champion Terry Griffiths** passed away on December 1, 2024, at the age of 77. He battled dementia and was celebrated for winning snooker's "Triple Crown."
- **MT Vasudevan Nair, a legendary Malayalam writer**, passed away on December 25, 2024, at the age of 91 in Kozhikode, Kerala. Renowned for his storytelling, he authored nine novels, 19 short story collections, and 54 screenplays.
- **Dr. Manmohan Singh, former Prime Minister of India**, passed away on December 26, 2024, at the age of 92 in Delhi. He was honored for his economic reforms and contributions to U.S.-India relations. Leaders worldwide have paid tribute to his legacy.
- **Osamu Suzuki, former chairman of Suzuki Motor Corporation**, passed away on December 25, 2024, at the age of 94 due to malignant lymphoma. He was renowned for expanding Suzuki's presence in India through Maruti Suzuki.
- **Former US President Jimmy Carter** passed away on December 29, 2024, at the age of 100. He was the longest-lived US president in history and was renowned for his extensive humanitarian work and dedication to peace.
- **Renowned folk artist and Padma Shri awardee Darshanam Mogilaiah** passed away on December 19, 2024, at the age of 73. He was celebrated for his exceptional skill in playing the Kinnera, a traditional string instrument.

BOOKS

- **Dr. Dinesh Shahra** unveiled his book **"Dalai Lama's Secret to Happiness"** on December 12, 2024, at the prestigious Library of Tibetan Works & Archives in Dharamshala. The book delves into the core teachings of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on inner peace, compassion, and universal values.
- On December 5, 2024, **External Affairs Minister Dr. S. Jaishankar** released **Vikram Sampath's book "Tipu Sultan: The Saga of the Mysore Interregnum"** at the Indian Habitat Centre in New Delhi. The book explores Tipu Sultan's resistance to British colonial control and controversial aspects of his rule.
- On December 17, 2024, **Union Minister Gajendra Singh Shekhawat** launched the book **"New Bharat – Modi's Vision and Development 2019-2024"** in New Delhi. The book, authored by Ravi Parashar,

highlights key initiatives and achievements of the Modi government over the past five years.

- "The Unyielding Judge: **A Tribute to Justice A.N. Grover's Legacy**," written by Gauri Grover, highlights Justice Grover's contributions to Indian jurisprudence, particularly the Kesavananda Bharti case. The book was launched on December 21, 2024, with remarks from Attorney General R Venkataramani.
- Nobel laureate **Abhijit Banerjee launched his new book, "Chhaunk: On Food, Economics, and Society"**, on November 22, 2024. The book blends memoir, cookbook, and social commentary, exploring the intersections of food, economics, and societal issues.
- Union Home Minister Amit Shah released the **book "Jammu Kashmir and Ladakh: Through the Ages"** in New Delhi on January 2, 2025. The book is authored by the Indian Council of Historical Research (ICHR) and edited by Prof. Raghuvendra Tanwar. The event featured Union Minister for Education, Dharmendra Pradhan, as the Guest of Honour.
- Former Indian wicketkeeper **Syed Kirmani released his autobiography, "Stumped: Life Behind and Beyond the Twenty-Two Yards,"** on December 29, 2024, in Bengaluru. The event took place at M. Chinnaswamy Stadium and featured cricket legends like Kapil Dev, Rahul Dravid, and Anil Kumble.

MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS ONE-LINER QUESTION BANK

Q1. Who became the Chairman of the International Cricket Council (ICC) on December 1, 2024?

- Sourav Ganguly
- Jay Shah
- Shashank Manohar
- N. Srinivasan
- None the above

Answer: b) Jay Shah, the outgoing secretary of the Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI), assumed the role of ICC Chairman on December 1, 2024, succeeding Greg Barclay.

Q2. What is the primary aim of the State Bank of India's "Har Ghar Lakhpati" initiative?

- Promote financial literacy among rural women
- Increase the interest rates on fixed deposit schemes
- Provide collateral-free loans to MSMEs
- Boost deposit accretion by helping depositors grow their savings to ₹1 lakh
- None the above

Answer: d) The "Har Ghar Lakhpati" initiative is aimed at boosting deposit growth by encouraging individuals to save through recurring deposit (RD) schemes, enabling them to achieve a savings target of ₹1 lakh.

Q3. Arjun Erigaisi became the second Indian chess player to achieve which ELO rating in classical chess?

- 2700
- 2800
- 2750
- 2900
- None the above

Answer: b) Arjun Erigaisi achieved the milestone ELO rating of 2800 in classical chess on December 1, 2024.

