



# Monthly Current Affairs

GK Digest



**March 2025**

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# MONTHLY GK DIGEST ONE LINER : MARCH 2025

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS

## World Meteorological Organization (WMO) launched the iClimateAction Project

- This initiative, supported by the Horizon Europe Work Programme 2023-2025, aims to address gaps in climate data collection, standardization, and accessibility.
- It focuses on enhancing the interoperability of Essential Climate Variables (ECVs) and improving global climate intelligence.

- The project involves collaboration with the Global Climate Observing System (GCOS), the Group on Earth Observations (GEO), and the European Commission.
- It aligns with key climate resilience initiatives, such as Early Warnings for All and the Global Greenhouse Gas Watch, to transform climate data into actionable strategies for policymakers, scientists, and communities worldwide.

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS-ONE LINER

- On March 1, 2025, Donald Trump signed an executive order making English the official language of the U.S. for the first time in history. This allows government agencies to limit multilingual services, reversing earlier mandates for language assistance.
- The U.S. will impose reciprocal tariffs on India and China from April 2, 2025, targeting unfair tariff practices. Key industries like pharmaceuticals, textiles, and IT services are likely to be affected. This move aims to address trade imbalances and safeguard AmerMark Carney was elected as the leader of Canada's Liberal Party on March 9, 2025, and is set to become the next Prime Minister. He succeeds Justin Trudeau, winning the leadership race with 85.9% of the vote.ican industries. It underscores a tougher stance on global trade policies.
- Mark Carney was elected as the leader of Canada's Liberal Party on March 9, 2025, and is set to become the next Prime Minister. He succeeds Justin Trudeau, winning the leadership race with 85.9% of the vote.
- On March 10, 2025, Syria's interim President Ahmed al-Sharaa signed an agreement in Damascus to merge the Kurdish-led Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) with the national army. This deal integrates the SDF's military and civilian institutions into the Syrian state framework, granting them roles in managing borders, oil fields, and airports.
- The 'UN80 Initiative' was announced by UN Secretary-General António Guterres on March 12, 2025, to improve the efficiency of UN operations as it marks 80 years. The initiative focuses on financial restructuring, operational improvements, and program alignment with global priorities.
- On March 13, 2025, Armenia and Azerbaijan finalized a peace treaty, ending nearly four decades of conflict. The agreement resolves disputes over the

Nagorno-Karabakh region and includes steps to normalize diplomatic and economic ties.

- NASA astronauts **Butch Wilmore and Suni Williams returned to Earth on March 18, 2025**, landing in the Gulf of Mexico via a SpaceX Crew Dragon after over nine months on the ISS. Launched June 5, 2024, for a short Starliner test, they stayed 286 days due to spacecraft issues, returning with Crew-9 members Nick Hague and Aleksandr Gorbunov.
- France announced the discovery of the world's largest white **hydrogen deposit on March 12, 2025, in Moselle's Folschviller region**. Estimated at 46 million tons and valued at \$92 trillion, this natural and carbon-free energy source offers sustainable clean energy without CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- On March 26, 2025, **Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang proposed a ₹16,196 crore budget for 2025–26**. It prioritizes youth empowerment, farmer welfare, and infrastructure development, with ₹11,028 crore for revenue expenditure and ₹5,168 crore for capital outlay. The budget emphasizes inclusive growth, economic stability, and sustainable development for Sikkim.

## NATIONAL NEWS

### GOI ELEVATED RAILWAYS CPSE'S IRCTC AND IRFC TO NAVRATNA STATUS

- This recognition grants them greater financial autonomy, allowing investments of up to ₹1,000 crore without prior government approval.
- Both entities achieved this milestone due to their strong financial performance, with IRCTC reporting a net profit of ₹1,111 crore and IRFC recording ₹6,412 crore in FY 2023-24.
- This upgrade enhances their operational efficiency and global competitiveness.

### VANTARA HAS BEEN INAUGURATED BY PM MODI ON 4 MARCH 2025

- Located within the Reliance Industries' Jamnagar refinery complex and spanning over 3,000 acres, Vantara is an initiative led by Anant Ambani, aimed at providing a sanctuary for rescued and endangered animals.
- The facility, established by Reliance Industries and Reliance Foundation, houses over 2,000 species and more than 1.5 lakh animals, offering advanced

medical care through a state-of-the-art wildlife hospital equipped with MRI, CT scans, and ICUs.

### SM, TEPL, & TSMPL SIGN FISCAL SUPPORT AGREEMENT FOR SEMICONDUCTOR FAB

- This project involves an investment of over ₹91,000 crore and will have a capacity of 50,000 wafers per month (WSPM).
- The Government of India has committed 50% fiscal support for eligible project costs under the Modified Programme for Semiconductor and Display Manufacturing Ecosystem.
- The fab is expected to generate over 20,000 skilled jobs and will cater to global markets in automotive, computing, communications, and artificial intelligence.

### PARLIAMENT PASSED RAILWAYS (AMENDMENT) BILL 2024

- **Repeal of the Indian Railway Board Act, 1905:** Provisions for the Railway Board are now incorporated into the Railways Act, 1989.
- **Decentralization of powers:** General managers in railway zones can approve projects up to ₹1,000 crore.
- **Independent regulator:** To oversee fare determination, infrastructure access, and service standards.
- **Safety and modernization:** Focus on infrastructure upgrades, accident reduction, and adoption of advanced technologies like KAVACH.

### INDIA'S AI REVOLUTION: A ROADMAP TO VIKSIT BHARAT

- **Key initiatives were unveiled on March 12, 2025, aiming to position India as a global leader in artificial intelligence.**
- **IndiaAI Mission:** Allocated ₹10,300 crore over five years to build infrastructure, boost indigenous GPU manufacturing, and democratize AI resources for startups, students, and researchers.
- **AI Compute Infrastructure:** Development of an advanced facility with 18,693 GPUs for creating AI solutions adapted to Indian languages and contexts.

- **Open GPU Marketplace:** Launched to provide affordable access to high-performance computing power at just ₹100/hour.
- **Semiconductor Manufacturing:** Five new plants are under construction, enhancing the domestic semiconductor industry critical for AI applications.
- **IndiaAI Dataset Platform:** Designed to provide high-quality, non-personal datasets to support diverse AI applications.

#### CONSTRUCTION OF A UREA PLANT IN ASSAM HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE GOVERNMENT

- This project involves **an investment of ₹10,601.4 crore and is aimed at enhancing** India's domestic urea production capacity.
- With an annual **production target of 12.7 lakh metric tonnes of urea, the plant will reduce** reliance on imports and address the growing demand for fertilizers in agriculture.
- The project will be **implemented as a joint venture, with the Assam Government holding a 40% stake**, promoting local participation.
- Additionally, it is expected to **generate significant employment opportunities in the** region, boosting socio-economic development.
- Overall, this initiative **aligns with the government's focus on improving agricultural productivity** and self-reliance in the fertilizer sector.

#### C-DOT LAUNCHES "SAMARTH" INCUBATION PROGRAM TO SUPPORT STARTUPS IN TELECOM AND IT

- The initiative aims **to bolster innovation in telecommunications and information technology** by supporting startups and innovators.
- **Objective:** To foster advancements in telecom and IT by nurturing startups working on next-generation technologies.
- **Focus Areas:** Telecom software applications, cybersecurity, 5G/6G technologies, artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), and quantum technologies.
- **Support Offered:** Up to ₹5 lakh in grants per startup, six months of furnished office space at C-DOT's campus, access to lab facilities, mentorship from industry experts, and potential future collaboration under C-DOT's research programs.

- **Structure:** The program will support up to 18 startups per cohort, with a total of 36 startups across two six-month cohorts, delivered in a hybrid mode.
- **Partnership:** C-DOT has teamed up with Software Technology Parks of India (STPI), under the Ministry of Electronics and IT, to implement the program, leveraging STPI's incubation expertise.
- **Eligibility:** Open to startups recognized by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), with a rigorous selection process involving screening and pitches to an expert panel.

#### GOI APPROVES RS 11,440 CRORE REVIVAL PACKAGE FOR RINL

- The package includes ₹10,300 crore as **equity infusion and ₹1,140 crore as conversion** of working capital loans into preference shares, helping to reduce debt and stabilize operations.
- This decision is aligned with the **goals of the National Steel Policy, 2017, which promotes sustainable growth and self-reliance in the steel industry.**
- RINL has faced challenges such as **rising input costs, mounting debt**, and global market fluctuations.
- The revival plan **addresses these issues by providing the necessary financial support** to improve production efficiency, operational performance, and competitiveness.

#### THE SALARIES, ALLOWANCES, AND PENSIONS OF MPS INCREASED BY THE GOVERNMENT

- This decision was formally notified on March 24, 2025, and aims to account for inflation and align with the Cost Inflation Index under the Income Tax Act.
- **Daily Allowance:** Raised from ₹2,000 to ₹2,500 per day for attending Parliament sessions and committee meetings.
- **Pension Increase:** Monthly pension for former MPs increased from ₹25,000 to ₹31,000.
- **Additional Pension:** For each year of service beyond five years, the additional pension rose from ₹2,000 to ₹2,500 per month.
- **Constituency Allowance:** Increased from ₹70,000 to ₹87,000 per month.



- Office Expenses: Revised from ₹60,000 to ₹75,000 per month.
- Basis of Adjustment: The hike is linked to the Cost Inflation Index under the Income-tax Act, 1961, as per a system established in 2018 for automatic revisions every five years.

### DISASTER MANAGEMENT (AMENDMENT) BILL 2024 HAS BEEN PASSED BY THE PARLIAMENT

- This amendment enhances the powers of the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and State Disaster Management Authorities (SDMA) to better prepare disaster management plans.
- **Key changes include:**
  - Use of real-time monitoring technologies like AI for disaster prediction and management.
  - Adoption of digital communication strategies to improve coordination during emergencies.
  - Formation of Urban Disaster Management Authorities (UDMAs) to address urban-specific risks.
  - Establishment of State Disaster Response Forces (SDRFs) for rapid response during crises.
  - The bill represents a shift from reactive responses to a more proactive approach.

### MORD & UNICEF YUWAAH SIGN SOI TO EMPOWER RURAL WOMEN AND YOUTH

- This three-year **partnership focuses on creating livelihood opportunities** by connecting women from Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to jobs, entrepreneurship, and skill-building programs.
- **Key highlights include:**
  - **Establishing Computer Didi Centers and Didi ki Dukan in five states**—Andhra Pradesh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, and Rajasthan—as pilot projects.
  - **Launching a Youth Hub**, an aggregator platform for jobs, skilling, and volunteering.
  - **Scaling up initiatives to benefit 35 lakh** women across 7,000+ blocks nationwide, with a focus on creating Lakhpati Didis (women entrepreneurs).

### GOVERNMENT INCREASED MGNREGS WAGES BY 2-7% FOR FY26

- This revision impacts daily wage **rates for unskilled manual laborers across** states, effective from April 1, 2025.
- **Key details include:**
  - Haryana recorded the highest wage increase of ₹26, bringing the daily wage to ₹400, the highest in India.
  - States like Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, and Telangana saw a ₹7 increase in daily wages.
  - The wage rates are linked to the Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL), reflecting inflation adjustments.

### NATIONAL NEWS- ONE LINER

- On March 1, 2025, the **Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment (MSJE)** launched the 'Sugamya Yatra' at Rajiv Chowk Metro Station, New Delhi, marking International Wheelchair Day. The initiative aimed to promote accessibility and inclusivity for wheelchair users.
- India's first **World Peace Centre was inaugurated on March 2, 2025, in Gurugram, led by Jain Acharya Lokesh Muni and Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti**. The event was attended by dignitaries like former President Ram Nath Kovind and Sri Sri Ravi Shankar. The centre aims Union Minister Amit Shah inaugurated the Workshop on Sustainability & Circularity in the Dairy Sector on March 3, 2025, in New Delhi. The event focused on promoting sustainable practices, launching the NDDDB Sustain Plus Project. It aims to achieve White Revolution 2.0 with environmental and economic goals.
- The **Ministry of Panchayati Raj launched the Sashakt Panchayat-Netri Abhiyan on March 4, 2025**, during a National Workshop of Women Elected Representatives of Panchayati Raj Institutions in New Delhi. This initiative is a targeted capacity-building program designed to empower Women Elected Representatives (WERs) in rural governance.
- The non-food **credit growth of India's banking system slowed to 12.5% year-on-year** in January 2025, compared to 16.2% last year. The decline is due to slower growth in services and personal loans, though credit to agriculture and industry showed improvement. Despite this, it marked a three-month high. to promote peace education, non-violence, and global harmony.

- The **Government of India launched five pilot projects for hydrogen-fuelled vehicles under the National Green Hydrogen Mission** on March 5, 2025. With 37 vehicles, 9 refuelling stations, and a budget of ₹208 crore, the initiative explores hydrogen transport's feasibility across 10 routes, like Delhi-Agra and Pune-Mumbai.
- India's **EPHL and Belgium's John Cockerill Defence (JCD) have formed a joint venture** for the Zorawar Light Tank Program, announced on March 4, 2025. This JV focuses on manufacturing turrets with 50% indigenous content under the Make in India initiative. It has a 60:40 ownership ratio, favoring JCD for technology transfer.
- Union **Minister Pralhad Joshi inaugurated India's first AI-powered solar manufacturing line** on March 3, 2025, at Goldi Solar's facility in Surat, Gujarat. The facility has a production capacity of 14 GW and integrates advanced AI technologies for precision and efficiency. This initiative supports India's net-zero goals and the Make in India vision by boosting clean energy manufacturing.
- On March 4, 2025, the Union Cabinet, **chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved** the revision of the Livestock Health and Disease Control Programme (LHDCP) with a total outlay of ₹3,880 crore for FY 2024-25 and FY 2025-26.
- The **Union Cabinet approved a ₹4,081 crore Ropeway Project from Sonprayag to Kedarnath** on March 5, 2025, reducing travel time to 36 minutes. It uses advanced 3S technology with a capacity of 18,000 passengers daily, boosting tourism and creating jobs.
- Chhattisgarh **FM Om Prakash Choudhary presented the Rs 1.65 lakh crore budget for FY26** on March 3, 2025, in Raipur. The budget emphasizes "GATI" (Good Governance, Accelerating Infrastructure, Technology, and Industrial Growth). Key allocations include Rs 10,000 crore for Krishak Unnati Yojana and Rs 8,500 crore for rural housing under PMAY-G.
- Mizoram **Chief Minister Pu Lalduhoma presented the Rs 15,198.76 crore state budget for FY26** on March 4, 2025, in Aizawl. The budget prioritizes the Bana Kaih Scheme, with a 75% increase in allocation to Rs 350 crore, supporting farmers and entrepreneurs. It also introduces a universal health insurance scheme with coverage up to Rs 5 lakh per year for beneficiaries.
- On March 4, 2025, the **Assam Cabinet renamed Jagiroad Electronic City as 'Ratan Tata Electronic City'** to honor Ratan Tata's contributions. This aligns with the establishment of a ₹27,000 crore Tata semiconductor assembly plant in Jagiroad. The initiative aims to boost Assam's semiconductor and electronics manufacturing sector.
- On March 7, 2025, **India and Ireland agreed to set up a Joint Economic Commission (JEC) during a meeting in Dublin**. The JEC will strengthen ties in trade, investment, and technology, focusing on areas like AI, cybersecurity, and fin-tech. A formal agreement for the JEC is expected later this year.
- On March 6, 2025, the Maharashtra government announced **the Media Monitoring Centre (MMC) with a ₹10 crore budget**. It will track news trends, combat misinformation, and ensure accurate reporting through real-time clarifications and analysis.
- On March 5, 2025, **Himachal Pradesh signed an MoC with Spray Engineering Devices Ltd. to set up India's first API, Green Hydrogen, and 2G Ethanol facility** in Solan district. With an investment of ₹1,400 crore, the project will generate 1,000 jobs and initially need 30 MW of green hydrogen.
- ICAI President **Charanjot Singh Nanda introduced VISHWASNIYA as the guiding theme** for his presidency on March 6, 2025. The term "VISHWASNIYA," meaning 'Reliable', emphasizes trust, excellence, and a nation-first approach.
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- The CEA and TPDDL **organized the 5th Edition of Lineman Diwas on March 4, 2025, in New Delhi**. The event honored linemen's contributions to India's power sector with the theme "Seva, Suraksha, Swabhiman". Over 180 linemen participated, sharing insights and best practices. The event highlighted dedication, safety, and pride in their vital roles.
- The **Oil Technologists' Association of India (OTAI) and the Malaysian Palm Oil Council (MPOC)** signed an agreement on March 7, 2025, to promote Malaysian palm oil in India. The partnership focuses on consumer education, scientific research, and addressing misconceptions about palm oil's benefits.
- Karnataka CM **Siddaramaiah announced on March 7, 2025, that Bengaluru City University will be renamed Dr. Manmohan Singh Bengaluru City University**. This honors the former PM's contributions to India's economic reforms. Government Arts College and Government RC College will become its constituent colleges. It marks the first Indian university named after Dr. Manmohan Singh.
- **Madhav National Park in Madhya Pradesh was declared India's 58th Tiger Reserve** on March 9, 2025. It spans 354 sq. km and is the 9th tiger reserve in the state, boosting tiger conservation efforts. The park currently has five tigers, with plans for further introductions. Its diverse terrains include forests.
- The Glass-Ceiling Index 2025 was **released on March 7, 2025, by The Economist**. The ranking evaluates working conditions for women across OECD countries. Sweden secured the 1st position, while India is not ranked, as it is not an OECD member.
- PM Narendra Modi **launched the Surat Food Security Saturation Campaign on March 7, 2025, in Limbayat, Surat**. The campaign ensures food and nutrition security for over 2.3 lakh beneficiaries under the National Food Security Act. It focuses on

including vulnerable groups like the elderly, widows, and differently-abled persons.

- India's first hydrogen-powered train will **launch by March 31, 2025, on the Jind-Sonapat route** in Haryana. The train uses hydrogen fuel cells, emitting only water and heat, reducing carbon emissions and noise pollution. It is part of the 'Hydrogen for Railways' initiative, supporting India's net-zero carbon goals. The train has a top speed of 110 km/h and a capacity of 2,638 passengers.
- India chaired **the 68th Session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs (CND)** for the first time on March 10, 2025, in Vienna, Austria. Ambassador Shambhu S. Kumaran presided over discussions on combating synthetic drugs, trafficking, and equitable medicine access.
- **Foxconn introduced FoxBrain, its first large language model, on March 10, 2025**. Built on Meta's Llama 3.1 architecture with 120 NVIDIA H100 GPUs, it specializes in reasoning and problem-solving.
- Airtel has **partnered with Elon Musk's SpaceX to bring Starlink's high-speed satellite internet** to India. Announced on March 11, 2025, this collaboration aims to enhance digital connectivity, especially in rural and remote areas.
- The Central **Government has imposed a five-year ban on the Awami Action Committee (AAC)**, led by Mirwaiz Umar Farooq, and the Jammu and Kashmir Ittihad Ul Muslimeen (JKIM), headed by Masroor Abbas Ansari. This decision, effective immediately, was taken under the Unlawful Activities (Prevention) Act (UAPA), 1967.
- Lieutenant Governor **VK Saxena inaugurated the Amrut Biodiversity Park along NH-24** in the Yamuna floodplains on March 7, 2025. Covering 90 hectares, it includes six water bodies with a capacity of 225 million liters, 14,500 trees, and 3.21 lakh riverine grasses. The park aims to restore the ecosystem, manage stormwater, and enhance groundwater recharge.
- The **PM-YUVA 3.0 scheme was launched on March 11, 2025, in New Delhi by the Ministry of Education**. It mentors young authors under 30 on themes like Indian Diaspora and Modern India (1950-2025). The contest ends on April 10, 2025, with mentorship running from **June to November 2025**.
- On March 12, 2025, PM Narendra Modi and **Mauritius PM Navinchandra Ramgoolam inaugurated the Atal Bihari Vajpayee Institute of**

Public Service and Innovation in Reduit, Mauritius. The institute aims to enhance governance through training and research, symbolizing India's commitment to the Global South.