Q4. With the inclusion of Ratapani, how many tiger reserves are there in India?

- 55
- 56
- 57
- 58
- None the above

Answer: c) Ratapani Tiger Reserve became the 57th tiger reserve in India, showcasing the country's commitment to protecting its tiger population.

Q5. Who won the Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award 2024?

- a) Maria Victoria Juan
- b) Florence Nightingale
- c) Mary Eliza Mahoney
- d) Clara Barton
- e) None the above

Answer: a) Nurse Maria Victoria Juan from the Philippines was honored with the Aster Guardians Global Nursing Award 2024 for her exceptional contributions to nursing.

Q6. Which word was declared the Oxford Word of the Year 2024?

- a) AI Overload
- b) Climate Crisis
- c) Brain Rot
- d) Crypto Craze
- e) None the above

Answer c:) On December 2, 2024, the term "Brain Rot" was declared the Oxford Word of the Year 2024.

Q7. Which Indian organization received the ISSA Good Practice Award for Asia and Pacific 2024?

- a) National Pension System (NPS)
- b) Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO)
- c) Life Insurance Corporation (LIC)
- d) Pradhan Mantri Shram Yogi Maandhan Scheme (PMSYM)
- e) None the above

Answer: b) The Employees' Provident Fund Organization (EPFO) was recognized for its innovative social security initiatives, earning it the ISSA Good Practice Award for Asia and Pacific 2024.

Q8. Which country won the 5th Junior Hockey Asia Cup in 2024?

- a) Pakistan
- b) India
- c) Oman
- d) Malaysia
- e) None the above

Answer: b) India defeated Pakistan in the final to clinch the title.

Q9. What is the revised GDP growth forecast for 2024-25 as per the RBI's announcement on December 6, 2024?

- a) 7.5%
- b) 7.2%
- c) 6.8%
- d) 6.6%
- e) None the above

Answer: d) The RBI reduced its GDP growth forecast for 2024-25 to 6.6% from the earlier estimate of 7.2%, citing challenges to economic growth.

Q10. Under which program was the \$1.17 billion deal for MH-60R helicopter support systems approved?

- a) Defense Security Assistance Program (DSAP)
- b) Foreign Military Financing (FMF)
- c) Foreign Military Sales (FMS)
- d) Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START)
- e) None the above

Answer: c) The U.S. Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program facilitates government-to-government sales of defense equipment, services, and training to foreign nations.

Q11. How many districts are covered under the 100-day TB elimination campaign launched on 7th December 2024?

- a) 250
- b) 500
- c) 347
- d) 400
- e) None the above

Answer: c) The campaign targets 347 districts across 33 states and Union Territories to intensify TB detection and improve treatment outcomes in high-risk areas.

Q12. Who has been appointed as the chairperson of the 68th Session of the United Nations Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)?

- a) Syed Akbaruddin
- b) Jaishankar Menon
- c) T. S. Tirumurti
- d) Shambhu S Kumaran
- e) None the above

Answer: d) Ambassador Shambhu S Kumaran officially took on the role of chairperson of the 68th Session of the CND, representing India's commitment to addressing global challenges in narcotics control.

Q13. What is the new growth forecast for India's FY25 according to the OECD?

- a) 5.8%
- b) 6.2%
- c) 6.5%
- d) 6.8%
- e) None the above

Answer: d) The OECD revised its growth forecast for India's FY25 to 6.8%. This reflects an optimistic outlook for India's economic growth.

Q14. Who was honored with the Indira Gandhi Prize for Peace, Disarmament, and Development in 2024?

- a) António Guterres
- b) Veronica Michelle Bachelet
- c) Malala Yousafzai
- d) Greta Thunberg
- e) None the above

Answer: b) Former Chilean President Veronica Michelle Bachelet Jeria was recognized with the award in 2024 for her contributions to human rights, gender equality, and democracy.

Q15. On which date did ISRO launch the European Space Agency's (ESA) Proba-3 mission?

- a) December 3, 2024
- b) December 5, 2024
- c) December 7, 2024
- d) December 10, 2024
- e) None the above

Answer: b) ISRO launched ESA's Proba-3 mission on December 5, 2024, from Sriharikota.

Q16. What is MuleHunter.ai?

- a) A financial literacy program
- b) A mobile banking app
- c) An AI/ML-based model to combat digital frauds
- d) A blockchain technology platform
- e) None the above

Answer: c) MuleHunter.ai is an AI/ML-based tool designed to detect and mitigate fraudulent activities involving mule accounts.

Q17. What is the name given to the 3D high-resolution images of the human fetal brain released by IIT Madras?

- a) DHARANI
- b) PRAJNA
- c) AMRITA
- d) SANJEEVANI
- e) None the above

Answer: a) The images are named DHARANI, highlighting their detailed and groundbreaking nature.

Q18. Bharati Kolli, honored as a Rising Star in Banking 2024, is associated with which organization?

- a) Reserve Bank of India
- b) Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC)
- c) International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- d) Federal Reserve Bank
- e) None the above

Answer: b) Bharati Kolli is the Director of the Data Management Office at Industrial and Commercial Bank of China (ICBC), New York, where she contributes to the bank's data strategies and operations.

Q19. Which countries will co-host the 2030 FIFA World Cup?

- a) Spain, Portugal, and Italy
- b) Spain, Portugal, and Morocco
- c) Spain, Portugal, and France
- d) Spain, Portugal, and Argentina
- e) None the above

Answer: b) The 2030 FIFA World Cup will be co-hosted by Spain, Portugal, and Morocco.

Q20. Who became the youngest-ever World Chess Champion on December 12, 2024?

- a) Magnus Carlsen
- b) Ding Liren
- c) Gukesh Shatters
- d) Ian Nepomniachtchi
- e) None the above

Answer: c) Gukesh Shatters became the youngest-ever World Chess Champion on December 12, 2024.

Q21. Who is the author of the book Dalai Lama's Secret to Happiness?

- a) Dr. Dinesh Shahra
- b) Tenzin Gyatso
- c) Dr. Karan Singh
- d) Pema Chödrön
- e) None the above

Answer: a) Dr. Dinesh Shahra unveiled the book on December 12, 2024, emphasizing the teachings of the Dalai Lama on inner peace and compassion.

Q22. Who has been appointed as the new MD & CEO of TransUnion CIBIL effective December 12, 2024?

- a) Rajesh Kumar
- b) Bhavesh Jain
- c) Amit Shah
- d) Ravi Agrawal
- e) None the above

Answer: b) Bhavesh Jain has been appointed as the new MD & CEO of TransUnion CIBIL, effective December 12, 2024, succeeding Rajesh Kumar.

Q23. Who developed the Amrit Gyaan Kosh portal?

- a) Ministry of Education

- b) Capacity Building Commission and Karmayogi Bharat
- c) National Informatics Centre
- d) NITI Aayog
- e) None the above

Answer: b) The portal was developed by the Capacity Building Commission and Karmayogi Bharat to enhance governance training.

Q24. In which district is the Eaglenest Bird Festival organized?

- a) Lohit District
- b) Tawang District
- c) West Kameng District
- d) East Siang District
- e) None the above

Answer: c) The festival is hosted in the West Kameng District, an area with significant ecological importance and a hub for birdwatching enthusiasts.

Q25. Who is the author of the book Tipu Sultan: The Saga of the Mysore Interregnum?

- a) Sanjeev Sanyal
- b) William Dalrymple
- c) Ramachandra Guha
- d) Vikram Sampath
- e) None the above

Answer: d) Vikram Sampath, a noted historian and writer, authored the book, adding to his repertoire of works on Indian history.

Q26. Which organization won the inaugural FICCI Drone Award on December 8, 2024, for its innovative use of drone technology?

- a) Karnataka State Police
- b) Indian Army
- c) National Disaster Response Force (NDRF)

- d) Indian Air Force
- e) None the above

Answer: a) The Karnataka State Police won the inaugural FICCI Drone Award for their innovative use of drone technology in training and capacity building.

Q27. Where is Gujarat's first semiconductor assembly and testing plant located?

- a) Ahmedabad
- b) Surat
- c) Vadodara
- d) Rajkot
- e) None the above

Answer: b) The plant is located in Surat, Gujarat.

Q28. Which state in India was the first to enact the Development and Promotion of Sports Act 2024?

- a) Maharashtra
- b) Karnataka
- c) Punjab
- d) Tamil Nadu
- e) None the above

Answer: c) Punjab is the first state in India to enact the Development and Promotion of Sports Act 2024.

Q29. Which organizations developed the Kisan Kavach anti-pesticide bodysuit?

- a) DRDO and ISRO
- b) BRIC-inStem and Sepio Health Pvt. Ltd.
- c) CSIR and ICMR
- d) IIT Bombay and ICAR
- e) None the above

Answer: b) The Kisan Kavach was developed by BRIC-inStem and Sepio Health Pvt. Ltd. using advanced fabric technology to protect farmers

from harmful pesticide exposure, demonstrating a public-private collaboration for agricultural innovation.