- On March 11, 2025, **UP CM Yogi Adityanath inaugurated Sify Infinit Spaces' AI-ready Data Centre** Campus in Noida. Named Sify Noida 02, it features three scalable towers with a capacity over 130 MW and a 220 KV substation. It is North India's largest AI-ready data center, boosting digital infrastructure.
- On March 11, 2025, **Rentokil Initial Hygiene achieved carbon neutrality for 2024 in India**, covering Scope 1, 2, and part of Scope 3 emissions. Key measures included battery recycling, energy-efficient LED installations, and adopting electric and CNG vehicles.
- Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw announced a USD 1 billion fund for the creator **economy on March 14, 2025, in New Delhi. This initiative aims to empower digital content creators with funding, skills, and global market access.** It also includes establishing India's first Indian Institute of Creative Technology (IICT) near Mumbai's Film City.
- On March 13, 2025, **Union Minister G. Kishan Reddy launched India's first Exploration Licence Auction** for Critical Minerals in Goa. The auction featured 13 exploration blocks for Rare Earth Elements (REE), Zinc, Diamond, Copper, and PGEs. This aims to reduce import dependency and promote private sector participation.
- On March 13, 2025, **BWSSB became the first water board in India to receive BIS certification** for its piped drinking water supply system. This recognition highlights its adherence to international quality standards and commitment to providing safe drinking water.
- On March 12, 2025, **Amazon, Google, and Meta pledged to support tripling global nuclear energy capacity by 2050.** Led by the World Nuclear Association, this initiative aims to enhance energy security and cut carbon emissions.
- On March 13, 2025, **Patanjali and DS Group acquired Magma Insurance for ₹4,500 crore, entering the financial services sector.** Meanwhile, **Temasek Holdings invested \$1 billion for a 10% stake in Haldiram Snacks, valuing the company at \$10 billion. The acquisition strengthens India's**

**insurance market, while the investment fuels**

Haldiram's expansion and global reach.

- On March 15, 2025, **SpaceX and NASA launched the Crew-10 mission** from the Kennedy Space Center. The mission aims to return astronauts Sunita Williams and Butch Wilmore from the International Space Station (ISS) after a nine-month extended stay.
- On March 13, 2025, **the Indian Railways joined the Amrit Sarovar Mission to address water scarcity.** This initiative aims to construct or rejuvenate ponds near railway sites, fostering groundwater recharge. The mission's goal is to rejuvenate over 68,000 ponds by August 15, 2025, promoting sustainable water management.
- Union Home Minister Amit **Shah inaugurated the Lachit Barphukan Police Academy on March 15, 2025, in Dergaon, Assam. The academy, named after the legendary Ahom general, offers modern facilities** like smart classrooms and weapon simulators for advanced police training. It aims to enhance law enforcement infrastructure and instill the values of bravery and patriotism.
- India and New Zealand initiated discussions on a **Free Trade Agreement (FTA)** on March 16, 2025, with talks led by India's Commerce and Industry Minister Piyush Goyal and New Zealand's Trade and Investment Minister Todd McClay.
- Maharashtra CM **Devendra Fadnavis inaugurated the first-ever temple of Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj on March 17, 2025, in Bhiwandi. Spanning four acres, it features a 6.5-foot idol sculpted by Arun Yogiraj and architectural designs inspired by Maratha forts.**
- The Indian **Government approved the Chandrayaan-5 mission on March 15, 2025.** It will feature a 350 kg rover, developed jointly with Japan, aimed at advancing lunar landing technologies. This mission is part of India's larger goal to achieve a human landing on the Moon by 2040.
- The **5G Innovation Hackathon 2025 was announced by the Department of Telecommunications (DoT) on March 17, 2025.** This six-month program encourages students, startups, and professionals to develop 5G-based solutions in areas like AI, IoT, and smart health. Participants receive mentorship, funding, and access to over 100 5G Use Case Labs, with winners announced in October 2025 at the India Mobile Congress (IMC).



- Nowruz, or **Persian New Year**, is celebrated on **March 19** or 20, marking the first day of spring and the Persian calendar's new year. It has been observed for over 3,000 years in countries like Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asia.
- India's first industry-driven **Digital Detox Initiative**, called **Beyond Screens**, was launched by Karnataka IT Minister Priyank Kharge on March 18, 2025. This initiative, developed in collaboration with the All India Gaming Federation (AIGF) and powered by Kahamind Healthcare Private Limited, aims to address digital addiction and promote responsible technology use.
- On March 17, 2025, the **Department of Telecommunications (DoT)** partnered with **WhatsApp** to launch the "Scam Se Bacho" campaign. This initiative aims to combat digital frauds and cyber threats by educating users to identify and report scams. It integrates with the Sanchar Saathi initiative and provides multilingual safety materials for broad accessibility.
- **WAVEX 2025**, launched by the **Ministry of Information & Broadcasting (MIB)** on **March 18, 2025**, aims to support media and entertainment startups in sectors like gaming, animation, XR, metaverse, and generative AI. Scheduled from May 1 to May 4, 2025, at the Jio World Convention Centre, Mumbai.
- On March 17, 2025, **ISRO Chairman Dr. V. Narayanan** inaugurated the **Shri S. Ramakrishnan Centre of Excellence** at IIT Madras, Chennai. The centre focuses on thermal management technologies for spacecraft and launch vehicles to support India's space missions. It aims to promote self-reliance in space technology and contribute to deep-space exploration and reusable spacecraft development.
- The **IndiaAI Hackathon 2025**, launched on **March 18, 2025**, by **IndiaAI** and the **Geological Survey of India (GSI)**, focuses on revolutionizing mineral targeting using AI. It aims to identify potential sites for critical minerals like rare earth elements, copper, and nickel.
- On March 18, 2025, **Indore** launched **India's first PPP-based green waste processing plant** in Bicholi Hapsi under the Swachh Bharat Mission-Urban (SBM-U). It converts 30-70 tonnes of green waste daily into eco-friendly products like wood pellets, fertilizers, and biodegradable plates to promote sustainability and generate municipal revenue.
- On March 18, 2025, **IAEA Director General Rafael Mariano Grossi** inaugurated the **S N Bose Building** at the Global Centre for Nuclear Energy Partnership (GCNEP), located at Sushma Swaraj Bhavan, New Delhi. Named after eminent physicist Dr. Satyendra Nath Bose, the building serves as a hub for advanced research and training in nuclear science and technology.
- On March 19, 2025, the **Cabinet** approved the **Revised Rashtriya Gokul Mission** with a budget of ₹3,400 crore for the 15th Finance Commission period. It includes support for Heifer Rearing Centres, interest subvention for HGM IVF heifers, and a focus on indigenous bovine breeds. The mission aims to enhance milk production and livestock productivity significantly.
- The **'Shishtachar' squads initiative**, announced on **March 8, 2025**, aims to enhance women's safety in public spaces across Delhi. Thirty district-wise squads, supervised by ACPs, will focus on preventing harassment and monitoring high-risk areas.
- Union Minister **Dr. Jitendra Singh** announced **North India's first nuclear power plant in Gorakhpur**, Haryana, on March 19, 2025. This initiative marks a milestone in India's nuclear energy expansion and aims to meet growing energy demands sustainably. It aligns with India's clean energy goals and its commitment to achieving net-zero emissions by 2070.
- Union Minister **Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya** unveiled the **anthem, mascot, and logo for the Khelo India Para Games 2025** on March 18, 2025, in New Delhi. The mascot, 'Ujjwala', symbolizes resilience, and the anthem, "Khelega khelega mera India, jeetega jeetega mera India", inspires inclusivity.
- The Ministry of **Ayush** launched the **Rashtriya Karmayogi Jan Seva Programme** on **March 18, 2025**, under the Capacity Building Commission. It focuses on fostering 'Seva Bhav', accountability, and skill enhancement among Central Government employees.
- Punjab became the first **state in India to introduce sign language in its Legislative Assembly** on March 19, 2025, led by Social Security Minister Dr. Baljit Kaur. Legislative sessions, including the Governor's Address and Budget discussions, will now be broadcast with sign language interpretation.

- On March 21, 2025, the Karnataka government approved a 100% salary hike for the Chief Minister, Ministers, and MLAs. The Chief Minister's **salary rose from ₹75,000 to ₹1.5 lakh/month, and MLAs' from ₹40,000 to ₹80,000/month**. This decision has sparked debates over governance priorities amidst financial challenges.
- India will host the 11th Asian **Swimming Championship at the Naranpura Sports Complex in Ahmedabad**, Gujarat, from October 1 to 15, 2025. The event will feature swimming, diving, artistic swimming, and water polo, with participation from leading Asian nations.
- On 20th March 2025, Delhi Health **Minister Pankaj Kumar Singh launched six mobile dental clinics** to provide free dental care across the city. This initiative, in collaboration with the Maulana Azad Institute of Dental Sciences (MAIDS), aims to make **oral healthcare accessible, especially in underprivileged areas**.
- Japan qualified for the 2026 FIFA World Cup on March 20, 2025, by defeating Bahrain 2-0** in an AFC Asian Qualifiers Group C match held in Saitama, Japan. This victory made them the first team to secure a spot, alongside hosts Canada, Mexico, and the United States.
- Kerala became the first **state in India to establish a Senior Citizens Commission** by passing the Kerala State Senior Citizens Commission Bill, 2025 on 19th March 2025. This commission focuses on safeguarding elderly rights, addressing issues like neglect, and promoting their active participation in society. It aims to improve the welfare and rehabilitation of senior citizens.
- The Indian Web **Browser Development Challenge (IWBCD), conducted by MeitY, concluded on March 20, 2025**, under the Aatmanirbhar Bharat initiative. Zoho Corporation won with its browser, Ulaa, emphasizing security, privacy, and multilingual support. This effort promotes India's digital sovereignty.
- India and Bolivia **signed an agreement on Quick Impact Projects on March 20, 2025**, strengthening bilateral ties. The deal focuses on development and cooperation between the two nations. It was signed after discussions between EAM S. Jaishankar and Bolivia's Foreign Minister Celinda Sosa Lunda.
- The East Coast Railway (ECOR) became **India's first railway zone to handle 250 million tons of freight** in

the 2024-25 financial year. This milestone was achieved on March 21, 2025, well before the fiscal year ended. It showcases ECoR's operational efficiency and contribution to India's economy.

- On March 22, **2025, the Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain—2025 was launched in Panchkula**, Haryana, on World Water Day. Inaugurated by Union Jal Shakti Minister C.R. Patil and Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini, the event aimed to promote rainwater harvesting and water conservation.
- The Annual Report on the **Status of Tigers, Prey, and Other Mammals – 2024** was released on March 21, 2025, by Andhra Pradesh Deputy CM K. Pawan Kalyan. It highlights 76 tigers in the Nagarjuna Sagar-Srisailem Tiger Reserve (NSTR) and discusses conservation successes and challenges, including habitat fragmentation and human-wildlife conflict.
- Paras **Defence & Space Technologies Ltd secured a ₹142.31 crore contract from DRDO's CHES** on March 20, 2025, to develop an advanced anti-drone laser system. The project involves creating a Laser Source Module integrated with a Beam Control System for mobile anti-drone applications.
- The Zaskar **Winter Sports and Tourism Festival 2024-25 was held from March 20 to 21, 2025**, at Atting Village in Zaskar Valley, Ladakh. It showcased winter sports like snow skiing, traditional archery, and yak riding, along with cultural performances. Organized by the Department of Youth Services & Sports, UT Ladakh, it promoted winter tourism and local heritage.
- Pune will host the Billie Jean King Cup Asia-Oceania **Group-1 from April 8–12, 2025, with six teams, including India, competing for two qualification spots**. This is Maharashtra's first international tennis event in 25 years, led by India's Ankita Raina.
- Union Minister Dr. **Jitendra Singh announced the completion of genome sequencing** of 10,000 Mycobacterium tuberculosis isolates on March 24, 2025, during World TB Day at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi. This milestone is part of the Dare2eraD TB program, aimed at eradicating tuberculosis in India by 2025.
- The Telangana **Assembly adopted the Transplantation of Human Organs and Tissues Act (THOTA)** on March 24, 2025. The Act ensures ethical organ and tissue transplantation, prevents illegal dealings, and regulates brain death declarations.

- On March 25, 2025, **India announced its first indigenous MRI machine, developed by SAMEER** under MeitY. The 1.5 Tesla MRI scanner will be installed at AIIMS Delhi by October 2025 for clinical trials. This innovation reduces import dependency, lowers costs, and promotes affordable healthcare under Atmanirbhar Bharat.
- The Government of India **launched the Baalpan ki Kavita initiative under the Ministry of Education**, aligning with the NEP 2020. It aims to promote early childhood education by compiling nursery rhymes in Indian languages and English to connect children with cultural heritage.
- India and Singapore **signed a Letter of Intent (LoI) on March 25, 2025, to establish a Green and Digital Shipping Corridor (GDSC)**. The partnership focuses on maritime decarbonization and digitalization, leveraging India's expertise in green fuel production and IT solutions. It aims to enhance sustainability and efficiency in global shipping operations.
- The Ministry of Labour and **Employment, in collaboration with the ILO, launched the Social Protection Data Pooling Exercise on March 19, 2025. It consolidates data from schemes like MGNREGA and EPFO, using encrypted Aadhaar** to identify beneficiaries. Social protection coverage doubled from 24.4% in 2021 to 48.8% in 2024.
- Union **Minister of State Jayant Chaudhary launched a DBIM-Compliant Website on March 20, 2025**, developed under the Digital Brand Identity Manual (DBIM) Version 3.0. This initiative aims to strengthen India's digital governance ecosystem by ensuring uniformity, accessibility, and efficiency in government websites.
- The Department for **Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) has issued the Hinges (Quality Control) Order, 2025**, mandating BIS certification for hinges, effective from July 1, 2025. This regulation aims to curb substandard imports, boost domestic manufacturing, and ensure consumer safety.
- On March 25, **2025, the Department of Posts (DoP) released a ₹5 commemorative postage stamp** honoring Mata Karma on her 1009th birth anniversary. The stamp, unveiled in Raipur, depicts her offering khichdi to Lord Krishna, reflecting her devotion and contributions to social harmony and women's empowerment.
- Poonawalla Fincorp **launched an AI-powered underwriting solution with IIT Bombay on March**

24, 2025. This system combines Machine Learning (ML) and Large Language Models (LLMs) to enhance credit evaluation and risk management. It aims to improve productivity by 40% in retail lending and will evolve into a self-learning AI model.

- JSW Steel has become **the world's most valuable steelmaker with a market capitalization of \$30.3 billion** as of March 25, 2025, surpassing competitors like ArcelorMittal. This success is driven by its aggressive expansion plans, including increasing capacity to 51.5 MT by FY31, and a stock surge of 18% in 2025, making it a top Nifty 50 performer.
- The Digital Crop Survey (DCS) **system, launched on March 25, 2025, ensures accurate crop data** collection using a mobile interface for real-time field updates. It is part of the Agri Stack initiative, adhering to the Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023, to safeguard farmers' data privacy.
- Admiral Dinesh K. Tripathi, **Chief of Naval Staff, inaugurated the New North Jetty at the Naval Base** in Kochi, Kerala, on March 26, 2025. The jetty, measuring 300 meters in length, can berth multiple naval ships and auxiliary vessels.
- On March 25, 2025, the Indian **Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) signed a ₹5,000 crore Rupee Term Loan** agreement with NTPC Renewable Energy Limited (NTPC REL), a subsidiary of NTPC Green Energy Limited. The loan will support NTPC REL's capacity expansion projects and refinance existing debt.
- On March 26, 2025, the Argentine **Football Association (AFA) partnered with HSBC for the 2025 season** in India and Singapore. This partnership focuses on brand synergy and international outreach, featuring the Argentina national football team, including Lionel Messi, in an exhibition match in October 2025 in India.
- The Yaoshang Festival of **Manipur, also known as the "Holi of Manipur," was celebrated on March 14 and 15, 2025**, after a year of pause. It began with the Yaoshang Mei Thaba (burning of thatch huts) and included Thabal Chongba (moonlight dance), sports, and joyful use of colors.
- On March 27, 2025, **the Lok Sabha passed the Immigration & Foreigners Bill, 2025**, aiming to revamp India's immigration laws. The bill consolidates outdated regulations, introduces real-time tracking of foreigners, and mandates reporting by hotels, universities, and hospitals.

- **The Sahkar Taxi initiative was announced on March 27, 2025, by Union Home Minister Amit Shah.** It aims to benefit cab, auto, and two-wheeler drivers by eliminating high commission fees from private platforms. The service will operate through cooperative societies, ensuring drivers retain their full earnings.
- **On March 27, 2025, the Ministry of Coal launched the 12th tranche of commercial coal** mine auctions in New Delhi, offering 28 coal and lignite blocks across multiple states. The initiative aims to boost domestic coal production, reduce imports, and strengthen energy security. Among the offered blocks, 13 are fully explored, 12 are partially explored, and 2 are lignite mines.
- **On March 28, 2025, India was confirmed as the world's second-largest tea exporter for 2024, surpassing** Sri Lanka with a record export of 255 million kilograms. Key markets included Iraq, UAE, Iran, Russia, USA, and the UK, with black tea contributing 96% of the total exports. Renowned varieties like Assam, Darjeeling, and Nilgiri teas drove global demand.
- **The 19th Singapore Maritime Week (SMW) was held from March 24 to 28, 2025, in Singapore,** celebrating SG60. The theme, "Actions Meet Ambition," focused on decarbonization and digitalization in maritime innovation. Over 20,000 attendees from nearly 80 countries participated. India's delegation, led by Sarbananda Sonowal, inaugurated the India Pavilion to enhance maritime ties.
- **On March 28, 2025, the government approved two key projects in Bihar. The Patna-Arrah-Sasaram Corridor** is a ₹3,712 crore highway project improving regional connectivity. The ₹6,282 crore Kosi-Mechi Intra-State Link Project will divert Kosi River water to irrigate flood-prone areas. Both projects aim to boost infrastructure and agricultural productivity in the state.
- **On March 28, 2025, Lok Sabha passed the Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2024, replacing the outdated 1925 Act.** The new law aligns India's maritime framework with global conventions, simplifying regulations for ease of business. It defines the rights and responsibilities of carriers, promoting transparency in maritime trade.
- **On March 28, 2025, the Union Cabinet announced a ₹22,919 crore scheme to boost electronics**

**component** manufacturing. It aims to attract ₹59,350 crore in investments, generate production worth ₹4,56,500 crore, and create 91,600 direct jobs. The scheme focuses on strengthening sub-assemblies and supply chain ecosystems.

- **On March 28, 2025, CDS General Anil Chauhan inaugurated Techkriti 2025 at IIT Kanpur, themed "Panta Rhei" (Everything Flows).** The event showcased a Defence Expo, discussions on AI, cybersecurity, and quantum computing. General Chauhan highlighted innovation's role in tackling future security challenges.
- **The 7th Act East Business Show was held in Shillong, Meghalaya, from March 25 to 27, 2025. Organized by the Meghalaya** government and the Indian Chamber of Commerce, the event aimed to strengthen trade and investment ties between BBIN (Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Nepal) and ASEAN nations.
- **On March 26, 2025, NITI Frontier Technologies Hub (NITI FTH), Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), and All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)** launched Digital Transformation Enabler for Growth and Empowerment (Dx-EDGE) to empower MSMEs. The initiative focuses on setting up Digital Transformation Facilitation Centres and using AI to boost innovation and global competitiveness under the vision of Viksit Bharat.
- **NITI Aayog launched the 2nd edition of Trade Watch Quarterly for Q2 of FY25** on March 28, 2025. The report highlights a 5.67% growth in India's trade during April-September 2024 compared to 2023. It provides insights into sectoral performance and **global trade dynamics. This initiative aims to strengthen India's trade position internationally.**
- **Chaitra Navratri 2025 started on March 30 and ends on April 7, honoring the nine forms of Goddess Durga. The first day, Ghatasthapana, focused on worshipping Maa Shailputri. Devotees observe** fasting and rituals during this spiritual festival.
- **March 31, 2025, marks Eid-ul-Fitr, celebrating the conclusion of Ramadan, a month of fasting and prayer. Families unite for festive meals, charity, and prayers, embracing gratitude and togetherness. This occasion symbolizes joy, unity, and spiritual reflection.**
- **India launched Operation Brahma to aid Myanmar after the 7.7 magnitude earthquake on March 25, 2025.** The mission deployed six aircraft and five



naval ships, delivering over 625 metric tons of essential supplies, including food and medical aid. A 200-bed field hospital was set up in Mandalay for critical care.

- The Hnatlangpui **Cleanliness Drive** was launched in **Aizawl, Mizoram on March 31, 2025**, focusing on sanitation and waste management. Organized by the Urban Development & Poverty Alleviation Department, Aizawl Municipal Corporation (AMC), and Central Young Mizo Association (CYMA), it includes a Biomedical Waste Treatment Facility and a Monitoring Committee for waste oversight.
- The **Telangana government launched a program to provide fine rice free of cost** through ration shops under the PDS starting April 1, 2025. Benefiting over 3.10 crore people, eligible cardholders receive 6 kg fine rice per person per month.
- **Rajgir, Bihar**, will host the **Hero Asia Cup Hockey 2025** from August 29 to September 7, 2025, at the Rajgir Hockey Stadium. The tournament will feature eight teams, including India, Pakistan, and Japan, serving as a qualifier for the 2026 FIH Men's Hockey World Cup.
- On March 31, 2025, under the **Pradhan Mantri Anusuchit Jaati Abhyuday Yojana (PM-AJAY)** scheme, 4,991 villages were declared as Adarsh Gram for the year 2024-25. These villages focus on improving socio-economic infrastructure for SC-dominated areas with over 40% SC population. Since inception, 11,076 villages have achieved Adarsh Gram status. The initiative ensures inclusive and holistic rural development.
- **N Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Sons, joined the IMF Advisory Council on Entrepreneurship and Growth** on March 26, 2025. The council, led by IMF Managing Director Kristalina Georgieva, focuses on fostering innovation, entrepreneurship, and productivity-led growth.

## BANKING

### GOI ELEVATED RAILWAYS CPSE'S IRCTC AND IRFC TO NAVRATNA STATUS

- This recognition grants them greater financial autonomy, allowing investments of **up to Rs.1,000 crore without prior government approval**.
- Both entities achieved this milestone due to their strong financial performance, with IRCTC reporting a

net profit of **Rs.1,111 crore** and IRFC recording **Rs.6,412 crore** in FY 2023-24.

- This upgrade enhances their **operational efficiency and global competitiveness**.

### PAYTM PARTNERS WITH RBL BANK TO STRENGTHEN DIGITAL PAYMENT

- This collaboration introduces **Paytm's Soundbox** and card machines to **RBL Bank's merchant** network, enabling real-time transaction monitoring and instant settlements through the Paytm for Business Dashboard.
- The payment solutions support multiple methods, including **UPI, RuPay credit card on UPI, UPI Lite, debit/credit cards, and EMI options**.
- The initiative aims to simplify payments, boost efficiency, and promote digital transformation for businesses.
- It also includes innovative features like **NFC-enabled Tap and Pay** and multilingual audio alerts in 11 languages.

### 12TH REGIONAL 3R AND CIRCULAR ECONOMY FORUM IN ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

- It aimed to promote sustainable waste management and the transition to a circular economy across the region, aligning with the **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** and carbon neutrality targets.
- **Theme:** "Realizing Circular Societies Towards Achieving SDGs and Carbon Neutrality in Asia-Pacific."
- **Launch of C-3:** Introduction of the Cities Coalition for Circularity (C-3) to boost city-level collaboration for sustainability.
- **Adoption of Jaipur Declaration:** This serves as a framework for regional cooperation in transitioning to a circular economy.

### THE NEW CREDIT ASSESSMENT MODEL FOR MSMEs LAUNCHED BY THE UNION FINANCE MINISTER

- **Utilizes Digital Footprints:** MSMEs' data such as GST records, bank statements, and income tax returns (ITRs) is used for credit evaluation, ensuring transparency and accuracy.
- **In-house Capability of Banks:** Public Sector Banks (PSBs) will use this model directly, reducing

dependency on external agencies for credit assessments.

- **Reduced Paperwork:** With digital data at its core, the model streamlines documentation, making the loan process faster and more efficient.
- **Inclusive Credit Access:** It ensures even smaller MSMEs without formal accounting systems can access loans, promoting financial inclusion.

#### SIDBI SIGNS MOU WITH FBL TO STRENGTHEN MSME FINANCING

- The collaboration aims to strengthen financing for **Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs)**.
- Focus areas include project finance, machinery/equipment loans, working capital (letters of credit and bank guarantees), and loans against property.
- The agreement also explores joint financing opportunities **to enhance credit access for MSMEs**.
- The MoU was signed by **Shri Prakash Kumar, Deputy Managing Director of SIDBI**, and **Shri Harsh Dugar, Executive Director of FBL**.
- Senior officials from both institutions were present during the signing.
- This partnership reflects their commitment to bridge credit gaps and support the growth of India's MSME sector.

#### CORPORATE INDIA TO NEED RS.115-125 LAKH CRORE IN DEBT BY FY30: CRISIL REPORT

- Corporate India will require **Rs.115-125 lakh crore** in debt between FY26 and FY30.
- Rs.45-50 lakh crore will be allocated for capital expenditure (capex), with **75% of investments** driven by the infrastructure sector.
- The remaining **Rs.70-75 lakh crore** will address working capital and NBFC financing.
- Highlights a potential funding gap of **Rs.10-20 lakh crore**, emphasizing the need to strengthen the corporate bond market.

#### YOUNGOV INDIA VALUE RANKINGS 2025

- **Top Brands:** Amazon (56.5), Flipkart (53.0), and Amul (52.8) ranked as the top three most valued brands in India.
- **Industries Covered:** The rankings span six sectors, including e-commerce, airlines, consumer

electronics, automobiles, general insurance, and travel booking platforms.

- **Consumer Insights:** Based on inputs from 1.3 lakh urban Indian consumers, the rankings evaluate brands on affordability, quality, and trust.
- **Special Highlights:** Amul is the only FMCG brand in the top three, reflecting its strong consumer trust and cooperative model.

#### INDIGO AIRLINES RANKED THE WORLD'S SECOND FASTEST-GROWING AIRLINE

- **IndiGo's Position:** Ranked 2nd as the world's fastest-growing airline in seat capacity.
- **Growth Rate:** IndiGo recorded a 10.1% year-on-year increase, reaching over 134.9 million seats in 2024.
- **1st Position:** Held by Qatar Airways, with a growth rate of 10.4%.
- **Flight Frequency:** IndiGo leads globally, with a 9.7% increase in flight frequency during 2024.
- **Significance:** Highlights IndiGo's expanding dominance in domestic and international markets.

#### PROFESSOR SUMAN CHAKRABORTY WINS UNESCO'S TWAS AWARD

- This prestigious award acknowledges his pioneering efforts in creating low-cost medical diagnostic technologies aimed at tackling significant health challenges like **anemia, cancer, COVID-19, and tuberculosis**.
- **Oroscreen:** A tool for detecting oral cancer at early stages.
- **Covirap:** A rapid and affordable testing solution for COVID-19.
- **HemoQR:** A portable device for anemia screening.
- These technologies are designed to make healthcare solutions both accessible and affordable, particularly for people in low-resource settings.

#### BRAND FINANCE INSURANCE 100 – 2025

- LIC achieved a **Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 88 out of 100**, earning an **AAA brand** strength rating, which reflects its robust reputation, trust, and market performance.
- The report, compiled by the **London-based brand valuation consultancy Brand Finance**, ranks the top 100 insurance brands globally based on their brand strength and value.

- **Poland's PZU topped** the list with an exceptional BSI score of **94.4 and an AAA+ rating**, followed by China Life Insurance in second place with a BSI score of 93.5, also rated AAA+.
- **LIC's third-place ranking** marks a notable achievement, having slipped from its position as the world's strongest insurance brand in the 2024 report (BSI 88.3).
- In terms of brand value, **LIC ranks 12th globally**, with a valuation that contributes to its prominence, while State Bank of India (SBI) Life Insurance, another Indian insurer, climbed to 74th, up 13 spots, with a brand value increase of 27% to USD 1.6 billion.

#### SEBI TIGHTENED RULES FOR SME IPOS WITH PROFITABILITY MANDATE

- **Profitability Mandate:** SMEs must have a minimum operating profit of Rs.1 crore in at least two of the last three financial years.
- **Offer-for-Sale (OFS) Cap:** Limited to 20% of the total issue size, and selling shareholders cannot offload more than 50% of their holdings.
- **Phased Lock-In for Promoters:** Excess promoter shareholding beyond the minimum contribution will be locked in for 1-2 years.
- **Minimum Application Size:** Increased to two lots to deter speculative participation.
- **Use of IPO Proceeds:** Restricted from repaying loans taken from promoters or related parties.
- **Transparency:** Draft Red Herring Prospectus (DRHP) must be open for public comments for 21 days.
- **Fundraising Without Main Board Migration:** SMEs can raise funds without migrating to the main board if post-issue paid-up capital exceeds Rs.25 crore, subject to compliance with main-board regulations.

#### INDIA RANKED FIFTH GLOBALLY FOR AIR POLLUTION IN 2024, AS REPORTED BY IQAIR

- India ranked as the fifth most polluted country, marking an improvement from **third place in 2023**.
- This was attributed to a **7% decline in PM2.5 levels**, although India's annual average of **50.6 µg/m³** still exceeds WHO guidelines by over tenfold, signifying severe pollution levels.
- The report also revealed that **13 of the 20 most polluted cities** worldwide were in India, with Byrnihat (Assam) recorded as the most polluted globally.

- The primary sources of this pollution include vehicular emissions, industrial outputs, and crop residue burning.

#### NATIONAL HOUSING BANK RELEASES REPORT ON TRENDS AND PROGRESS OF HOUSING IN INDIA 2024

- **Housing Loan Growth:** Outstanding individual housing loans stood at Rs.33.53 lakh crore as of September 30, 2024, reflecting a 14% year-on-year growth.
- **House Price Trends:** The Housing Price Index (NHB-RESIDEX) recorded a 6.8% year-on-year increase for the quarter ending September 2024.
- **Government Initiatives:** Highlights include PMAY-G, PMAY-U, and the Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF).
- **Challenges and Opportunities:** Identifies regional disparities in housing finance and emphasizes technological advancements and digitization as growth drivers.

#### INDIA'S AI REVOLUTION: A ROADMAP TO VIKSIT BHARAT

- Key initiatives were unveiled on **March 12, 2025**, aiming to position India as a global leader in artificial intelligence.
- **IndiaAI Mission:** Allocated Rs.10,300 crore over five years to build infrastructure, boost indigenous GPU manufacturing, and democratize AI resources for startups, students, and researchers.
- **AI Compute Infrastructure:** Development of an advanced facility with 18,693 GPUs for creating AI solutions adapted to Indian languages and contexts.
- **Open GPU Marketplace:** Launched to provide affordable access to high-performance computing power at just Rs.100/hour.
- **Semiconductor Manufacturing:** Five new plants are under construction, enhancing the domestic semiconductor industry critical for AI applications.
- **IndiaAI Dataset Platform:** Designed to provide high-quality, non-personal datasets to support diverse AI applications.

#### INDIA EMERGED AS TOP SOURCE COUNTRY FOR FDI INTO DUBAI WITH USD 3 BILLION INVESTMENT

- **India's FDI Contribution:** India emerged as the top source country for FDI into Dubai in 2024, with

investments totaling USD 3.018 billion, accounting for 21.5% of Dubai's total FDI inflow.

- **Sectoral Focus:** Indian investments were concentrated in real estate, business services, software & IT, and consumer products.
- **Greenfield FDI:** Dubai retained its position as the world's top destination for Greenfield FDI projects for the fourth consecutive year.
- **Overall FDI Growth:** Dubai attracted a record-breaking AED 52.3 billion (USD 14.24 billion) in FDI capital in 2024, marking a 33.2% increase from 2023.

### RBI INTRODUCED FRAMEWORK FOR RECOGNISING SROS FOR AA ECOSYSTEM

- This initiative aims to enhance governance, promote best practices, and ensure the sustainable growth of the AA ecosystem.
- **Eligibility:** SROs must be not-for-profit entities under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, with a minimum net worth of Rs.2 crore.
- **Responsibilities:** SROs will establish benchmarks for professional conduct, resolve disputes, and ensure transparency and independence.
- **Application Process:** Interested entities can apply via the PRAVAAH portal by June 15, 2025.
- **Significance:** Supports smoother adoption of the AA framework, which facilitates secure data exchange between Financial Information Providers (FIPs) and Users (FI-Us).

### RBI & NCFE LAUNCH NATIONWIDE FINANCIAL LITERACY CAMPAIGN

- **Target Groups:** Focuses on youth, senior citizens, and underserved communities.
- **Initiatives:** Includes multilingual campaigns, financial literacy centers, and the "RBI Kehta Hai" awareness program.
- **Topics Covered:** Online banking safety, fraud prevention, investment awareness, and financial planning.
- **Objective:** Empower individuals to make informed financial decisions and safeguard against fraud.

### AP SIGNS MOU WITH MICROSOFT TO ENHANCE AI SKILLS AMONG YOUTH

- To enhance AI and advanced technology skills among youth, creating a skilled workforce for IT-based industries.

- 2 lakh youth to be trained in AI, cloud computing, and digital productivity within a year.
- Training for **500 teachers**, **10,000** engineering students, and **30,000** ITI students.
- 100 hours of AI training for **50,000 individuals** to improve public services and capacity building.
- AI curriculum integration in educational institutions with certification by Microsoft.

### RBI WINS DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AWARD

- **Awarding Body:** The award was presented by Central Banking, London.
- **Recognition:** Acknowledged RBI's leadership in digital innovation and operational improvements.
- **Sarathi System (Launched January 2023):** Digitized internal workflows, improved record-keeping, data analysis, and operational efficiency.
- **Pravaah Platform (Launched May 2024):** Simplified regulatory processes for external stakeholders and integrated seamlessly with the Sarathi system for transparency and secure operations.

### APCRDA & HUDCO SIGN RS 11,000 CRORE LOAN AGREEMENT FOR AMARAVATI DEVELOPMENT

- **Purpose:** To accelerate the development of Amaravati, the greenfield capital city of Andhra Pradesh.
- **Location of Signing:** Residence of CM N. Chandrababu Naidu, Undavalli, Guntur district.
- **Funding for First Phase:** The estimated cost is Rs.26,000 crore.
- **Additional Support:** Financial commitments also come from the World Bank and Asian Development Bank.
- **Goal:** To enhance infrastructure and promote planned urban development in Amaravati.

### LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT AND MEITY SIGN MOU FOR AI-POWERED 'SANSAD BHASHINI'

- **Aim:** The 'Sansad Bhashini' initiative aims to enhance multilingual parliamentary operations using AI, ensuring accessibility and efficiency in legislative processes.
- **AI-Based Translation:** Real-time translation of debates, documents, and proceedings into regional languages.



- **AI Chatbot:** Assists members with procedural rules and legislative documents.
- **Speech-to-Text System:** Converts spoken debates into written transcripts with real-time transcription.
- **Speech-to-Speech Conversion:** Enables real-time multilingual discussions.
- **Automatic Summarization:** Facilitates quicker decision-making and improved record-keeping.

### SCHEDULED COMMERCIAL BANKS WRITE OFF OVER ₹16 LAKH CRORE IN LOANS (FY15-FY24)

- Scheduled commercial banks wrote off over Rs.16 lakh crore in loans between FY15 and FY24.
- The write-offs include non-performing assets (NPAs) fully provisioned as per RBI guidelines.
- The report highlights year-wise details of write-offs, with FY19 recording the highest at Rs.2.36 lakh crore.
- It emphasizes that write-offs do not absolve borrowers of liabilities, and recovery efforts continue through legal and insolvency mechanisms.

### INDIA'S FREE SPEECH RANKING IN GLOBAL INDEX

- **Top Country:** Norway, with a score of 87.9.
- **India's Position:** Ranked 24th out of 33 countries, with a score of 62.6.

#### India's Performance:

- India ranks between South Africa (66.9) and Lebanon (61.8).
- **37% of Indian respondents** supported government restrictions on policy criticism, the highest among surveyed nations.
- Despite public support for free speech, actual conditions reflect "democratic backsliding."

### SEBI PARTNERED WITH DIGILOCKER TO RESOLVE THE ISSUE OF UNCLAIMED FINANCIAL ASSETS

- **Objective:** The initiative aims to reduce unclaimed financial assets (e.g., dormant accounts, unclaimed dividends, forgotten investments) in the Indian securities market by improving accessibility and inheritance processes.
- **DigiLocker Integration:** Investors can store and access demat account and mutual fund statements, including Consolidated Account Statements (CAS),

securely through DigiLocker, a government-backed digital platform.

- **Nomination Facility:** Investors can appoint data access nominees who receive read-only access to the investor's financial holdings on DigiLocker after their death, simplifying asset transmission.
- **Notification Process:** Upon an investor's death, **KYC Registration Agencies (KRAs)** inform DigiLocker, which then automatically notifies nominees via SMS and email to ensure timely awareness.
- **Mandatory Compliance:** SEBI has directed asset management companies (AMCs), depositories, and KRAs to integrate with **DigiLocker by April 1, 2025**, ensuring seamless statement retrieval for investors.
- **Broader Functionality:** DigiLocker already supports storing other financial documents like bank statements, insurance policies, and NPS details, making it a centralized hub for managing financial assets.

### AN INCENTIVE SCHEME FOR THE PROMOTION OF LOW-VALUE BHIM-UPI TRANSACTIONS

- Approved on March 19, 2025, with a total outlay of **Rs.1,500 crore**, this scheme focuses on **UPI transactions up to Rs.2,000**.
- Under the scheme, merchants receive an incentive of **0.15% per transaction value**, which reduces their cost burden and promotes greater adoption of digital payments.
- The initiative aligns with the government's goal of moving toward a less-cash economy while boosting financial inclusion.
- Additionally, it aims to achieve a **targeted transaction volume of Rs.20,000 crore** for the financial year 2024-25, making digital payments seamless and accessible for small-scale merchants and customers alike.

### CONSTRUCTION OF A UREA PLANT IN ASSAM HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE GOVERNMENT

- This project involves an investment of **Rs.10,601.4 crore** and is aimed at enhancing India's domestic urea production capacity.
- With an annual production target of **12.7 lakh metric tonnes of urea**, the plant will reduce reliance on imports and address the growing demand for fertilizers in agriculture.

- The project will be implemented as a **joint venture**, with the **Assam Government holding a 40% stake**, promoting local participation.
- Additionally, it is expected to generate significant employment opportunities in the region, boosting socio-economic development.

### SEBI LOWERED THE MINIMUM INVESTMENT IN SOCIAL STOCK EXCHANGE INSTRUMENTS TO ₹1,000

- **Objective:** This move aims to enhance retail participation in social impact investments, making it more accessible for smaller investors.
- **ZCZP Instruments:** These are unique financial tools designed for donations to non-profit organizations (NPOs) listed on the SSE. They do not offer returns like interest or dividends but serve as a structured way to fund social causes.
- **Background:** The change modifies provisions outlined in SEBI's earlier circulars from September 19, 2022, and December 28, 2023. It reflects recommendations from the Social Stock Exchange Advisory Committee and public feedback.
- **Impact:** By lowering the threshold, SEBI expects to channel more funds into sectors like education, healthcare, women's empowerment, and rural development.

### INDIA'S BIO-ECONOMY REACHED \$165B IN 2024

- The report was unveiled on 21st March 2025 during the BIRAC Foundation Day ceremony.

#### India's Bioeconomy Growth:

- Reached **\$165.7 billion in 2024**, marking a 16-fold increase from **\$10 billion in 2014**.
- Contributes 4.25% to India's GDP.

#### Sectoral Contributions:

- **Biopharma:** Vaccines, medical devices, and diagnostics.
- **Bio-industrial:** Biofuels, bioplastics, and chemicals.
- **Bio-agriculture:** Genetically modified crops like Bt Cotton.
- **Bio-IT and Research Services:** Clinical trials and bioinformatics.

#### Government Initiatives:

- Introduction of the BioE3 Policy (Biotechnology for Economy, Employment, Environment).
- Launch of BioSaarthi, a global mentorship initiative for biotech startups.
- Future Projections:
- India aims to achieve a \$300 billion bioeconomy by 2030, driven by innovation, research, and policy support.

### LENDBOX TOPS ASIA-PACIFIC GROWTH RANKINGS, SURPASSING ADITYA BIRLA AND TITAN

- It showcases the top **500 fastest-growing companies in the Asia-Pacific region** based on Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of revenues between 2020 and 2023.
- Companies were ranked based on their **CAGR of revenues over three financial years (2020–2023)**.
- Only companies with revenue growth driven organically were considered, excluding those relying on acquisitions or mergers.