Q30. Who authored the book "New Bharat – Modi's Vision and Development 2019-2024"?

- a) Gajendra Singh Shekhawat
- b) Nitin Gadkari
- c) Rajnath Singh
- d) Ravi Parashar
- e) None the above

Answer: d) The book "New Bharat – Modi's Vision and Development 2019-2024" was authored by Ravi Parashar.

Q31. What is the tagline of the 38th National Games?

- a) "Unity in Diversity"
- b) "From Mountains to Glory"
- c) "Sankalp Se Shikhar Tak"
- d) "Pride of the Himalayas"
- e) None the above

Answer: c) The tagline "Sankalp Se Shikhar Tak" translates to "From Dedication to Pinnacle," symbolizing the determination and effort required to achieve excellence in sports and life.

Q32. Who has been appointed as the Managing Director of State Bank of India (SBI) effective December 18, 2024?

- a) Rama Mohan Rao Amara
- b) CS Setty
- c) Rajnish Kumar
- d) Dinesh Khara
- e) None the above

Answer: a) Rama Mohan Rao Amara has been appointed as the Managing Director of SBI,

bringing extensive experience in banking, credit, and international banking.

Q33. Who won the National 50m Rifle 3 Position title at the 67th National Shooting Championship Competitions held in December 2024?

- a) Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar
- b) Swapnil Kusale
- c) Kiran Jadhav
- d) Divyansh Panwar
- e) None the above

Answer: c) Kiran Jadhav clinched the title on December 18, 2024, by defeating Olympians Aishwary Pratap Singh Tomar and Swapnil Kusale in a highly competitive event at the Madhya Pradesh Academy Shooting Range, Bhopal.

Q34. Who was named the brand ambassador for the inaugural Kho Kho World Cup 2025?

- a) Akshay Kumar
- b) Virat Kohli
- c) MS Dhoni
- d) Salman Khan
- e) None the above

Answer: d) Salman Khan was officially named the brand ambassador for the first-ever Kho Kho World Cup, reflecting his association with sports and his enthusiasm for promoting the traditional Indian sport globally

Q35. What is the revised GDP growth forecast for India by CareEdge Ratings for FY25?

- a) 7.5%
- b) 6.5%
- c) 5.5%
- d) 4.5%
- e) None the above

Answer: b) CareEdge Ratings revised down India's GDP growth forecast to 6.5% for FY25 on December 15, 2024.

Q36. Which country is the dominant supplier of critical minerals to India?

- a) United States
- b) Australia
- c) China
- d) Brazil
- e) None the above

Answer: c) China is the dominant supplier of critical minerals to India, including cobalt, lithium, nickel, rare earth elements, and graphite.

Q37. On which National Highway (NH) was India's first bio-bitumen-based stretch constructed?

- a) NH-44
- b) NH-24
- c) NH-8
- d) NH-48
- e) None the above

Answer: a) The 1 km bio-bitumen-based stretch is part of NH-44, located in Nagpur, Maharashtra. NH-44 is the longest National Highway in India.

Q38. What is the name of the highest civilian award of Kuwait that Prime Minister Narendra Modi received in December 2024?

- a) Order of Kuwait Star
- b) Order of Mubarak Al-Kabeer
- c) Order of Sheikh Sabah
- d) Order of Al-Sabah Excellence
- e) None the above

Answer: b) The Order of Mubarak Al-Kabeer is Kuwait's highest civilian honor, recognizing individuals who contribute significantly to the country's international relations and diplomacy.

Q39. Who is the author of the book "The Unyielding Judge: A Tribute to Justice A.N. Grover's Legacy"?

- a) R. Venkataramani
- b) Gauri Grover
- c) Kesavananda Bharti
- d) Nani Palkhivala
- e) None the above

Answer: b) The book "The Unyielding Judge: A Tribute to Justice A.N. Grover's Legacy" was written by Gauri Grover, highlighting Justice Grover's contributions to Indian jurisprudence.

Q40. Who won the gold medal in the men's 10m Air Rifle event at the 67th National Shooting Championship?

- a) Dhanush Srikanth
- b) Abhinav Bindra
- c) Divyansh Singh Panwar
- d) Shahu Tushar Mane
- e) None the above

Answer: d) Shahu Tushar Mane claimed the gold medal in the men's 10m Air Rifle event at the 67th National Shooting Championship held in Bhopal on December 23, 2024.

Q41. Who won the FIDE World U-18 Youth Rapid & Blitz Chess titles on December 17, 2024?