#### Top Company:

- Indian fintech firm Lendbox claimed the 1st position with a **CAGR of 536%** and reported revenues of **\$51 million in 2023**. It operates as a peer-to-peer lending platform, revolutionizing financial services in India.

#### Indian Representation:

- 81 Indian companies featured in the rankings, cementing India's strong presence in the Asia-Pacific economic landscape.
- Other notable Indian entries include **Aditya Birla Capital (374th position)** and **Titan Company (301st position)**.

#### Sector Distribution:

- IT and Software companies dominated the rankings, accounting for **27% of the total entries**.
- **Financial Services followed with a 10% share**, highlighting the rapid growth in fintech and innovative financial solutions.

#### Regional Insights:

- Singapore led with **108 companies**, followed by **Japan and South Korea** in terms of representation, underscoring their economic strength and innovation ecosystems.

### RBI DATA: ECBS NET INFLOWS SURGED OVER 2 TIMES TO USD 18.4 BILLION IN 10MFY25

- **Net Inflows:** ECB net inflows surged over 2 times to USD 18.4 billion during the first 10 months of FY25.
- **Registrations and Disbursements:** ECB registrations totaled USD 47.3 billion, and disbursements reached USD 42.3 billion.
- **Cost Reduction:** Declining costs of overseas fundraising, including reductions in the Secured Overnight Financing Rate (SOFR), contributed to this growth.
- **Sectoral Insights:** Funds were allocated for modernization, infrastructure development, refinancing old ECBs, and sourcing capital goods.

### REVISED CRITERIA FOR CLASSIFYING MSMEs NOTIFIED BY THE GOVERNMENT

- The new classification aims to better align the investment and turnover thresholds with current economic realities.
- **Micro Enterprises:** Investment limits raised to Rs.2.5 crore, and turnover thresholds increased to Rs.10 crore.
- **Small Enterprises:** Investment limits set at Rs.25 crore, while turnover thresholds are now Rs.100 crore.
- **Medium Enterprises:** Investment limits expanded to Rs.125 crore, and turnover thresholds increased to Rs.500 crore.

### GOI APPROVES RS 11,440 CRORE REVIVAL PACKAGE FOR RINL

- The package includes **Rs.10,300 crore as equity infusion** and **Rs.1,140 crore** as conversion of working capital loans into preference shares, helping to reduce debt and stabilize operations.
- This decision is aligned with the goals of the **National Steel Policy, 2017**, which promotes sustainable growth and self-reliance in the steel industry.
- **RINL has faced challenges such as rising input costs**, mounting debt, and global market fluctuations.
- The revival plan addresses these issues by providing the necessary financial support to improve production efficiency, operational performance, and competitiveness.

### PFRDA ISSUES GUIDELINES FOR UNIFIED PENSION SCHEME (UPS) UNDER NPS

- These guidelines aim to streamline and unify the pension structure for Central Government employees.
- **The UPS, effective from April 1, 2025**, integrates the current NPS framework while setting consistent standards for employees, including existing personnel, new recruits, and retirees under specified conditions.
- Its primary goals are to enhance **transparency**, **ensure equitable pension benefits**, and promote financial security post-retirement.

### RBI: RRBS GET 5 MORE YEARS TO AMORTISE ADDITIONAL PENSION LIABILITIES

- Initially effective from November 1, 1993, RRBs can now spread their pension liability payments over five additional years, ending March 31, 2030.
- This decision, announced on March 20, 2025, mandates RRBs to expense at least 20% of their total pension liability annually.
- Any remaining liability must be disclosed as "unamortized expenditure" in their financial statements.
- The extension aims to ease financial pressure on RRBs, improve their fiscal stability, and ensure smooth compliance with regulatory standards.

### PSBs' DIVIDENDS INCREASES 33% TO RS 27,830 CRORE IN FY24: GOI DATA

- This growth is reflective of PSBs' improved financial health, driven by record-breaking profits of Rs.1.41 lakh crore, up from **Rs.1.05 lakh crore in FY23**.
- The dividends largely benefit the government, which holds significant stakes in PSBs, receiving **Rs.18,013 crore (65% of the total)**.
- The State Bank of India (SBI) contributed significantly, with a net profit of **Rs.61,077 crore, over 40% of the total profits**.
- This success stems from enhanced asset quality, robust credit growth, and higher profitability across PSBs.

### ADB & SHRIRAM FINANCE SIGN USD 150 MILLION LOAN AGREEMENT FOR MSME & EV FINANCING

- **Support for MSMEs:** The funding will target micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs), especially those owned or led by women, to boost economic inclusion and growth.
- **Regional Focus:** The initiative prioritizes underserved regions to ensure equitable access to credit.
- **EV Financing:** It supports India's transition to low-emission transport by promoting the adoption of electric vehicles.

### SIDBI SIGNED MOU WITH CMAI & SICS TO STRENGTHEN TEXTILE MSME SECTOR

- **Aim:** To strengthen the MSME textile and garment sector by providing financial and technical assistance, including access to collateral-free loans and modernization support.
- Entrepreneurs can avail of collateral-free loans up to **Rs.10 crore under the CGTMSE scheme**.
- **SIDBI support** centers will assist with loan applications and processing.
- Special focus on upgrading textile machinery and garment sector advancements.
- Loan processing time **reduced to 30-45 days**, with interest rates ranging from **8.75% to 9.75%**.

### JICA SIGNS 6 ODA LOAN AGREEMENTS WORTH RS.11,181 CRORE WITH GOI

- These agreements are **designed to support projects that address key development areas in India**.
- **Urban Transport:** Expansion of Delhi Metro Phase 4 to enhance connectivity and reduce urban congestion.
- **Water Supply:** Construction of Chennai Seawater Desalination Plant to ensure sustainable water resources.
- **Forest Management:** Promoting eco-friendly forestry practices for biodiversity conservation.
- **Aquaculture and Biodiversity Conservation:** Supporting sustainable aquaculture initiatives and preserving aquatic ecosystems.  
<https://currentaffairs.bankexamstoday.com/>
- **Investment Promotion:** Advancing economic growth through the Tamil Nadu Investment Promotion Program (Phase 3).

### IREDA SECURED JPY 26 BILLION ECB FACILITY FROM SBI TOKYO

- This marks a significant milestone for India's renewable energy sector.
- **Purpose:** The funds will be utilized to promote and finance renewable energy projects across India, supporting the country's transition to green energy and reducing dependence on fossil fuels.
- **Loan Details:** The facility is a five-year unsecured loan and includes a Green Shoe Option of JPY 10 billion, which allows flexibility to increase the loan amount based on demand.
- **Cost Efficiency:** The loan is provided at a highly competitive landed cost, below 7%, making it cost-effective for IREDA and enabling efficient allocation of resources for renewable energy initiatives.
- **Global Presence:** This agreement enhances IREDA's global footprint, demonstrating its ability to secure international funding for clean energy projects while strengthening ties with Japanese financial institutions.

### GOVERNMENT INCREASED MGNREGS WAGES BY 2-7% FOR FY26

- This revision impacts daily wage rates for unskilled manual laborers across states, effective from April 1, 2025.
- Haryana recorded the highest wage increase of ₹26, bringing the daily wage to ₹400, the highest in India.
- States like Andhra Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Nagaland, and Telangana saw a ₹7 increase in daily wages.
- The wage rates are linked to the Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL), reflecting inflation adjustments.

### HURUN GLOBAL RICH LIST 2025

- This year's list features **3,442 billionaires from 71 countries, marking a record** increase of 163 new entrants.
- **India ranks third globally with 284 billionaires**, adding 13 new billionaires this year.
- **Key highlights include Elon Musk reclaiming the top spot with a net worth** of \$420 billion, followed by Jeff Bezos and Mark Zuckerberg.
- In India, **Mukesh Ambani remains the richest person with a net worth** of ₹8.6 lakh crore (\$100 billion).
- while **Roshni Nadar becomes the first Indian woman to enter the global top 10 wealthiest women list**,



ranking 5th with a net worth of ₹3.5 lakh crore (\$40 billion).

### MOF RETAINS SMALL SAVINGS SCHEME INTEREST RATES FOR Q1FY26

Popular schemes include:

- **Public Provident Fund (PPF):** Interest rate remains at 7.1%.
- **National Savings Certificate (NSC):** Interest rate stays at 7.7%.
- **Sukanya Samriddhi Yojana (SSY):** Interest rate continues at 8.2%.
- The decision **ensures stability and predictability for small savers** and risk-averse investors.
- Quarterly **reviews are conducted, considering factors like inflation and economic trends**, but no adjustments were made for this period.

### GLOBAL FINANCIAL CENTRES INDEX 2025

- **India's Position:** Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City) ranked 46th, improving from 52nd.
- **Top Country:** New York City retained the 1st position, followed by London and Hong Kong.
- **Top 3 Centres:** New York, London, and Hong Kong.
- **Asia-Pacific Region:** Six centres, including Singapore and Shanghai, ranked in the global top 20.
- **India's GIFT City:** Achieved top rank in Reputational Advantage and improved its FinTech ranking to 40th.
- **Overall Trends:** Increased ratings for most centres, reflecting stronger confidence in global financial hubs.

### RBI RAISES LIQUIDITY LIMIT FOR STANDALONE PRIMARY DEALERS TO ₹15,000 CRORE.

- The limit will rise **from ₹10,000 crore to ₹15,000 crore, effective April 2, 2025.**
- **Purpose:** The SLF provides SPDs with short-term liquidity at the repo rate, enabling them to support the government securities (G-Sec) market.
- **Reason for Increase:** The decision is based on an assessment of evolving liquidity conditions to ensure adequate funding for SPDs.
- **Impact:**
  - Enhances SPDs' ability to underwrite and trade G-Secs, improving market liquidity and price discovery.

- Strengthens the infrastructure of the G-Sec market, encouraging broader investor participation.
- Terms: The RBI will communicate individual limits to SPDs separately. All other terms and conditions of the SLF remain unchanged.

### SEBI ISSUED NEW GUIDELINES FOR INTRADAY INDEX DERIVATIVE MONITORING

- **Here are the key points:**
- **Intraday Monitoring:** Stock exchanges are required to monitor position limits for index derivatives multiple times during the trading day. A minimum of four random snapshots will be taken within predefined time windows.
- **No Penalties for Now:** Breaches of these intraday limits will not attract penalties or be considered violations until further notice.
- **Proposed Changes:** SEBI is also working on a new system with delta-based or futures-equivalent limits, which may allow higher intraday limits compared to end-of-day limits.
- **Standard Operating Procedure (SOP):** Exchanges like NSE and BSE must prepare an SOP to inform market participants about the monitoring process and notify them of any breaches.

### BLUPINE ENERGY SECURES RS 1,787 CR FUNDING FROM NABFID

- **Purpose:** The funds are aimed at repowering and upgrading existing solar energy projects to improve efficiency and expand renewable capacity.
- **Structure:** This involves 14 Special Purpose Vehicles (SPVs) across Punjab, Uttarakhand, and Karnataka, with both central and state power purchasers as off-takers.
- **Impact:** By lowering debt servicing costs and improving cash flow, it strengthens BluPine Energy's position in India's renewable energy market.
- **Strategic Goal:** The initiative aligns with India's renewable energy vision and emphasizes operational excellence to meet sustainable energy demands.

### BANDHAN BANK SIGNS MOU WITH IAF FOR SHAURYA SALARY ACCOUNT

- **Aim:** To provide specialized banking solutions for defense personnel through the Shaurya Salary

Account, offering exclusive benefits tailored to their needs.

#### Highlights:

- Features include a zero-balance savings account, insurance coverage for personnel and families, and attractive interest rates.
- Bandhan Bank serves as a SPARSH Service Centre, supporting defense pensioners and their families through 557 designated branches.
- The initiative strengthens Bandhan Bank's partnership with government organizations and enhances banking services for the Indian Air Force.

#### RBI DATA: NET CLAIMS OF NON-RESIDENTS ON INDIA INCREASES BY USD 11 BILLION IN Q3FY25

- **Net Claims by Non-Residents:** This refers to the overall financial obligations India has to foreign entities. It increased by **USD 11 billion**, reaching a total of **USD 364.5 billion**.
- **Foreign Assets of Indian Residents:** These are the assets held abroad by Indians, which declined by **USD 40.1 billion**. A significant part of this was due to a **USD 70.1 billion** decrease in reserve assets (like foreign currency reserves).
- However, reserve assets did improve compared to the previous year, increasing by **USD 13.2 billion**.
- **Non-Resident Claims in India:** These represent investments or financial claims foreigners hold in India. This also declined, by **USD 29.1 billion**, offsetting part of the increase in net claims.

#### NABARD & SBI SIGN MOU TO DRIVE SUSTAINABLE GROWTH IN RURAL ASSAM

- The initiative focuses on enhancing rural livelihoods, providing institutional support **to farmers, artisans, and MSMEs, and improving the credit ecosystem**.
- The MoU includes a financial commitment of **Rs.500 crores for FY 2025–26**, with a long-term target of **Rs.1,000 crores annually** in the coming years.
- By combining **NABARD's development expertise with SBI's financial capabilities**, this partnership aims to promote capacity building, institutional lending, and overall economic stability in rural Assam.

#### BANKING- ONE LINER

- City Union Bank (CUB) **launched a co-branded credit card with Chennai Super Kings (CSK)** on March 1,

MONTHLY GK DIGEST ONE LINER: MARCH 2025

2025, in Chennai. The card offers perks like rewards on CSK merchandise, match tickets, and exclusive fan experiences. It comes in three variants with global acceptance, security, and contactless payment features.

- The Government of India **launched five pilot projects for hydrogen-fuelled vehicles** under the National Green Hydrogen Mission on March 5, 2025. With 37 vehicles, 9 refuelling stations, and a budget of ₹208 crore, the initiative explores hydrogen transport's feasibility across 10 routes, like Delhi-Agra and Pune-Mumbai.
- On March 4, 2025, **Jio Financial Services Limited (JFSL) announced the acquisition** of State Bank of India's (SBI) entire 17.8% stake in Jio Payments Bank Limited (JPBL) for ₹104.5 crore. This transaction involves the purchase of 7.9 crore equity shares, making JPBL a wholly-owned subsidiary of JFSL.
- **Niva Bupa Health Insurance launched 'Rise' on March 7, 2025**, catering to India's "Missing Middle". This plan offers affordable coverage, flexible premium options, and unlimited digital consultations. It aims to bridge the gap for those excluded from government schemes and private insurance.
- Bank of Baroda (BoB) **launched the "Bob Global Women NRE & NRO Savings Account"** on March 7, 2025, for women NRIs. It offers benefits like auto sweep, concessional loan rates, 100% locker rent waivers, and customized debit cards. Additional perks include airport lounge access and insurance coverage.
- CredResolve raised **\$1.1 million in funding on March 6, 2025, led by UNLEASH Capital Partners** and CDM Capital. The funds will enhance its AI-based debt recovery technology and expand partnerships with 25+ financial institutions. It aims to automate workflows, improve borrower communication, and comply with RBI regulations.
- , grasslands, and lakes.
- The **Punjab government launched 'Project Hifazat' on March 7, 2025, to help women** and children facing violence. It includes a 24x7 helpline (181), rescue vehicles, and collaboration with Punjab Police and Health departments for timely interventions.
- SEBI's total income for 2023-24 **rose by 48%, reaching ₹2,075 crore, as announced** on March 4, 2025. This growth was mainly due to fee and subscription revenue, which contributed ₹1,851.5

crore. Income from investments also increased significantly.

- India's steel imports fell to **0.6 million tonnes in February 2025, a 40% sequential drop** and a 29% month-on-month decline, reported on March 9, 2025. This sharp fall is linked to concerns over potential safeguard duties. Steel exports also dropped 60% to 0.4 million tonnes during the same period.
- The report on personal income tax (PIT) collections for FY 2023-24 was released on March 10, 2025, by the Finance Ministry in a Lok Sabha reply. PIT **rose to 3.5% of GDP, a 140 basis points increase since FY 2014-15**. This growth is attributed to tax reforms like the New Income Tax Regime, better compliance, and economic expansion. Collections reached over ₹10.4 lakh crore in FY24.
- On March 7, 2025, **India imposed an anti-dumping duty of up to \$986 per tonne on the water treatment chemical 'Trichloro isocyanuric acid'** from China and Japan. The measure will be in effect for five years to protect domestic manufacturers from low-cost imports.
- On March 12, 2025, **the EU announced counter tariffs on 26 billion euros (USD 28 billion)** of U.S. goods, starting April 1, 2025. This retaliates against Trump's 25% steel and aluminum tariffs, affecting 5% of EU exports. Phase 1 reimposes tariffs on USD 8 billion in U.S. items like bourbon; Phase 2 hits USD 19.6 billion in industrial and agricultural goods.
- On March 10, 2025, **Canara HSBC Life Insurance partnered with GIC Housing Finance to offer credit life insurance solutions for home loan borrowers**. The Group Asset Secure product protects borrowers and their families against loan liabilities in unforeseen circumstances.
- On March 11, 2025, **Kuhoo Finance secured an NBFC license from the Reserve Bank of India, enabling it to directly offer education loans**. The platform provides loans up to ₹2 crore for domestic and international studies, using AI-driven credit models to assess students' employability.
- On March 13, 2025, **IRDAI granted a Certificate of Registration to Valueattics Reinsurance Ltd**, India's first private reinsurer. Backed by GoDigit promoters and Fairfax Financial Holdings, it begins operations with an initial capital of ₹210 crore.
- On March 12, 2025, **BRISKPE (Bharat Resilient Integrated System for Key Payment Ecosystem)**,

**backed** by Prosus, received the RBI's (Reserve Bank of India) in-principle authorisation to operate as a Payment Aggregator for Cross-Border (PA-CB) transactions.

- On March 13, 2025, **the RBI imposed penalties on JM Financial Products Ltd and Experian India for regulatory non-compliance**. JM Financial Products was fined ₹3.1 lakh for NBFC-related violations, and Experian India faced a ₹2 lakh penalty under the Credit Information Companies (Regulation) Act, 2005.
- On March 14, 2025, **the MSME sector's growth was highlighted with a reduction in Non-Performing Assets (NPAs) from 11% in 2020 to 4% in 2024**. Initiatives like CGTMSE, ECLGS, and the Udyam Registration portal played a key role in this improvement.
- The RBI announced the 'on Tap' Cohort under its Regulatory Sandbox on **March 13, 2025, focusing on climate change risks and sustainable finance**. It aims to foster innovation in green finance, build sustainable financial ecosystems, and address climate-related risks. The RBI also plans to host a 'Greenathon' to encourage climate-focused financial solutions.
- India's WPI inflation rose to **2.4% in February 2025 from 2.3% in January, per data released on March 17, 2025**. The increase was driven by higher prices in **manufactured food, textiles, and non-food articles**. Food inflation within WPI eased slightly, though potato and onion prices stayed high. This contrasts with retail inflation (CPI), which dropped to 3.6%, below the RBI's 4% target.
- Flipkart's super.money app became India's fifth largest UPI platform, handling 139.10 million transactions in February 2025, per NPCI data. Launched in **June 2024, it surpassed Cred within a year, offering 5% cashback**. It trails only PhonePe, Google Pay, Paytm, and Navi, as reported on March 13, 2025.
- On March 15, 2025, **SEBI announced the reduction of the rights issue timeline to 23 days**, effective from April 7, 2025. The subscription period will now range from 7 to 30 days, with streamlined processes for validation and approval through stock exchanges. Draft offers no longer need SEBI filing, enhancing efficiency. This move aims to simplify corporate fundraising and improve ease of business.

- On March 17, 2025, **Bajaj Finserv signed Share Purchase Agreements (SPAs) to acquire Allianz SE's 26% stake in their insurance joint ventures—Bajaj Allianz General Insurance Company (BAGIC) and Bajaj Allianz Life Insurance Company (BALIC)—for ₹24,180 crore.** This acquisition will increase Bajaj Group's ownership in both companies to 100% from the current 74%, marking the end of their 24-year partnership.
- The sixth **round of RBI's Remittances Survey (2023-24), published on March 19, 2025, shows a shift in migration trends. For the first time, remittances from advanced economies like the US (27.7%) exceeded those from Gulf countries (UAE at 19.2%).** This reflects a preference for high-skilled migration to developed nations due to better opportunities.
- India's **Directorate General of Trade Remedies (DGTR) has proposed a 12% provisional safeguard duty on certain steel imports for a period of 200 days.** This recommendation, issued on March 18, 2025, aims to protect the domestic steel industry from a surge in imports, particularly from countries like China, South Korea, and Japan.
- Paytm has partnered with SBI Mutual Fund to launch the **JanNivesh ₹250 SIP, enabling individuals to start investing in mutual funds with as little as ₹250.** This initiative, announced on March 18, 2025, aims to promote financial inclusion and simplify access to wealth-building opportunities.
- On March 18, 2025, **Paytm Money Limited received SEBI approval to act as a Research Analyst under the SEBI (Research Analysts) Regulations, 2014.** This allows it to provide investment research, insights, and reports to enhance wealth management services.
- On March 19, 2025, **Fitch Ratings released its Global Economic Outlook, maintaining India's GDP forecast at 6.5% for FY26. The FY27 projection was revised upward to 6.3%, reflecting expectations of robust capital expenditure and private sector lending.**
- The Frontier Seed (Pacific) Program by ADB, with an **initial funding of \$4 million (shared by ADB and the ORCA Trust Fund), was launched on March 13, 2025, in Suva, Fiji.** It supports innovative businesses in food security, environmental sustainability, and coastal mapping with risk capital and technical assistance. Initial recipients include SeaPAC Pte Ltd and Kahuto Pacific.
- UIDAI has partnered with Bengaluru-based Generative AI company **Sarvam AI to enhance Aadhaar services. This collaboration, effective from March 18, 2025, introduces a voice-based AI platform supporting 10 Indian languages, with plans to expand further.** Key features include real-time fraud detection, user feedback mechanisms, and multilingual support, all while **ensuring data privacy within UIDAI's secure infrastructure.**
- NPCI International Payments Limited (NIPL) partnered with Singapore's HitPay on March 20, 2025, to expand UPI payments in Singapore. Over 12,000 merchants, including restaurants and tourist attractions, will accept QR code-based UPI transactions.** This initiative provides Indian travelers with seamless payment options and strengthens economic ties.
- IndusInd International Holdings Ltd (IIHL) has successfully completed the acquisition of Reliance Capital (RCAP) for ₹9,650 crore under the Corporate Insolvency Resolution Process (CIRP).** The transaction, finalized on March 18, 2025, involved transferring the bid amount to lenders.
- On 21st March 2025, **SEBI imposed fines totaling ₹50 lakh on 10 entities for non-genuine trades in the illiquid stock options segment on the BSE.** Each entity was fined ₹5 lakh for engaging in reversal trades that created artificial trading volumes.
- Non-life insurance **premiums in February 2025 declined by 2.8%, totaling ₹21,747 crore, compared to ₹22,378 crore in February 2024.** The decline was due to weak commercial lines and muted growth in health and motor insurance. However, Standalone Health Insurers (SAHI) recorded a 7.8% year-on-year growth, driven by retail health insurance. This was reported on 21st March 2025.
- On March 20, 2025, **UK-based Prudential plc and India's HCL Group announced a joint venture to establish a standalone health insurance business in India.** The partnership involves Prudential Group Holdings Limited holding a 70% stake, while Vama Sundari Investments, an HCL Group promoter company, holds the remaining 30% stake.
- On **20th March 2025, Bain Capital announced its acquisition of an 18% stake in Manappuram Finance** for ₹4,385 crore through a preferential allotment at ₹236 per share. This deal, at a 30% premium, will trigger a mandatory open offer for an



additional 26% stake. Post-transaction ownership could reach 41.7% on a fully diluted basis.

- The Open Network for Digital **Commerce (ONDC) surpassed 200 million transactions on March 24, 2025**. The first 100 million transactions took 20 months, while the next 100 million were achieved in just six months.
- India will abolish the 6% equalisation levy on digital advertising services starting April 1, 2025. This move aims to ease the tax burden **on advertisers and improve trade relations with the United States**, which had opposed the levy.
- On March 21, 2025, the RBI fined IDBI Bank Ltd ₹36.30 lakh for inadequate due diligence on inward remittances and Citibank N.A. ₹36.28 lakh for faulty reporting under the Liberalised Remittance Scheme, both under FEMA, 1999. The penalties address regulatory lapses, not customer transaction issues.
- The East **Coast Railway (ECoR) became India's first railway zone to handle 250 million tons (MT) of freight in 2024-25**, achieving the milestone on March 21, 2025, ahead of schedule. It marked the second consecutive year crossing 250 MT and reinforced ECoR as the country's top freight-loading zone.
- On March 26, 2025, **Centrico Insurance Repository Limited (CIRL) partnered with Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)** to improve Insurance Repository (IR) services for policyholders. This collaboration enables secure, paperless management of insurance policies, streamlines claims, and enhances grievance resolution.
- The Bank of **India declared Rolta India's ₹616.30 crore NPA as fraud on March 26, 2025**, fully provisioning the amount and notifying the RBI. Rolta India had filed for bankruptcy in January 2023, with debts of over ₹14,000 crore to various creditors.
- The NPCI **launched BHIM 3.0 on March 26, 2025, enhancing the app with features like Split Expenses, Family Mode, and a Spend Analytics Dashboard. It also supports over 15 Indian languages and works offline. The nationwide rollout will finish by April 2025**. These updates aim to make digital payments more inclusive and user-friendly.
- From May 1, 2025, **withdrawing cash from ATMs in India will become more expensive**. The fee for financial transactions, such as cash withdrawals, will rise to ₹19 from ₹17, while non-financial transactions, such as balance inquiries, will now cost ₹7 instead of ₹6. These charges apply after

exceeding the free monthly limit, which is five transactions in metro cities and three in non-metro areas.

- The Government of **India has discontinued the Medium-Term Government Deposit (MTGD) and Long-Term Government Deposit (LTGD) components of the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS)**, effective March 26, 2025. This decision was made after evaluating the scheme's performance and evolving market conditions.
- Parliament **passed the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill 2024 on March 26, 2025**, introducing key changes to banking governance. It allows up to four nominees for accounts, raises the substantial interest threshold for directorships from ₹5 lakh to ₹2 crore, and empowers banks in auditor remuneration.
- The Embassy **Fixed Deposit Scheme by HDFC Bank, launched on March 26, 2025**, caters to the financial needs of diplomatic missions, diplomats, and staff. It offers Foreign Currency Term Deposits in USD with a minimum deposit of \$5,000, interest rates updated monthly, and no auto-renewal feature, ensuring flexibility and competitive returns.
- On March 26, 2025, the RBI **imposed penalties on HDFC Bank (₹75 lakh) for violations of KYC norms, including improper risk categorization and duplicate identification codes**. Punjab & Sind Bank faced a fine of ₹68.20 lakh for non-compliance with large exposure reporting and BSBDA norms.
- On March 24, 2025, **the Bank of India (BoI) partnered with New India Assurance Co. Ltd. (NIACL)** to offer enhanced general insurance products. The collaboration leverages BoI's network of 5,200 branches to provide comprehensive insurance solutions, including health, motor, and home coverage. This strategic alliance aims to ensure greater financial security for customers by integrating banking and insurance services.
- On March 28, 2025, **the ADB-funded SMILE Program was launched with a \$350 million loan to boost India's logistics efficiency**. The program aims to enhance multimodal infrastructure, reduce logistics costs, and align with the National Logistics Policy. It focuses on improving the Logistics Performance Index (LPI) ranking and promoting sustainable practices like smart logistics systems and low-emission transport.

- On March 27, 2025, the **government announced plans to raise ₹8 lakh crore via dated securities** in H1 FY 2025–26. This represents 54% of the total ₹14.82 lakh crore gross borrowing for the fiscal year. The borrowing includes ₹10,000 crore of Sovereign Green Bonds through 26 weekly auctions across various tenures.
- On March 28, 2025, the **Central Bank of India partnered with PSB Alliance Pvt Ltd to offer** digital supply chain finance. This collaboration utilizes PSB Alliance's digital platform for end-to-end, paperless financing solutions for supply chain participants. The initiative aims to streamline financing processes and enhance efficiency in supply chain management.
- On March 19, 2025, **Zuno General Insurance became India's first insurer to include Pay-How-You-Drive (PHYD)** as a standard feature in motor insurance. It uses mobile telematics to assess driving behavior, rewarding safe drivers with lower premiums. Customers can track their driving scores and get feedback via the Zuno app. This initiative promotes safer roads and personalized insurance.
- On March 28, 2025, the **government announced plans to establish the Second National Gene Bank (NGB) under the theme "Investing in Innovations"** from the Union Budget 2025–26. This facility will conserve 10 lakh crop germplasm, doubling India's gene banking capacity. Managed by ICAR-NBPGR, it aims to safeguard agricultural biodiversity, ensure food security, and support climate-resilient farming.
- On March 28, 2025, SEBI **granted in-principle approval to ASK Group to enter the mutual fund business**. This expansion complements their existing services like portfolio and wealth management. ASK plans to launch research-driven mutual fund products, catering to India's growing investor base.
- MobiKwik has launched **MobiKwik Securities Broking Pvt Ltd (MSBPL) as a wholly owned subsidiary for stock broking**. Approved on March 3, 2025, MSBPL will trade shares, securities, derivatives, and more. With ₹2 crore funding planned, MobiKwik aims to challenge major players like Zerodha and Groww.
- On March 28, 2025, Authum Investment and **Infrastructure Ltd received approval from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to acquire a 79.28% stake in India SME Asset Reconstruction Company Ltd (ISARC), a SIDBI-sponsored ARC**. The ₹260 crore deal involves both primary and secondary transactions,

with Authum injecting ₹170 crore to boost ISARC's net worth to ₹300 crore.

- The Lok Sabha **passed the Carriage of Goods by Sea Bill, 2024, on March 28, 2025, replacing the 1925 Act** to modernize maritime laws. The Bill aligns India's regulations with international conventions, defining responsibilities, liabilities, and rights of carriers.
- The Union Cabinet approved a **₹22,919 crore Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme** on March 28, 2025, to boost domestic production. The scheme aims to attract investments of ₹59,350 crore and create 91,600 direct jobs, reducing import dependence. It focuses on manufacturing sub-assemblies and strengthening India's electronics supply chain.
- Axis Bank, in **partnership with J.P. Morgan, launched India's first blockchain-based 24/7 cross-border payment system** on March 26, 2025. Using J.P. Morgan's Kinexys Digital Payments platform, it enables real-time USD clearing for businesses from GIFT City.
- Federal Bank **acquired an additional 4% stake in Ageas Federal Life Insurance (AFLIC)** for ₹105 crore on March 28, 2025. This increases its ownership from 26% to 30%, subject to regulatory approvals.
- The Government of India **issued the order for equity conversion in Vodafone Idea Limited** on March 29, 2025, and the company received it on March 30, 2025. Through this, GoI will acquire a 48.99% stake by converting ₹36,950 crore of spectrum dues into equity. Promoters' combined stake will reduce to 25.57%, while GoI becomes the largest shareholder.

## APPOINTMENTS

Name of the Person	Designation
MR Kumar	Former Chairman of the Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC)
Dinesh Kumar Khara	Former Chairman of the State Bank of India (SBI)
Vishakha Mulye	CEO of Aditya Birla Capital
Nilesh Shah	Managing Director of Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company
Alice Geevarghese Vaidyan	Former Chairman and Managing Director of General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re).
Senior Advocate Manan Kumar Mishra	Chairman of the Bar Council of India

Santosh Agarwal	CEO of Paisabazaar
Ajay Seth	Revenue Secretary
Dr. Mayank Sharma	Controller General of Defence Accounts
Yamandú Orsi	Uruguay's new President
Christian Stocker	Austria's Chancellor
Ajay Bhadoo	CEO of Government e-Marketplace
Anju Rathi Rana	First woman Union Law Secretary
Dr. Ajit Ratnakar Joshi	Executive Director of RBI
Professor Sabyasachi Kar	Director of the Institute of Economic Growth
Sumant Kathpalia's	MD and CEO of IndusInd Bank
Vikas Kaushal	Chairman and Managing Director of Hindustan Petroleum Corporation Limited
Dr. Himanshu Pathak	Director General of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
Takashi Nakajima	President and Chief Executive Officer of Honda Cars India Ltd.
Justice Joymalya Bagchi	Judge of the Supreme Court of India
Atul Kumar Goel	Chief Executive of the Indian Banks' Association
Rajeev Shukla	Executive Board Member
Ashish Shelar	Director General of the International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
Arun Mammen	Chairman of the Automotive Tyre Manufacturers' Association
N Ganapathy Subramaniam	Chairman of Tata Communications
Mark Joseph Carney	24th Prime Minister of Canada
Dr. Shivkumar Kalyanaraman	CEO of the Anusandhan National Research Foundation
Lip-Bu Tan	CEO of Intel Corporation
Dr. Lakshmi Venu	Vice Chairman of Tractors and Farm Equipment Limited
Deena Mehta	Independent Director of Fino Payments Bank
Rajiv Bajaj	Managing Director and CEO of Bajaj Auto
Krishnamachari Srikanth	Goodwill Ambassador of VISION 2020 India
Stuart Richard Young	8th Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago
Indranil Bhattacharyya	Executive Director of RBI
Kirsty Coventry	first woman and first African President of the International Olympic Committee
Amitabh Kant	Chancellor of NIIT University
Anuj Kumar Singh	Joint Secretary (Director level) in the UPSC

Shri Ashok Singh Thakur	Chairman of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage
Justice Harish Tandon	Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court
Mythili Balasubramanian's	Interim MD & CEO Edelweiss ARC
Sarra Zaafrani Zenzri	Prime Minister, Tunisia
Netumbo Nandi-Ndaitwah	CEO of Intel Corporation
Rahul Bhawe	MD & CEO of Industrial Finance Corporation of India (IFCI)
Ajay Seth	India's new Finance Secretary
Gopal Vittal	Chairman of GSMA (Global System for Mobile Communications Association)
S. K. Majumdar	Executive Director of Canara Bank
Parminder Chopra	CMD of Power Finance Corporation Ltd.
Dilma Vana Rousseff	President of the New Development Bank
Ashok Singh Thakur	Chairman of the Indian National Trust for Art and Cultural Heritage
Sanjay Kumar Singh	Bureau Member of United World Wrestling-Asia
Rajiv Gauba	Full-time member of NITI Aayog
Sanjay Kumar Mishra	Full-time member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM).
Yusuf Pachmariwala	Managing Director & CEO of Hitachi Cash Management Services
Sunil Kakkar	Whole-Time Director of Maruti Suzuki
Rajneet Kohli	Executive Director of Foods at HUL
Steve Waugh	Centre for Australia-India Relations Advisory Board
CS Setty	Chairman of the Indian Banks' Association
Dr. Jay Bhattacharya	Director of the National Institutes of Health
IFS officer Nidhi Tiwari	Private Secretary to Prime Minister Narendra Modi
Ambuj Chandna	MD & Head of Consumer Banking Group at DBS Bank India
Shaleen Toshniwal	20th Chairman of MATEXIL

## INDEX AND RANKING

### YOUNG INDIA VALUE RANKINGS 2025

- **Top Brands:** Amazon (56.5), Flipkart (53.0), and Amul (52.8) ranked as the top three most valued brands in India.

- **Industries Covered:** The rankings span six sectors, including e-commerce, airlines, consumer electronics, automobiles, general insurance, and travel booking platforms.
- **Consumer Insights:** Based on inputs from 1.3 lakh urban Indian consumers, the rankings evaluate brands on affordability, quality, and trust.
- **Special Highlights:** Amul is the only FMCG brand in the top three, reflecting its strong consumer trust and cooperative model.

### INDIGO AIRLINES RANKED THE WORLD'S SECOND FASTEST-GROWING AIRLINE

- **IndiGo's Position:** Ranked 2nd as the world's fastest-growing airline in seat capacity.
- **Growth Rate:** IndiGo recorded a 10.1% year-on-year increase, reaching over 134.9 million seats in 2024.
- **1st Position:** Held by Qatar Airways, with a growth rate of 10.4%.
- **Flight Frequency:** IndiGo leads globally, with a 9.7% increase in flight frequency during 2024.
- **Significance:** Highlights IndiGo's expanding dominance in domestic and international markets.

### INDIA'S INDEX OF INDUSTRIAL PRODUCTION (IIP) RECORDS 5.0% GROWTH IN JANUARY 2025

- **Highlights sector-wise performance:**
- **Manufacturing Sector:** This sector led the growth with 5.5%, driven by increased production in basic metals, petroleum products, and chemical goods. Out of 23 manufacturing industries, 19 showed positive growth, reflecting strong domestic demand and improved operational efficiency.
- **Mining Sector:** Mining output grew by 4.4%, supported by higher extraction volumes and advancements in mining technology.
- **Electricity Sector:** Growth in electricity generation was modest at 2.4%, ensuring stable energy supplies for industrial operations.
- The **recovery in industrial production is attributed to favorable macroeconomic conditions**, improved inventory management, and rising domestic demand.
- The IIP serves as a critical indicator of India's **industrial health, reflecting the economy's resilience and potential for sustained growth.**

### INDIA'S FREE SPEECH RANKING IN GLOBAL INDEX

- **Top Country:** Norway, with a score of 87.9.
- **India's Position:** Ranked 24th out of 33 countries, with a score of 62.6.
- **India's Performance:**
  - India ranks between South Africa (66.9) and Lebanon (61.8).
  - 37% of Indian respondents supported government restrictions on policy criticism, the highest among surveyed nations.
  - Despite public support for free speech, actual conditions reflect "democratic backsliding."

### LENDBOX TOPS ASIA-PACIFIC GROWTH RANKINGS, SURPASSING ADITYA BIRLA AND TITAN

- It showcases the top **500 fastest-growing companies in the Asia-Pacific region** based on Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) of revenues between 2020 and 2023.
- Companies were ranked based on their **CAGR of revenues over three financial years (2020–2023).**
- Only companies with revenue growth driven organically were considered, excluding those relying on acquisitions or mergers.

#### Top Company:

- Indian fintech firm Lendbox claimed the 1st position with a **CAGR of 536%** and reported revenues of **\$51 million in 2023**. It operates as a peer-to-peer lending platform, revolutionizing financial services in India.

#### Indian Representation:

- 81 Indian companies featured in the rankings, cementing India's strong presence in the Asia-Pacific economic landscape.
- Other notable Indian entries include **Aditya Birla Capital (374th position)** and **Titan Company (301st position).**

#### Sector Distribution:

- IT and Software companies dominated the rankings, accounting for **27% of the total entries.**
- **Financial Services followed with a 10% share**, highlighting the rapid growth in fintech and innovative financial solutions.

#### Regional Insights:



- Singapore led with **108 companies, followed by Japan and South Korea** in terms of representation, underscoring their economic strength and innovation ecosystems.