- a) Nihal Sarin
- b) Rameshbabu Praggnanandhaa
- c) Pranav Venkatesh
- d) Arjun Erigaisi
- e) None the above

Answer: c) Pranav Venkatesh secured gold in both the Rapid and Blitz categories at the FIDE World U-18 Youth Rapid & Blitz Chess Championship 2024 held in Slovenia, showcasing exceptional performance in both formats.

Q42. As per SEBI, What is the minimum investment amount required for participating in a Specialized Investment Fund (SIF)?

- a) ₹5 lakh
- b) ₹10 lakh
- c) ₹25 lakh
- d) ₹50 lakh
- e) None the above

Answer: b) The minimum investment threshold for SIFs is ₹10 lakh, making it accessible to affluent investors but with a lower entry barrier than Portfolio Management Services (which often require higher investments).

Q42. Dr. Manmohan Singh, who passed away on December 26, 2024, served as the ___ Prime Minister of India.

- a) 11th
- b) 10th
- c) 12th
- d) 13th
- e) None the above

Answer: a) Dr. Manmohan Singh was the 11th Prime Minister of India, serving from 2004 to 2014. His tenure is noted for significant economic reforms and fostering U.S.-India relations.

Q43. Who has been appointed as the new Revenue Secretary of India on December 25, 2024?

- a) Ravi Agrawal
- b) Subhash Chandra
- c) Nitin Gupta
- d) Arunish Chawla
- e) None the above

Answer: d) Arunish Chawla was appointed as the new Revenue Secretary of India on December 25,

2024. His previous role was as Secretary in the Department of Pharmaceuticals.

Q44. Who was appointed as the Chairperson of the National Accreditation Board for Testing and Calibration Laboratories (NABL) on December 27, 2024?

- a) Dr. Sandip Shah
- b) Dr. Ravi Agrawal
- c) Dr. K. Chockalingam
- d) Dr. Arnab Kumar Chowdhury
- e) None the above

Answer: a) On December 27, 2024, Dr. Sandip Shah was appointed as the Chairperson of NABL, which is a constituent board of the Quality Council of India (QCI).

Q45. What is the full form of ARRAI, for which SEBI launched an official website on December 9, 2024?

- a) Association of Registered Research Analysts of India
- b) Association of Retired Research Analysts of India
- c) Association of Recognized Research Analysts of India
- d) Association of Regional Research Analysts of India
- e) None the above

Answer: a) ARRAI stands for the Association of Registered Research Analysts of India. SEBI launched the official website to facilitate collaboration, promote best practices, and enhance investor trust.

Q46. Who was appointed as a board member of the newly formed interim Asian body by World Boxing on December 27, 2024?

- a) Abhinav Bindra
- b) Ajay Singh
- c) Mary Kom
- d) Rajesh Bhandari
- e) None the above

Answer: b) Ajay Singh, the President of the Boxing Federation of India (BFI), was appointed as a board member of the interim Asian body formed by World Boxing to safeguard boxing's inclusion in the Olympic Games beyond 2028.

Q47. What is the projected GDP growth rate for India in FY26, according to India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra)?

- a) 6.6%
- b) 6.7%
- c) 7.0%
- d) 6.8%
- e) None the above

Answer: a) India Ratings and Research (Ind-Ra) projected India's GDP to grow at 6.6% in FY26.

Q48. What is the new Death-cum-Retirement Gratuity (DCRG) limit for Haryana state employees, as announced on December 30, 2024?

- a) Rs 15 lakh
- b) Rs 20 lakh
- c) Rs 25 lakh
- d) Rs 30 lakh
- e) None the above

Answer: c) The Haryana government announced a 25% increase in the DCRG limit, raising it from Rs 20 lakh to Rs 25 lakh, effective January 1, 2025.

Q49. Which state government launched the SWAR platform to address language barriers?

- a) Maharashtra
- b) Gujarat

- c) Karnataka
- d) Tamil Nadu
- e) None the above

Answer: b) The SWAR platform was launched by the Gujarat government on December 25, 2024.

Q50. Which Nobel laureate authored "Chhaunk: On Food, Economics, and Society"?

- a) Amartya Sen
- b) Malala Yousafzai
- c) Abhijit Banerjee
- d) Muhammad Yunus
- e) None the above

Answer: c) The author of "Chhaunk: On Food, Economics, and Society" is Abhijit Banerjee, a Nobel laureate in Economics.

Q51. Which institution developed the needle-free shock syringe?

- a) IIT Kanpur
- b) IIT Bombay
- c) AIIMS Delhi
- d) IISc Bangalore
- e) None the above

Answer: b) Researchers at IIT Bombay have developed this innovative syringe to provide a painless alternative to traditional injections.