## AWARDS AND HONOURS

Awardee	Awards
Anora	97th Academy Awards
Dr. Suborno Bose	Lifetime Achievement in Hospitality and Education Through Technology Award
Nithin Kamath	EY Entrepreneur Of The Year Award 2024
Chinese architect Liu Jiakun	Pritzker Architecture Prize
Dr. Uma Sharma	BRICS CCI WE Trailblazer Lifetime Achievement Award
Prime Minister Narendra Modi	Honorary Order of Freedom of Barbados
Professor Suman Chakraborty	UNESCO's TWAS Award
RBI	Digital Transformation Award
Jayshree Vencatesan	Ramsar Award for 'Wetland Wise Use'.
'Laapataa Ladies'	Best Picture Award
Prime Minister Narendra Modi	Grand Commander of the Order of the Star and Key of the Indian Ocean
Andrew Barto and Richard Sutton	ACM A.M. Turing Award
Muthoot Microfin	Gold Awards
Gayatri Spivak	Holberg Prize
Banwari Gaur, Kulwant Singh, Mohan Tambe, Bidhubhusan Nanda	Lifetime Achievement Award
Ram Sutar	Maharashtra Bhushan
Chiranjeevi	Lifetime Achievement
Vijay Sankar	Knight's Cross
Günter Blöschl	Water Prize
Vinod Shukla	Jnanpith Award
Tamil Nadu	National Award
Punjab & Sind Bank	Top Improvers
13 Winners	IP Awards
Masaki Kashiwara	Abel Prize
Rana Dasgupta	Windham-Campbell Prize
MyNaa Swamy	Ugadi Award
Nandeswar Daimary, Sima Swlwngnai Lwdwng Mwndar (Poetry)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Assamese Language)
Aron Raja, Swrni Thakhai (Novel)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Bodo Language)
Easterine Kire, Spirit Nights (Novel)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (English Language)

Ratilal 'Anil', Kavita Vishe Kavita (Literary Criticism)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Gujarati Language)
Gagan Gill, Main Jab Tak Aai Bahar (Poetry)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Hindi Language)
H.S. Shivaprakash, Nanna Tatrakandara (Poetry)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Kannada Language)
Shamas un Nabi 'Gulan', Naad (Poetry)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Kashmiri Language)
N. Shivdas, Teen Urman (Short Stories)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Konkani Language)
Prabhas Kumar Choudhary, Sanjh Ke Hantha (Poetry)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Maithili Language)
K.R. Mallika, Rogavum Sthreeyum (Literary Criticism)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Malayalam Language)
Neela S. Manjrekar, Eka Ashi Chi Kahani (Short Stories)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Marathi Language)
Yuva Baral, Chhichimira (Short Stories)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Nepali Language)
Ashutosh Parida, Aprastuta Pruthivi (Poetry)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Odia Language)
Shivpal 'Ansh', Ret Ret (Poetry)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Punjabi Language)
Guryam Bardana, Geet Ganga (Poetry)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Rajasthani Language)
Gobind Chatra, Nel Bhabna (Poetry)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Santhali Language)
Harshdev Madhav, Tava Sparshe Sparshe (Poetry)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Sanskrit Language)
Hundraj Balwani, Purzo (Short Stories)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Sindhi Language)
Haobam Satyabati Devi, Mainu Bora Nungshi Sheirol (Literary Criticism)	Sahitya Akademi Awards (Manipuri Language)
Harmanpreet Singh	Hockey India Awards 2024 Player (Men)
Savita Punia	Hockey India Awards 2024 Player (Women)
1975 Team	Hockey India Awards 2024 Lifetime Award
Hardik Singh	Hockey India Awards 2024 Midfielder
Amit Rohidas	Hockey India Awards 2024 Defender
Abhishek	Hockey India Awards 2024 Forward
Mridulika Jha	Ramnath Goenka Journalism Awards 2025 (Illegal Immigration)

Jisha Elizabeth	Ramnath Goenka Journalism Awards 2025 (Cyber Slavery)
Sibu Tripathi	Ramnath Goenka Journalism Awards 2025 (Joshimath Crisis)
Twesh Mishra	Ramnath Goenka Journalism Awards 2025(EV Industry)
Shubhajit Roy	Ramnath Goenka Journalism Awards 2025(Israel Conflict)

## MOUS SIGNED

Signed Between	Date Signed	Purpose
(CCRH) and Adamas University	1st March 2025	To advance homoeopathy research through academic and scientific collaboration
(IIFT) with APEC – Antwerp/Flanders Port Training Center	3rd March 2025	To enhance trade and logistics education through academic collaboration between India and Belgium.
India and Nepal	3rd March 2025	To Strengthen Cooperation in Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene Sector
IOB & IGBC	3rd March 2025	To Promote Green Finance for IGBC-Certified Projects
SIDBI with FBL	6th March 2025	To Strengthen MSME Financing
IWAI with J&K	6th March 2025	To Enhance River Cruise Tourism
Infineon Technologies Asia Pacific and CDIL Semiconductors	6th March 2025	To advance India's manufacturing ecosystem, promote road safety, and enhance environmental sustainability.
DPIIT and Mercedes-Benz India	6th March 2025	To convert 500 NBT storybooks, general reading materials, and other engaging books into accessible formats for Deaf children through (ISL)

(CIL) - IIT Hyderabad	7th March 2025	To advance research in clean coal technologies, Carbon Capture
(BoI) with the Indian Army	7th March 2025	To upgrade the 'Rakshak Salary Package'
HDFC Bank, the Indian Army, and CSC Academy	8th March 2025	To expand Project NAMAN under the Parivartan programme.
India and Armenia	10th March 2025	To foster collaboration in the regulation of medical products.
(ASCI) and (NSG)	10th March 2025	To boost public sector governance
(DoP)with (FSID), (IISc)	11th March 2025	To design the technology architecture for Digital Address DPI
(NHLML) and (IWAI)	11th March 2025	To develop a state-of-the-art Multi-Modal Logistics Park
(SAIPL) and (ACI)	11th March 2025	To manufacture 200 Diamond DA40 NG trainer aircraft in India.
(DBT) and Government of Assam	12th March 2025	To create a biotechnology ecosystem by leveraging Assam's biodiversity and agricultural strengths.
RBI and the Bank of Mauritius	12th March 2025	to promote the use of Indian Rupee (INR) and Mauritian Rupee (MUR) for bilateral transactions.
NABARD with J&K Grameen Bank	12th March 2025	To promote and finance 2,000 Joint Liability Groups across Jammu & Kashmir and Ladakh
REC Limited with Kerala's Energy Management Centre	13th March 2025	Focuses on financing pumped storage projects in Kerala over the next five years.
AP with Microsoft	13th March 2025	To enhance AI and advanced

		technology skills among youth, creating a skilled workforce for IT-based industries.
India and the Maldives	17th March 2025	Promoting the use of their respective local currencies— Indian Rupees (INR) and Maldivian Rufiyaa (MVR)—for bilateral trade
Lok Sabha Secretariat and MeitY	18th March 2025	For AI-powered 'Sansad Bhashini
Gujarat Government and Nayara Energy	18th March 2025	Focusing on wetland improvement, biodiversity enhancement, eco-tourism, and local stakeholder involvement.
Indian Railways with IIT Madras	19th March 2025	Focuses on creating a sustainable and futuristic mode of transportation.
Andhra Pradesh government with the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation	19th March 2025	To Boost Tech Support
SECI with Government of MP	19th March 2025	For 200 MW Solar Project at Dhar
Garden Reach Shipbuilders & Engineers Ltd.with PWD Nagaland	19th March 2025	To enhance regional connectivity and infrastructure development.
(CSIR-IIIM) and HAPICO Industries	20th March 2025	To enhance mental health support for military personnel and their families
(AFMS) and NIMHANS	20th March 2025	To foster innovation and accelerate the growth of manufacturing and fintech startups in India.
(DPIIT) and YES BANK	20th March 2025	To strengthen India's startup ecosystem
(DPIIT) and Kyndryl Solutions Pvt Ltd	20th March 2025	To boost innovation in

		India's manufacturing and IT startup ecosystem.
CAG & IIT Madras	20th March 2025	To Enhance Data Analytic Skills
Bellatrix Aerospace and Astroscale Japan	21st March 2025	To address space debris removal and enhance in-orbit mobility,
SIDBI with CMAI & SICS	21st March 2025	To Strengthen Textile MSME Sector
NSDC & PayPal	21st March 2025	To Provide Skill Development Opportunities
AIBI and MBAN	23rd March 2025	To Strengthen Investment Banking
IIM Mumbai and CAG India	25th March 2025	To strengthen economic governance and accountability
IHI Corporation, Hokkaido Electric Power Co., Mitsubishi Gas Chemical, Mitsui O.S.K. Lines (MOL), Mizuho Bank, Tokyo Century Corporation with ACME Group	25th March 2025	To establish a Green Ammonia Production Facility in Odisha, India
Bandhan Bank with IAF	26th March 2025	To introduce the Shaurya Salary Account, a specialized banking solution for defense personnel.
Telangana and Himachal Pradesh	26th March 2025	To develop 520 MW hydropower projects in Lahaul-Spiti district, focusing on renewable energy collaboration.
Himachal Pradesh Government and (UNESCO)	26th March 2025	To enhance education quality
(CAG) with (BISAG-N)	26th March 2025	To enhance audits, integrating (AI), (ML), and Big Data Analytics.
(NACIN) and (IMU)	27th March 2025	To enhance the marine enforcement and

		operational capabilities of CBIC officers
Luminous Power Technologies with SBI	27th March 2025	To promote solar financing loans of up to ₹10 crore are offered for MSMEs
(CAG) of India with the National Institute of Urban Affairs	28th March 2025	to strengthen India's startup ecosystem
(CAG) with (BISAG-N)	30th March 2025	To enhance audits, integrating (AI), (ML), and Big Data Analytics.
NABARD & SBI	30th March 2025	To Drive Sustainable Growth in Rural Assam

### IMPORTANT DAYS

Date	Day	Theme
1st March 2025	Zero Discrimination Day	Theme: "We Stand Together,"
1st March 2025	World Seagrass Day	Theme: "Grooming Youth – Blooming Seagrass"
1st March 2025	Civil Accounts Day	"Digitalisation of Public Financial Management in India: The Transformative Decade (2014-24)".
1st March 2025	International Wheelchair Day	Theme:-
3rd March 2025	World Hearing Day	Theme: "Changing mindsets: Empower yourself to make ear and hearing care a reality for all!"
3rd March 2025	World Wildlife Day	Theme: "Partnerships for Wildlife Conservation."
4th March 2025	National Safety Day	Theme: "Safety and Well-being Crucial for Viksit Bharat,"
4th March 2025	World Engineering Day	Theme: "Unleashing the Power of Engineers to Advance the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)"
5th March 2025	International Day for Disarmament and Non-	Theme: "Strengthening Global Commitments for a Peaceful Future",

	Proliferation Awareness	
7th March 2025	Jan Aushadhi Diwas	Theme: (Affordable Medicines, Excellent Quality).
8th March 2025	International Women's Day	Theme: Accelerate Action",
10th March 2025	International Day of Women Judges	Theme: "Celebrates the role of women in the judiciary and promotes gender equality
10th March 2025	CISF Raising Day	Theme: "Securing the Nation with Resilience and Dedication,"
10th March 2025	Commonwealth Day	Theme: "Together We Thrive."
11th March 2025	No Smoking Day	Theme: "Take Back Your Life This No Smoking Day"
12th March 2025	Mauritius National Day	Theme: -
13th March 2025	World Kidney Day	"Are Your Kidneys OK? Detect Early, Protect Kidney Health"
13th March 2025	World Rotaract Day	Theme: The Magic of Rotary"
14th March 2025	International Day of Action for Rivers	Theme: "Our Rivers, Our Future",
14th March 2025	World Congenital Heart Defect Awareness Day	Theme: "Spreading Hope & Support for Stronger Hearts,"
14th March 2025	International Day of Mathematics	Theme: "Mathematics, Art, and Creativity"
15th March 2025	World Consumer Rights Day	Theme: To raise awareness about Asperger's Syndrome and honors Hans Asperger
15th March 2025	World Sleep Day	Theme: "Make Sleep Health a Priority"
15th March 2025	International Day to Combat Islamophobia	To raise awareness about Islamophobia and promote tolerance and inclusion
16th March 2025	National Vaccination Day	Theme: "Vaccines for All: Ensuring a Healthier Future".
18th March 2025	Ordnance Factories Day	Theme: -
18th March 2025	Global Recycling Day	Theme: It promotes recyclables as the "Seventh Resource"



		essential for sustainability.
22nd March 2025	Eiffel Tower Day	Theme: Symbol of engineering marvel and remains one of the most recognized landmarks globally.
20th March 2025	International Day of Happiness	Theme: "Caring and Sharing," emphasizes kindness, generosity, and gratitude in building stronger communities.
20th March 2025	UN French Language Day	Theme: "Towards Zero Waste in Fashion and Textiles,"
20th March 2025	World Day of Theatre for Children and Young People	Theme: "Towards Zero Waste in Fashion and Textiles,"
20th March 2025	World Oral Health Day	It emphasizes the importance of maintaining healthy teeth and gums.
21st March 2025	World Down Syndrome Day	Theme: "Improve Our Support Systems",
21st March 2025	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination	Theme: "60th Anniversary of ICERD",
21st March 2025	World Poetry Day	Theme: "Towards Zero Waste in Fashion and Textiles,"
21st March 2025	World Forestry Day	Theme: "Forests for Climate Action,
22nd March 2025	Rajasthan Day	Theme: "The Power of Nature"
22nd March 2025	World Puppetry Day	Theme: "Robots, AI, and the Dream of the Puppet?",
22nd March 2025	Earth Hour 2025	Theme: "The Power of Nature"
22nd March 2025	Bihar Diwas	Theme: "Unnat Bihar, Viksit Bihar" (Advanced Bihar, Developed Bihar).
22nd March 2025	World Water Day 2025	Theme: "Glacier Preservation,"
23rd March 2025	Martyr's Day (Shaheed Diwas)	Theme: "Unnat Bihar, Viksit Bihar" (Advanced Bihar, Developed Bihar).

23rd March 2025	World Meteorological Day	Theme: "Closing the Early Warning Gap Together"
24th March 2025	World Tuberculosis Day	Theme: "Yes! We Can End TB: Commit, Invest, Deliver".
24th March 2025	International Day for the Right to the Truth Concerning Gross Human Rights Violations and for the Dignity of Victims	Honors victims of serious human rights violations and promotes the right to truth, justice, and reparations.
25th March 2025	International Day of Remembrance of the Victims of Slavery and the Transatlantic Slave Trade	Theme: "Acknowledge the past. Repair the present. Build a future of dignity and justice."
26th March 2025	Purple Day	Theme: To raising global awareness about epilepsy
27th March 2025	World Theatre Day	Theme: "Theatre and a Culture of Peace"
28th March 2025	Universal Acceptance Day	Theme: "Connecting the Unconnected – Building a Multilingual Internet for Viksit Bharat"
30th March 2025	International Day of Zero Waste	Theme: "Towards Zero Waste in Fashion and Textiles,"
31st March 2025	International Transgender Day of Visibility	Theme: "Empowering Trans Voices: Visibility, Equity, and Justice."
31st March 2025	62nd National Maritime Day and Merchant Navy Week	Theme: "Sustainable Shipping: Opportunities and Challenges."

## GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

### PRADHAN MANTRI SHRAM YOGI MAANDHAN YOJANA

- It ensures a minimum monthly pension of ₹3,000 after the age of 60 for eligible workers with a monthly income of up to ₹15,000.
- The scheme is administered by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, with LIC as the Pension Fund Manager.
- Key Features:
  - Eligibility: Workers aged 18-40 years with a monthly income of ₹15,000 or less.

- Government Contribution: Matches the worker's contribution on a 1:1 basis.
- Family Pension: Spouse receives 50% of the pension amount if the beneficiary passes away.
- Enrollment: Easy registration through Common Service Centres (CSCs) or the Maandhan portal.

## REPORTS

### INDIA EMERGED AS THE 3RD LARGEST BIOFUEL PRODUCER IN THE WORLD

- The report, titled "**Biofuels Annual 2025**", was released by the Ministry of Petroleum and Natural Gas (MoPNG).
- **Key Highlights of the Report:**
  - **Ethanol Blending:** India achieved 19.6% ethanol blending in petrol as of January 2025, with a target of 20% by 2025.
  - **Economic Impact:** The initiative saved ₹85,000 crore in foreign exchange and reduced CO2 emissions equivalent to planting 1.75 crore trees.
  - **Farmer Benefits:** Boosted farmer incomes by utilizing sugarcane and agricultural residues for biofuel production.
  - **Infrastructure Development:** Agreements with 131 ethanol plants to enhance production capacity and promote sustainable energy.

### NITI AAYOG REPORT: WOMEN'S CREDIT MONITORING SURGES 42%, HITS 27 MILLION IN 2024

- **42% Growth:** As of December 2024, 27 million women actively monitored their credit, marking a 42% increase from 2023.
- **Regional Insights:** Non-metro areas saw a 48% rise in credit self-monitoring, compared to 30% in metro regions.
- **Loan Trends:** Women accounted for 35% of business borrowers, with notable growth in business and gold loans since 2019.
- **Challenges:** Barriers like credit aversion and collateral issues persist, emphasizing the need for gender-smart financial products.

### THE WEALTH REPORT 2025: INDIA RANKED 4TH GLOBALLY

- It highlights India's position as the 4th largest country in terms of high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs), defined as those with assets exceeding \$10 million.
- India has 85,698 HNWIs in 2024 and is projected to see a 9.4% growth, reaching 93,753 by 2028.
- This growth is attributed to strong economic performance, emerging investment opportunities, and a thriving luxury market.
- Globally, India ranks behind the United States, China, and Japan in HNWI population.
- Additionally, India's billionaire population has grown by 12% year-on-year, with 191 billionaires having a combined wealth of \$950 billion, placing the country 3rd globally in billionaire wealth.

### CORPORATE INDIA TO NEED ₹115-125 LAKH CRORE IN DEBT BY FY30: CRISIL REPORT

- **Contents of the Report:**
  - Corporate India will require ₹115-125 lakh crore in debt between FY26 and FY30.
  - ₹45-50 lakh crore will be allocated for capital expenditure (capex), with 75% of investments driven by the infrastructure sector.
  - The remaining ₹70-75 lakh crore will address working capital and NBFC financing.
  - Highlights a potential funding gap of ₹10-20 lakh crore, emphasizing the need to strengthen the corporate bond market.

### BRAND FINANCE INSURANCE 100 – 2025

- LIC achieved a Brand Strength Index (BSI) score of 88 out of 100, earning an AAA brand strength rating, which reflects its robust reputation, trust, and market performance.
- The report, compiled by the London-based brand valuation consultancy Brand Finance, ranks the top 100 insurance brands globally based on their brand strength and value.
- Poland's PZU topped the list with an exceptional BSI score of 94.4 and an AAA+ rating, followed by China Life Insurance in second place with a BSI score of 93.5, also rated AAA+.
- LIC's third-place ranking marks a notable achievement, having slipped from its position as the world's strongest insurance brand in the 2024 report (BSI 88.3).

- In terms of brand value, LIC ranks 12th globally, with a valuation that contributes to its prominence, while State Bank of India (SBI) Life Insurance, another Indian insurer, climbed to 74th, up 13 spots, with a brand value increase of 27% to USD 1.6 billion.

### INDIA RANKED FIFTH GLOBALLY FOR AIR POLLUTION IN 2024, AS REPORTED BY IQAIR

- India ranked as the fifth most polluted country, marking an improvement from third place in 2023.
- This was attributed to a 7% decline in PM2.5 levels, although India's annual average of 50.6  $\mu\text{g}/\text{m}^3$  still exceeds WHO guidelines by over tenfold, signifying severe pollution levels.
- The report also revealed that 13 of the 20 most polluted cities worldwide were in India, with Byrnihat (Assam) recorded as the most polluted globally.
- The primary sources of this pollution include vehicular emissions, industrial outputs, and crop residue burning.

### NITI AAYOG REPORT: WOMEN'S CREDIT MONITORING SURGES 42%, HITS 27 MILLION IN 2024

- **42% Growth:** As of December 2024, 27 million women actively monitored their credit, marking a 42% increase from 2023.
- **Regional Insights:** Non-metro areas saw a 48% rise in credit self-monitoring, compared to 30% in metro regions.
- **Loan Trends:** Women accounted for 35% of business borrowers, with notable growth in business and gold loans since 2019.
- **Challenges:** Barriers like credit aversion and collateral issues persist, emphasizing the need for gender-smart financial products.

### THE WEALTH REPORT 2025: INDIA RANKED 4TH GLOBALLY

- It highlights India's position as the 4th largest country in terms of high-net-worth individuals (HNWIs), defined as those with assets exceeding \$10 million.
- India has 85,698 HNWIs in 2024 and is projected to see a 9.4% growth, reaching 93,753 by 2028.

- This growth is attributed to strong economic performance, emerging investment opportunities, and a thriving luxury market.
- Globally, India ranks behind the United States, China, and Japan in HNWI population.
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### NATIONAL HOUSING BANK RELEASES REPORT ON TRENDS AND PROGRESS OF HOUSING IN INDIA 2024

- **Housing Loan Growth:** Outstanding individual housing loans stood at ₹33.53 lakh crore as of

September 30, 2024, reflecting a 14% year-on-year growth.

- **House Price Trends:** The Housing Price Index (NHB-RESIDEX) recorded a 6.8% year-on-year increase for the quarter ending September 2024.
- **Government Initiatives:** Highlights include PMAY-G, PMAY-U, and the Urban Infrastructure Development Fund (UIDF).
- **Challenges and Opportunities:** Identifies regional disparities in housing finance and emphasizes technological advancements and digitization as growth drivers.

### INDIA EMERGED AS TOP SOURCE COUNTRY FOR FDI INTO DUBAI WITH USD 3 BILLION INVESTMENT

- **Key Insights from the Report:**
  - **India's FDI Contribution:** India emerged as the top source country for FDI into Dubai in 2024, with investments totaling USD 3.018 billion, accounting for 21.5% of Dubai's total FDI inflow.
  - **Sectoral Focus:** Indian investments were concentrated in real estate, business services, software & IT, and consumer products.
  - **Greenfield FDI:** Dubai retained its position as the world's top destination for Greenfield FDI projects for the fourth consecutive year.
  - **Overall FDI Growth:** Dubai attracted a record-breaking AED 52.3 billion (USD 14.24 billion) in FDI capital in 2024, marking a 33.2% increase from 2023.

### NCTAD REPORT: INDIA, CHINA SAW STRONG TRADE GROWTH IN Q4 2024 AMID RISKS

- **Key highlights from the report include:**
- **Global Trade Milestone:** Trade reached a record \$33 trillion in 2024, with services trade rising 9%, and goods trade increasing 2%.
- **India's Growth:** India experienced significant growth, with 8% quarterly and 6% annual increases in goods imports, and 7% quarterly and 2% annual growth in goods exports. Services also surged, with 10% annual growth in both exports and imports.
- **China's Contribution:** China's trade surplus expanded, thanks to strong export momentum and stable domestic demand.
- **Risks Identified:** The report warned of challenges like trade imbalances, geopolitical tensions, and

slowing demand in shipping, which could affect future trade growth.

### WMO REPORT: ATMOSPHERIC CO2 LEVELS REACHED AT 420 PPM IN 2023

- **CO2 Levels:** Atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO2) concentration reached 420 parts per million (ppm) in 2023, the highest in 800,000 years (8 lakh years), based on comprehensive global data.
- **Increase:** A 2.3 ppm rise from 2022, making CO2 levels 151% above the pre-industrial baseline of 1750.
- **Causes:** The surge is attributed to ongoing fossil fuel emissions, significant emissions from vegetation fires, and reduced carbon absorption by forests, worsened by the 2023-24 El Niño event.
- **Climate Impact:** Global warming is estimated at 1.34–1.41°C above the 1850-1900 average, signaling an intensifying climate crisis.
- **Long-Term Outlook:** CO2's long atmospheric lifespan means temperature rises will persist for decades without substantial emission reductions.

### AVERAGE MONTHLY DATA CONSUMPTION PER USER SURGED TO 27.5 GIGABYTES IN 2024

- It highlights **India's average monthly data consumption per user reaching 27.5 GB** in 2024, driven by the rapid adoption of 5G networks and Fixed Wireless Access (FWA).
- **Key findings include:**
  - **5G Traffic Surge:** 5G data traffic tripled in 2024 and is projected to surpass 4G traffic by Q1 2026.
  - **Device Ecosystem:** Active 5G devices doubled year-on-year to reach 271 million in 2024.
  - **Regional Growth:** Category B and C circles led the growth, with 5G data consumption increasing by 3.4 times and 3.2 times, respectively.

### INDIA'S BIO-ECONOMY REACHED \$165B IN 2024

- The **report was unveiled on 21st March 2025 during the BIRAC Foundation Day ceremony.**
- **India's Bioeconomy Growth:**
  - Reached \$165.7 billion in 2024, marking a 16-fold increase from \$10 billion in 2014.
  - Contributes 4.25% to India's GDP.



- **Sectoral Contributions:**
  - Biopharma: Vaccines, medical devices, and diagnostics.
  - Bio-industrial: Biofuels, bioplastics, and chemicals.
  - Bio-agriculture: Genetically modified crops like Bt Cotton.
  - Bio-IT and Research Services: Clinical trials and bioinformatics.
- **Government Initiatives:**
  - Introduction of the BioE3 Policy (Biotechnology for Economy, Employment, Environment).
  - Launch of BioSaarthi, a global mentorship initiative for biotech startups.
- **Future Projections:**
  - India aims to achieve a \$300 billion bioeconomy by 2030, driven by innovation, research, and policy support.

### MOSPI REPORT: INDIA'S ENERGY INTENSITY IMPROVES TO 0.2180 MJ/INR GDP IN FY24

- It highlights **improvements in energy intensity, which measures energy required** to generate one unit of GDP, showing a reduction to 0.2180 MJ/INR GDP in FY24 from 0.2192 MJ/INR GDP in FY23.
- This improvement reflects **increased energy efficiency, particularly** in the industrial sector, where energy use dropped from 361.5 MJ to 284.2 MJ.
- The report also **includes data on India's energy reserves, production, and consumption**, alongside import/export dependencies.
- New features like a **chapter on Energy Accounts, based on the SEEA 2012 framework, and a Sankey Diagram** for visualizing energy flow are included.

### INDIA BECAME THE HIGHEST MILK PRODUCER IN THE WORLD

- It was **released on March 25, 2025, by Union Minister Rajiv Ranjan Singh**, under the Department of Animal Husbandry and Dairying.
- The report provides detailed insights into India's livestock and dairy sector, including:
  - **India's annual milk production of 239 million metric tons (MMT)**, contributing 24% of global milk production.
  - A target to **achieve 300 MMT in the next five years.**

- The role of **initiatives like the Rashtriya Gokul Mission in boosting milk production and conserving indigenous breeds.**
- Employment statistics, **noting that 10 crore people, with 75% being women**, are engaged in milk production.

### UNESCO RELEASES 'EDUCATION AND NUTRITION: LEARN TO EAT WELL' REPORT

- **Highlights:**
  - Nearly 50% of primary school pupils globally received school meals in 2024.
  - 27% of school meals in 2022 were not developed with nutritionist input.
  - Only 93 out of 187 evaluated countries had legislation or guidelines on school food and drink.
  - Few countries regulate cafeteria and vending machine offerings.
  - Advocates for healthier, locally sourced, and nutritious school meals.
  - Promotes food education in school curricula for lifelong healthy eating.
- **Examples of success:**
  - Brazil restricts ultra-processed foods in schools.
  - China reforms nutrition in rural schools.
  - Nigeria implements the Home-Grown School Feeding Programme.
  - India's PM-POSHAN scheme feeds 118 million children daily.

### SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

Name of Summit	Organized/Led By	Venue	Aim/Theme
NXT Conclave	NXT, founded by Kartikeya Sharma, Member of Parliament (Rajya Sabha).	New Delhi	Theme: "Shaping the Future of Humanity".
12th Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forum	United Nations Centre for Regional Development	Rajasthan International Centre, Jaipur	Theme: "Realizing Circular Societies Towards Achieving SDGs and Carbon Neutrality in Asia-Pacific."

International Radiobiology Conference	INMAS-DRDO	New Delhi	Theme: "Biological Effects of Space Radiation and Human Space Missions"
5th BRICS CCI WE Women's Summit	BRICS Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Women Empowerment Vertical	New Delhi	Theme: "Women Changemakers: Transforming the World, Shaping the Future."
"Nari Shakti Se Viksit Bharat"	Ministry of Women and Child Development	New Delhi	Theme: "Empowered Women for a Developed India,"
Mobile World Congress	GSMA	Spain	Theme: "Converge. Connect. Create."
World Sustainable Development Summit (WSDS) 2025	Energy and Resources Institute	New Delhi	Theme: "Partnerships for Accelerating Sustainable Development and Climate Solutions."
SME Forum's 6th Annual Conference	India SME Forum	Dubai	Theme: "MSMEs in Viksit Bharat: Fueling the Growth Engine."
GRIDCON 2025	POWERGRID	IICC, New Delhi	Theme: Grid Resilience
Gujarat SemiConnect Conference	Gujarat CM Bhupendra Patel	Gandhinagar	Theme: "Silicon Gujarat: Powering India's Semiconductor Revolution."
4th 'No Money for Terror' Conference	German Government	Munich, Germany	Theme: "Combating Terror Financing in the Digital Age"
10th edition of the Raisina Dialogue	Observer Research Foundation	New Delhi	Theme: "Kālachakra – People, Peace, Planet"
NDTL Annual	National Dope	New Delhi	To promote clean sports and strengthen anti-

Conference 2025	Testing Laboratory		doping measures globally
4th India-EU Maritime Security Dialogue	India's Ministry of External Affairs and the EU's European External Action Service	New Delhi	To strengthen maritime cooperation for a secure Indo-Pacific.
4th Global Ministerial Conference	Morocco and WHO	Marrakech, Morocco	Theme: "Commit to Life,"
Partnership for Healthy Cities	Bloomberg Philanthropies, WHO, Vital Strategies, and the City of Paris	Paris, France	It focused on combating noncommunicable diseases (NCDs) and injuries.
Sourcex India 2025	FIEO with support from the Ministry of Commerce & Industry	New Delhi	It aimed to position India as a global sourcing hub
India's first Nano Electronics Roadshow	S. Krishnan, Secretary, MeitY	Bengaluru	To foster collaboration among industry, academia, and policymakers
International Ramayana Conclave	International Ramayana and Vedic Research Institute	Colombo	To foster cultural and spiritual connections between India and Sri Lanka
Fisheries Startup Conclave 2.0	Department of Fisheries under the Ministry of Fisheries, Animal Husbandry, and Dairying	Hyderabad, Telangana	Theme: "Innovation and Sustainability in Fisheries and Aquaculture.".
India Innovation Summit	(DHR), (ICMR), and the (CTD) under the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare.	New Delhi	Theme: "Pioneering Solutions to End TB".

69th Session of UN Commission on Status of Women	UN Women, under the UN Economic and Social Council	Mumbai, India	Theme: "Accelerating Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women and Girls."
National Conference on 'Environment – 2025	National Green Tribunal	New Delhi	To address issues like climate change, pollution control, and biodiversity conservation.

## ECONOMY- ONE LINER

- On March 3, 2025, **Bihar Deputy Chief Minister Samrat Choudhary presented a ₹3.17 lakh crore budget** in the assembly. This budget, ₹38,169 crore higher than the previous fiscal, focuses on education (₹60,964 crore), health (₹20,335 crore), and law and order (₹17,831 crore).
- On March 3, 2025, **the Jharkhand Government presented a ₹1.45 lakh crore Budget for FY 2025-26** in the State Assembly. ₹62,844 crore is allocated to the social sector, with ₹13,363 crore for the Mukhyamantri Maiya Samman Yojana to support women. The budget estimates 7.5% economic growth for the state. It focuses on farmers, tribals, women, and overall social development.
- Chhattisgarh FM Om **Prakash Choudhary presented the Rs 1.65 lakh crore budget for FY26 on March 3, 2025**, in Raipur. The budget emphasizes "GATI" (Good Governance, Accelerating Infrastructure, Technology, and Industrial Growth). Key allocations include Rs 10,000 crore for Krishak Unnati Yojana and Rs 8,500 crore for rural housing under PMAY-G.
- Mizoram **Chief Minister Pu Lalduhoma presented the Rs 15,198.76 crore state budget for FY26 on March 4, 2025**, in Aizawl. The budget prioritizes the Bana Kaih Scheme, with a 75% increase in allocation to Rs 350 crore, supporting farmers and entrepreneurs. It also introduces a universal health insurance scheme with coverage up to Rs 5 lakh per year for beneficiaries.
- Karnataka CM **Siddaramaiah presented the ₹4.09 lakh crore budget for FY26 on March 7, 2025**. Key allocations include ₹51,034 crore for the state's five guarantee schemes and ₹51,339 crore for agriculture. The budget emphasizes urban development, including Bengaluru metro expansion.

- India's **agricultural production reached a record high in 2024-25**, as per the **Second Advance Estimates released on March 10, 2025**. Total Kharif production was 1,663.91 LMT, while Rabi production reached 1,645.27 LMT. Record outputs of rice (1,206.79 LMT) and wheat (1,154.30 LMT) were achieved.
- Assam **Finance Minister Ajanta Neog presented a ₹2.63 lakh crore budget for FY 2025-26 on March 10, 2025**, focusing on welfare and fiscal responsibility. Highlights include professional tax exemption for those earning up to ₹15,000/month, a ₹5,000 aid for tea workers, and a ₹5,000 crore allocation for the Orunodoi Scheme. This budget, with a ₹620.27 crore deficit.
- Maharashtra's FM **Ajit Pawar presented a Rs 7.2 lakh crore budget for FY26 on March 10, 2025**. The focus areas are infrastructure, agriculture, industries, and social welfare. Key highlights include 50 lakh new jobs, 1,500 km of new roads, and investments in irrigation and urban development.
- On March 12, 2025, **Moody's upgraded India's GDP growth projection to exceed 6.5% in FY26**, up from 6.3% in FY25. This optimism stems from factors like increased government capital expenditure, tax relief for middle-income groups, and monetary easing.
- On March 12, 2025, MP **Finance Minister Jagdish Deora presented a ₹4.21 trillion budget for FY 2025-26**, a 15% increase from the previous year. Key allocations include ₹47,296 crore for Scheduled Tribes, ₹32,633 crore for Scheduled Castes, and ₹18,669 crore for the Mukhya Mantri Laadli Behna Yojana.
- On March 12, 2025, **Puducherry Chief Minister N. Rangasamy presented a ₹13,600 crore tax-free budget for FY26**. Key focuses include welfare, education, and infrastructure. Highlights are ₹2,110 crore for welfare schemes like LPG subsidies and ₹1,000 monthly aid for college students.
- Deputy CM **Chowna Mein presented Arunachal Pradesh's FY 2025-26 Budget on March 10, 2025**, with an outlay of ₹39,842 crore. The budget emphasizes four pillars: people, infrastructure, economy, and innovation, declaring FY 2025-26 as the "Year of Human Capital". Key allocations include ₹3,000 crore for education and ₹2,000 crore for rural connectivity.
- Union **Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman presented the Manipur Budget 2025-26 on March**

10, 2025, with an outlay of ₹35,103.90 crore, focusing on infrastructure, social welfare, and relief measures. It includes ₹9,520 crore for social sector initiatives and ₹100 crore for relief operations.

- India's retail **inflation dropped to a seven-month low of 3.61% in February 2025**, as per the Consumer Price Index (CPI). This was primarily due to a significant decline in food inflation, which fell to 3.75%. The data was released on March 12, 2025, by MoSPI, reflecting alignment with the RBI's 4% target.
- India's **unincorporated non-agricultural sector grew by 12.84% in 2023-24**, with enterprises increasing from 6.5 crore to 7.34 crore, as per NSO data released on March 12, 2025. Over 12 crore workers were employed, a rise of more than 1 crore from the previous year.
- India's foreign exchange **reserves reached \$653.97 billion as of March 7, 2025**, marking a significant \$15.26 billion increase in one week. This growth was driven by the RBI's \$10 billion forex swap on February 28, 2025, alongside rises in foreign currency assets and gold reserves.
- Morgan Stanley **projects India to become the world's third-largest economy by 2028**, overtaking Germany. The economy is expected to grow from \$3.5 trillion in 2023 to \$5.7 trillion in 2028, driven by policy reforms, infrastructure, and macro stability. India's share in global GDP may rise to 4.5% by 2029, making it a major consumer market.
- India's **coal imports declined for the sixth consecutive month in February 2025**, as reported on March 12, 2025. Thermal coal imports dropped by 18.5% year-on-year to 11.36 million tonnes, driven by increased domestic coal production.
- Tamil Nadu FM Thangam **Thennarasu presented the FY26 budget on March 14, 2025**, with a total expenditure of Rs 4,39,293 crore, a 99.5% increase from FY25's Revised Estimate. Key allocations include Rs 55,261 crore for education, Rs 34,396 crore for urban development, and Rs 29,465 crore for rural development.
- Haryana CM Nayab Singh Saini **presented a ₹2.05 lakh crore budget for 2025-26 on March 17, 2025**. Key initiatives include a "Department of Future", AI hubs in Gurugram and Panchkula, and a ₹2,000 crore Fund of Funds to support startups. The budget emphasizes combating drug abuse, enhancing education, and achieving a \$1 trillion GSDP by 2047.

- The OECD has **revised India's GDP growth forecast to 6.4% for FY 2024-25**, as per its latest update on March 17, 2025. This projection reflects a slight improvement from earlier estimates, driven by factors like strong domestic demand and public infrastructure investments.
- The **Government e-Marketplace (GeM) surpassed ₹5 lakh crore in Gross Merchandise Value (GMV) on March 17, 2025**, achieving this milestone over 18 days before the financial year-end.
- On March 17, 2025, Himachal Pradesh Chief Minister Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu presented the ₹58,514 crore budget for FY 2025-26. Key focuses **included tourism, rural development, green energy, and social welfare**. Highlights include higher MSP for crops, eco-tourism site development, and Shimla Ropeway Project.
- India's **tobacco exports doubled in four years, growing from \$923 million in 2021-22 to \$1,840 million by February 2025**, with projections to surpass \$2 billion by March 2025. This rise is due to increased global demand and challenges in competing countries like Brazil and Zimbabwe. Reported on 21st March 2025.
- Delhi CM Rekha Gupta **presented a ₹1 lakh crore budget for 2025-26 on March 25, 2025**, marking a 31.5% increase from the previous year. Key allocations include ₹19,291 crore for education, ₹12,893 crore for health, and ₹5,100 crore for women under the Mahila Samridhi Yojana.
- The HSBC Flash India Manufacturing PMI increased to 57.6 in **March 2025 from 56.3 in February**, marking a rise in manufacturing activity. This growth reflects strong demand and higher production levels.
- On March 25, 2025, S&P Global Ratings cut India's GDP growth projection **for FY 2025-26 from 6.7% to 6.5%**. This adjustment reflects global trade challenges and rising US tariffs. However, strong domestic demand, lower borrowing costs, and reduced food inflation are expected to support economic resilience.
- The Finance Minister of Tripura, Pranajit Singha Roy, presented the ₹32,423.44 crore State Budget for FY 2025-26 on March 21, 2025. The budget **prioritizes infrastructure development, education, healthcare, and employment generation**.



- On March 26, 2025, **Sikkim Chief Minister Prem Singh Tamang proposed a ₹16,196 crore budget** for 2025–26. It prioritizes youth empowerment, farmer welfare, and infrastructure development, with ₹11,028 crore for revenue expenditure and ₹5,168 crore for capital outlay. The budget emphasizes inclusive growth, economic stability, and sustainable development for Sikkim.
- Punjab **Finance Minister Harpal Singh Cheema presented a ₹2.36 lakh crore budget for FY 2025-26** on March 26, 2025. Major highlights include a universal health insurance scheme for 65 lakh families, ₹150 crore for a drug census, and ₹110 crore for anti-drone systems to combat smuggling. The budget focuses on healthcare, education, and tackling the drug menace while projecting a 10% GSDP growth for the next fiscal year.

## OBITUARY- ONE LINER

- Renowned Marathi travel **writer Dr. Meena Prabhu passed away on March 1, 2025, in Pune** at the age of 85. She was known for her engaging travelogues like Majha London and Turknama, offering rich cultural insights.
- Fred Stolle, **an Australian tennis legend, passed away at 86 on March 5, 2025**. Renowned for winning the 1965 French Championships and 1966 U.S. Championships in singles, plus 17 Grand Slam doubles titles, he achieved world No. 1 status and helped **Australia secure three straight Davis Cups (1964-1966)**.
- Former Odisha minister and senior BJD leader Ananta Das passed away at 85 on March 9, 2025, in Bhubaneswar. He was a four-time MLA from the **Bhograi constituency, serving from 2004 to 2019**.
- Renowned Carnatic classical singer Garimella Balakrishna Prasad passed away at 76 on March 9, 2025, in Tirupati, Andhra Pradesh. A former Asthana **Vidwan of Tirumala Tirupati Devasthanams (TTD), he composed** over 1,000 Annamacharya Sankeerthanams.
- Former Indian cricketer Syed Abid **Ali passed away on March 12, 2025, at the age of 83** in California. He played 29 Test matches for India, scoring 1,018 runs and taking 47 wickets between 1967 and 1974.
- Veteran **actor-filmmaker Deb Mukherjee passed away on March 14, 2025, at the age of 83**, in Mumbai. Known for films like "Jo Jeeta Wohi Sikandar" and "Main Tulsi Tere Aangan Ki", he was a prominent figure in Indian cinema.
- Arvind Singh Mewar, a **prominent descendant of the legendary Rajput king Maharana Pratap** and the 76th Custodian of the House of Mewar, passed away at the age of 81 on March 16, 2025, in Udaipur, Rajasthan.
- Veteran Tamil actor-comedian Bindu Ghosh passed away on March 16, 2025, at the age of 76, in Chennai after a prolonged illness. She acted in over **100 Tamil films and was celebrated** for her exceptional comedic talent in classics like "Kozhi Koovuthu".
- Renowned **Odia poet Ramakanta Rath passed away on March 16, 2025, at the age of 91**, in Bhubaneswar, Odisha. Known for modernist works like "Sri Radha" and "Saptama Rutu", he revolutionized Odia literature.
- Veteran BJP leader and former Union Minister **Dr. Debendra Pradhan passed away on March 17, 2025, at the age of 84**, in New Delhi. He served as Union Minister for Transport and Agriculture in the Atal Bihari Vajpayee government.
- Dr. Senkalong (**Senka**) **Yaden, a pioneering Naga scientist and educator, passed away on March 16, 2025, in Texas, USA**. His remarkable journey from Mokokchung, Nagaland, to becoming a distinguished academic in the United States is a testament to his resilience and excellence.
- Tamil actor-director **Manoj Bharathiraja passed away on March 25, 2025, at the age of 48**, due to cardiac arrest. He was known for films like Taj Mahal (1999) and Samuthiram (2001) and directed Margazhi Thingal (2023). Manoj was the son of filmmaker **Bharathiraja and is survived by his wife, Nandana, and two daughters**.
- Legendary actor Richard Chamberlain, known for iconic roles in Dr. Kildare, Shogun, and The Thorn Birds, passed away on March 29, 2025, in Waimanalo, Hawaii, at the age of 90**. His death was due to complications from a stroke.

## BOOKS

- The book **She for Her** was unveiled at the **5th BRICS CCI WE Annual Women's Summit** on March 4, 2025, in New Delhi. Authored by Rashmi Trivedi, it highlights the achievements of trailblazing women changemakers across diverse fields and nationalities.

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- The book "*Leo — The Untold Story*", authored by **P.S. Raman**, was launched on March 16, 2025, in Chennai. It explores Chennai Super Kings' iconic journey, from triumphs to challenges. Cricket legends like M.S. Dhoni and R. Ashwin graced the event.
- The book "*Thumb Printed: Champaran, Indigo Peasants Speak to Gandhi Volume III*" was **launched on March 11, 2025, during the 135th Foundation Day** of the National Archives of India. Edited by Shahid Amin, Tridip Suhrud, and Megha Todi, it compiles 423 testimonies from the Champaran Satyagraha.
- The book '*March of Glory*', released on **March 18, 2025, celebrates India's 1975 Hockey World Cup** victory. Authored by K. Arumugam and Errol D'Cruz, it features anecdotes, rare photographs, and detailed insights. The launch was attended by Hockey India President Dilip Tirkey and team members like Ashok Kumar, who scored the winning goal.
- On March 15, 2025, **Justice P.N. Prakash, former judge of the Madras High Court, launched** the book '*Memories and Milestones*' in Chennai. Authored by historian V. Sriram and Lashman, the book commemorates 60 years of Blue Cross of India, highlighting its pioneering efforts in animal welfare.
- The book '*Ripples of Change: Gender-transformative rural WASH programmes* in India' was launched by the Jal Shakti Minister, C.R. Paatil, on March 26, 2025, in New Delhi. This publication, a collaboration between the Department of Drinking Water and Sanitation (DDWS) and UNICEF India, highlights ten inspiring stories of women-led initiatives in rural India under the Swachh Bharat Mission (Grameen) and Jal Jeevan Mission.
- The book "*The Life and Contribution of the Women Members of the Constituent Assembly*" was released on March 8, 2025, during the "Nari Shakti Se Viksit Bharat" conference. It was published by the Legislative Department.
- On March 6, 2025, **AP Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu unveiled** Daggubati Venkateswara Rao's book '*Prapancha Charitra*' in

Visakhapatnam. The book, written in Telugu, explores world history, covering traditions, wars, governance, and technological advancements.

## MONTHLY CURRENT AFFAIRS ONE-LINER QUESTION BANK

**Q.1 What is the title of Kailash Satyarthi's autobiography, launched at the Jaipur Literature Festival in January 2025?**

- a) Unfinished Dreams
- b) My Struggle
- c) Flame of Justice
- d) Diyaslai
- e) None of these

**Answer: d)** "Diyaslai" is the autobiography of Nobel Laureate Kailash Satyarthi, launched at the Jaipur Literature Festival.

**Q.2 Which sector recorded the highest growth in the Index of Eight Core Industries in January 2025?**

- a) Electricity
- b) Fertilizers
- c) Cement
- d) Coal
- e) None of these

**Answer: c)** Cement production saw the highest growth at 14.5%, contributing significantly to the 4.6% overall increase in the core industries index.

**Q.3 Who was re-elected as the Chairman of the Bar Council of India (BCI) for the seventh consecutive term in 2025?**

- a) Kapil Sibal
- b) Manan Kumar Mishra
- c) Harish Salve
- d) Arun Jaitley
- e) None of these

**Answer: b)** Senior Advocate Manan Kumar Mishra, a BJP Rajya Sabha MP from Bihar, was re-elected for a record seventh term.

**Q.4 Which film won Best Picture at the 97th Academy Awards on March 2, 2025?**

- a) Oppenheimer
- b) Killers of the Flower Moon
- c) Anora
- d) The Holdovers

e) None of these

**Answer: c)** Directed by Sean Baker, "Anora" won multiple Oscars, including Best Director and Best Actress.

**Q.5 Who has been appointed as the Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA) in March 2025?**

- a) Ravi Agrawal
- b) Dr. Mayank Sharma
- c) Arun Bansal
- d) Arnab Kumar Chowdhury
- e) None of these

**Answer: b)** Dr. Mayank Sharma, a 1989-batch IDAS officer, took charge as the Controller General of Defence Accounts (CGDA) on March 1, 2025.

**Q.6 Where was India's first World Peace Centre inaugurated in March 2025?**

- a) Delhi
- b) Gurugram
- c) Mumbai
- d) Bengaluru
- e) None of these

**Answer: b)** India's first World Peace Centre was inaugurated on March 2, 2025, in Gurugram by Jain Acharya Lokesh Muni and Ahimsa Vishwa Bharti.

**Q.7 Dr. Meena Prabhu, who passed away on March 1, 2025, was known for her contributions to which literary genre?**

- a) Travel writing
- b) Historical fiction
- c) Science fiction
- d) Poetry
- e) None of these

**Answer: a)** Dr. Meena Prabhu was a renowned Marathi travel writer, famous for works like Majha London and Turknama, offering rich cultural insights.

**Q.8 Who won the 38th Cannes International Open Chess Tournament held in France in March 2025?**

- a) Praggnanandhaa R
- b) Vidit Gujrathi
- c) Arjun Erigaisi
- d) Pa Iniyen
- e) None of these

**Answer: d)** Indian Grandmaster Pa Iniyen secured the title, remaining undefeated with 7.5 points in a field of participants from 25 countries.

**Q.9 Ajay Bhadoo was appointed as the CEO of which Indian government platform on March 3, 2025?**

- a) UPI
- b) Government e-Marketplace (GeM)
- c) Digital India Corporation
- d) Bharat Broadband Network
- e) None of these

**Answer: b)** Ajay Bhadoo, an IAS officer, took over as CEO of Government e-Marketplace (GeM) to enhance public procurement efficiency.

**Q.10 Who was awarded the Lifetime Achievement in Hospitality and Education Through Technology award in 2025?**

- a) Ritesh Agarwal
- b) Dr. Suborno Bose
- c) Deep Kalra
- d) Sanjiv Mehta
- e) None of these

**Answer: b)** Dr. Suborno Bose, Chairman of the International Institute of Hotel Management (IIHM), was honored with the Lifetime Achievement in Hospitality and Education Through Technology award on March 5, 2025.

**Q.11 Who was appointed as the first woman Union Law Secretary of India on March 5, 2025?**

- a) Indira Jaising
- b) Rekha Sharma
- c) Meenakshi Lekhi
- d) Anju Rathi Rana
- e) None of these

**Answer: d)** Anju Rathi Rana, an officer of the Indian Legal Service, was appointed as the first woman Union Law Secretary.

**Q.12 The book "She for Her," unveiled at the 5th BRICS CCI WE Summit, was authored by:**

- a) Rashmi Trivedi
- b) Kiran Bedi
- c) Sudha Murty
- d) Arundhati Roy

e) None of these

**Answer:** a) The book She for Her was unveiled at the 5th BRICS CCI WE Annual Women's Summit on March 4, 2025, in New Delhi. Authored by Rashmi Trivedi

**Q.13 According to the Global Terrorism Index 2025, which country ranked first in terrorism impact?**

- a) Afghanistan
- b) Syria
- c) Burkina Faso
- d) Pakistan
- e) None of these

**Answer:** c) The Sahel region's instability placed Burkina Faso at the top of the index, while India remained in the 14th position.

**Q.14 Which Padma Shri awardee was appointed as Federal Bank's first brand ambassador?**

- a) Kangana Ranaut
- b) Vidya Balan
- c) Ratan Tata
- d) Deepika Padukone
- e) None of these

**Answer:** b) Federal Bank Limited appointed Padma Shri awardee Vidya Balan as its first-ever brand ambassador on March 5, 2025.

**Q.15 According to the Global Terrorism Index 2025, which country ranked first in terrorism impact?**

- a) Afghanistan
- b) Syria
- c) Burkina Faso
- d) Pakistan
- e) None of these

**Answer:** c) The Sahel region's instability placed Burkina Faso at the top of the index, while India remained in the 14th position.

**Q.16 Which Padma Shri awardee was appointed as Federal Bank's first brand ambassador?**

- a) Kangana Ranaut
- b) Vidya Balan
- c) Ratan Tata
- d) Deepika Padukone

e) None of these

**Answer:** b) Federal Bank Limited appointed Padma Shri awardee Vidya Balan as its first-ever brand ambassador on March 5, 2025.

**Q.17 Who became the first Indian to win the prestigious Ramsar Award for 'Wetland Wise Use'?**

- a) Medha Patkar
- b) Jayshree Vencatesan
- c) Vandana Shiva
- d) Sunita Narain
- e) None of these

**Answer:** b) Jayshree Vencatesan, co-founder of Care Earth Trust, won the Ramsar Award for her conservation efforts, particularly in the Pallikaralai Marsh, Chennai.

**Q.18 According to the SIPRI report released on March 10, 2025, which country was the largest arms importer?**

- a) India
- b) China
- c) Ukraine
- d) Saudi Arabia
- e) None of these

**Answer:** c) Ukraine (8.8%) was the largest arms importer, followed by India (8.3%). India's arms imports declined by 9.3%, with France and Israel gaining prominence over Russia.

**Q.19 What is the revised GDP growth projection for India in FY26 according to Moody's?**

- a) 5.8%
- b) 6.3%
- c) 6.7%
- d) 6.5%
- e) None of these

**Answer:** d) Moody's upgraded India's GDP growth projection for FY26 to exceed 6.5%, citing factors like increased government capital expenditure, tax relief, and monetary easing.

**Q.20 Which Indian company signed an MoU to manufacture 200 Diamond DA40 NG trainer aircraft in India?**

- a) HAL
- b) Tata Advanced Systems
- c) Sakthi Aircraft Industry Pvt Ltd



- d) Adani Defence & Aerospace
- e) None of these

**Answer: c)** Sakthi Aircraft Industry Pvt Ltd (SAIPL) partnered with the Aero Club of India (ACI) to manufacture these aircraft under the Make in India initiative.

**Q.21 Which team won the 15th Hockey India Senior Women National Championship on March 12, 2025?**

- a) Hockey Punjab
- b) Hockey Haryana
- c) Hockey Jharkhand
- d) Hockey Karnataka
- e) None of these

**Answer: c)** Hockey Jharkhand won the championship after defeating Hockey Haryana in a thrilling 4-3 penalty shootout.

**Q.22 What is the primary focus of the 'on Tap' Cohort under RBI's Regulatory Sandbox announced on March 13, 2025?**

- a) Climate change risks and sustainable finance
- b) Digital lending reforms
- c) Cryptocurrency regulations
- d) Rural banking expansion
- e) None of these

**Answer: a)** The RBI's 'on Tap' Cohort aims to foster innovation in green finance and build sustainable financial ecosystems while addressing climate-related financial risks.

**Q.23 Who was appointed as the CEO of Intel Corporation on March 18, 2025?**

- a) Pat Gelsinger
- b) Sundar Pichai
- c) Lip-Bu Tan
- d) Lisa Su
- e) None of these

**Answer: c)** Lip-Bu Tan, a semiconductor industry veteran, previously led Cadence Design Systems and aims to advance AI and chip manufacturing at Intel.

**Q.24 Flipkart's super.money app became India's \_\_\_\_\_ largest UPI platform in February 2025.**

- a) Second
- b) Third
- c) Fourth
- d) Fifth

- e) None of these

**Answer: d)** Flipkart's super.money app processed 139.10 million transactions in February 2025, surpassing Cred within a year and ranking fifth behind PhonePe, Google Pay, Paytm, and Navi.

**Q.25 Which book, launched on March 18, 2025, celebrates India's 1975 Hockey World Cup victory?**

- a) March of Glory
- b) Victory of Glory
- c) Golden Era of Hockey
- d) The Hockey Chronicle
- e) None of these

**Answer: a)** 'March of Glory,' released on March 18, 2025, celebrates India's 1975 Hockey World Cup victory and includes anecdotes, rare photographs, and detailed insights about the historic event.

**Q.26 What was the theme of the NDTL Annual Conference 2025 held on March 19, 2025?**

- a) Clean Sports for a Better Future
- b) Anti-Doping Science: Innovations and Challenges
- c) Global Sports Integrity
- d) The Future of Anti-Doping Laws
- e) None of these

**Answer: b)** The NDTL Annual Conference 2025, held on March 19, 2025, focused on "Anti-Doping Science: Innovations and Challenges," emphasizing advancements in doping detection and prevention.

**Q.27 Where was North India's first nuclear power plant announced on March 19, 2025?**

- a) Haryana
- b) Rajasthan
- c) Punjab
- d) Uttar Pradesh
- e) None of these

**Answer: a)** Union Minister Dr. Jitendra Singh announced North India's first nuclear power plant in Gorakhpur, Haryana, marking a major step in India's clean energy expansion.

**Q.28 The Frontier Seed (Pacific) Program launched by ADB in March 2025 aims to support:**

- a) Renewable energy startups

- b) Financial inclusion initiatives
- c) Space technology research
- d) Sustainable agriculture and coastal mapping
- e) None of these

**Answer: d)** The program, launched in Suva, Fiji, focuses on food security, environmental sustainability, and coastal mapping risk assessment with an initial \$4 million fund.

**Q.29 Who was appointed as the Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court on March 21, 2025?**

- a) Justice Harish Tandon
- b) Justice D.Y. Chandrachud
- c) Justice Ranjan Gogoi
- d) Justice N.V. Ramana
- e) None of these

**Answer: a)** Previously serving in the Calcutta High Court, Justice Harish Tandon was appointed as the Chief Justice of the Orissa High Court.

**Q.30 Vinod Kumar Shukla won the 59th Jnanpith Award in 2025. Which literary language is he associated with?**

- a) Bengali
- b) Hindi
- c) Marathi
- d) Tamil
- e) None of these

**Answer: b)** At 88, he became the first writer from Chhattisgarh to win the prestigious Jnanpith Award, India's highest literary honor.

**Q.31 Who was appointed as India's new Finance Secretary in March 2025?**

- a) T. V. Somanathan
- b) Ajay Seth
- c) Rahul Bhawe
- d) Gopal Vittal
- e) None of these

**Answer: b)** Ajay Seth was appointed as India's new Finance Secretary on March 24, 2025.

**Q.32 Which state won the National Award for Excellence in Integrated Water Resources Management 2024?**

- a) Karnataka
- b) Maharashtra

- c) Tamil Nadu
- d) Rajasthan
- e) None of these

**Answer: c)** Tamil Nadu won for the Tamil Nadu Irrigated Agriculture Modernisation Project (TNIAMP).

**Q.33 S&P Global Ratings revised India's GDP growth forecast for FY 2025-26 to what percentage?**

- a) 7.0%
- b) 6.7%
- c) 6.5%
- d) 6.3%
- e) None of these

**Answer: c)** The downgrade from 6.7% to 6.5% was due to global trade challenges and rising US tariffs, despite strong domestic demand.

**Q.34 Who has been re-elected as the President of the New Development Bank (NDB)?**

- a) Dilma Rousseff
- b) Xi Jinping
- c) Jacob Zuma
- d) Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva
- e) None of these

**Answer: a)** Dilma Vana Rousseff has been re-elected as the President of the New Development Bank (NDB), announced on March 19, 2025. Her second term will run from July 7, 2025, to July 6, 2030.

**Q.35 Which components of the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS) were discontinued by the Government of India effective March 26, 2025?**

- a) Short-Term Bank Deposit (STBD)
- b) Gold Metal Loan (GML)
- c) Medium-Term Government Deposit (MTGD) and Long-Term Government Deposit (LTGD)
- d) Gold Sovereign Bonds (GSB)
- e) None of these

**Answer: c)** The Government of India has discontinued the Medium-Term Government Deposit (MTGD) and Long-Term Government Deposit (LTGD) components of the Gold Monetisation Scheme (GMS), effective March 26, 2025.

**Q.36 According to the Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill 2024, what is the revised substantial interest threshold for directorships in banks?**

- a) ₹5 lakh
- b) ₹10 lakh
- c) ₹1 crore
- d) ₹2 crore
- e) None of these

**Answer: d)** The Banking Laws (Amendment) Bill 2024 raises the substantial interest threshold for directorships in banks from ₹5 lakh to ₹2 crore.

**Q.37 The Yaoshang Festival, celebrated in Manipur, is also known as the:**

- a) Festival of Colors
- b) Harvest Festival of Manipur
- c) "Holi of Manipur"
- d) Spring Festival of the Northeast
- e) None of these

**Answer: c)** The Yaoshang Festival of Manipur, also known as the "Holi of Manipur," was celebrated on March 14 and 15, 2025.

**Q.38 Which of the following financial institutions signed a Rupee Term Loan agreement of ₹5,000 crore with NTPC Renewable Energy Limited (NTPC REL) on March 25, 2025?**

- a) Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC)
- b) Reserve Bank of India (RBI)
- c) State Bank of India (SBI)
- d) National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)
- e) None of these

**Answer: a)** On March 25, 2025, the Indian Railway Finance Corporation (IRFC) signed a ₹5,000 crore Rupee Term Loan agreement with NTPC Renewable Energy Limited (NTPC REL), a subsidiary of NTPC Green Energy Limited.

**Q.39 On March 27, 2025, Luminous Power Technologies signed an MoU with which bank to promote solar financing?**

- a) Axis Bank
- b) State Bank of India
- c) HDFC Bank
- d) ICICI Bank
- e) None of these

**Answer: b)** Luminous Power Technologies signed an MoU with SBI in New Delhi to promote solar financing, offering loans of up to ₹10 crore for MSMEs and industries.

**Q.40 Who won the 2025 Abel Prize for contributions to algebraic analysis and representation theory?**

- a) Masaki Kashiwara
- b) Terence Tao
- c) Manjul Bhargava
- d) Akshay Venkatesh
- e) None of these

**Answer: a)** Masaki Kashiwara won the 2025 Abel Prize for his work on D-modules and crystal bases in algebraic analysis.

**Q.41 Who won the women's singles title in the Indian Open 2025 Squash Tournament?**

- a) Joshna Chinappa
- b) Helen Tang
- c) Anahat Singh
- d) Dipika Pallikal

**Answer: c)** Anahat Singh emerged victorious in the women's singles category, defeating Helen Tang of Hong Kong at the prestigious PSA Copper event in Mumbai.

**Q.42 What was the percentage growth in India's trade during April-September 2024 compared to the same period in 2023, as highlighted in NITI Aayog's Trade Watch Quarterly for Q2 of FY25?**

- a) 6.75%
- b) 4.32%
- c) 5.67%
- d) 7.12%
- e) None of these

**Answer: c)** The report launched by NITI Aayog on March 28, 2025, highlighted a 5.67% growth in India's trade.