



WEEKLY CURRENT AFFAIRS PDFs

April 2025



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NATIONAL AFFAIRS / GOVERNMENT SCHEME

1. Union Cabinet Approves Key Proposals, Including ₹22,919 Crore ECMS & ₹37,216 Crore Fertilizer Subsidy.

On March 28, 2025, the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, approved the following proposals/schemes:

- Approved the Electronics Component Manufacturing Scheme (ECMS) with a total outlay of ₹22,919 crore to strengthen India's self-reliance (Atmanirbhar Bharat) in the electronics supply chain.
- Approved the release of an additional installment of Dearness Allowance (DA) to Central Government employees and Dearness Relief (DR) to pensioners, effective from January 1, 2025.
- Approved a ₹37,216 crore subsidy on Phosphatic and Potassic (P&K) fertilizers for the Kharif season of 2025.

Key Points:-

- (i) Approved the construction of a 4-lane access-controlled greenfield and brownfield Patna-Arrah-Sasaram corridor (National Highway (NH)-119A), connecting Patna to Sasaram in Bihar under the Hybrid Annuity Mode (HAM).
- (ii) Approved the inclusion of the Kosi-Mechi Intra-State Link Project of Bihar under the Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana-Accelerated Irrigation Benefits Programme (PMKSY-AIBP), with a total outlay of ₹6,282.32 crore.

2. PM Modi Inaugurates Key Projects in Maharashtra & Unveils ₹33,700 Crore Development Initiatives in Chhattisgarh.

On March 30, 2025, Prime Minister Narendra Modi embarked on a one-day official visit to Maharashtra and Chhattisgarh. In Nagpur, Maharashtra, he inaugurated multiple development projects and paid tribute to prominent leaders. In Bilaspur,

Chhattisgarh, he laid the foundation stone, initiated construction work, and dedicated projects worth over ₹33,700 crore to the nation.

- PM Modi laid the foundation stone for the Madhav Netralaya Premium Centre in Nagpur, Maharashtra. This upcoming facility will include a 250-bed hospital, 14 outpatient departments (OPDs), and 14 modular operation theatres to provide world-class yet affordable eye care.
- PM Modi visited Smruti Mandir in Nagpur and paid tribute to Dr. Keshav Hedgewar and Madhavrao Golwalkar, key figures in the foundation of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh. He also visited Deekshabhoomi to pay homage to Dr. B. R. Ambedkar, the principal architect of the Indian Constitution.
- In Nagpur, PM Modi inaugurated a state-of-the-art Loitering Munition Testing Range and an exclusive runway for unmanned aerial vehicles at Solar Defence and Aerospace Limited.

Key Points:-

- (i) PM Modi inaugurated and laid the foundation stones for multiple projects worth over ₹33,700 crore in Mohbhattha village, Bilaspur district, Chhattisgarh.
- (ii) During the event, PM Modi flagged off the Mainline Electric Multiple Unit train service on the Abhanpur-Raipur route via Mandir Hasaud, enhancing regional rail connectivity.
- (iii) PM Modi laid the foundation stone for NTPC's Sipat Super Thermal Power Project Stage III with a capacity of 800 Megawatts in Bilaspur, contributing to India's growing energy sector.

3. NIXI Hosts UA Day 2025, Promoting a Multilingual Internet for Viksit Bharat.

The 3rd Universal Acceptance Day (UA Day) 2025 was celebrated in New Delhi on March 28, 2025. The National Internet Exchange of India (NIXI), under the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (Meity), organized a hybrid event at the India Habitat Centre, New Delhi.

- The theme of the event, "Connecting the Unconnected - Building a Multilingual Internet for Viksit Bharat," focused on promoting Universal Acceptance (UA) and fostering a more inclusive digital ecosystem in India.

- The event featured discussions on UA's socio-economic impact, its benefits for businesses, and its crucial role in shaping effective public policy. The importance of a multilingual internet was emphasized, highlighting UA's role in ensuring seamless access to digital services for all.

- The 'Bhashini Portal', highlighted during Universal Acceptance Day 2025, promotes linguistic inclusivity by enabling real-time translation across Indian languages, making digital content accessible to non-English speakers. Launched in Gandhinagar in August 2022, Bhashini, developed under Meity's National Language Translation Mission, stands for "Bhasha Interface for India."

Key Points:-

(i) The event was graced by S. Krishnan, Secretary of Meity and Chairman of NIXI, as the Chief Guest. Notable speakers included Tim Curtis (UNESCO), Samiran Gupta (ICANN), and Jaco Du Toit (UNESCO HQ).

(ii) NIXI is a non-profit company under Section 8 of the Companies Act, 2013, aimed at enhancing internet services in India.

(iii) UA Day, established by ICANN in March 2023 with UASG's support, promotes Universal Acceptance (UA), ensuring that all valid domain names and email addresses, regardless of script

or language, can be used by all internet-enabled systems globally.

4. Odisha CM Naveen Patnaik Launches 'Antyodaya Gruha Yojana' in Kalahandi.

Odisha CM Mohan Charan Majhi launched the "Antyodaya Gruha Yojana" in March 2025, a housing initiative aimed at improving the living conditions of underprivileged citizens and supporting the mission of "Housing for All."

- The scheme will spend Rs 7,550 crore over three years to construct over 5 lakh houses for eligible households in the state.

- Each beneficiary will receive Rs 1.20 lakh for constructing pucca (permanent) houses, ensuring better living standards.

- Under the scheme, beneficiaries will also receive key services such as toilets (Swachh Bharat Mission), LPG connections (PMUY), clean drinking water (JJM), and electricity (Saubhagya Yojana).

Key Points:-

(i) The scheme prioritizes households from disadvantaged groups, including persons with disabilities, widows, and those affected by natural disasters or development projects.

(ii) A budget of Rs 2,600 crore has been allocated for the current financial year, with the remaining funds allocated over the next three years, aiming to provide homes for over 26 lakh people.

(iii) CM Majhi also inaugurated developmental projects worth Rs 617.51 crore, including the Juluko in-stream storage structures and a Rs 52 crore grid sub-station at Brundabahal, improving water and power infrastructure in Kalahandi.

5. India-US Naval Exercise 'Tiger Triumph' 4th Edition Kicks Off in Visakhapatnam.

Exercise Tiger Triumph-25, the 4th edition of the bilateral Tri-Service Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) Exercise between India and the United States of America (USA), commenced on the Eastern Seaboard on April 01, 2025, and will continue till April 13, 2025.

- The Harbour Phase of the exercise commenced at Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh (AP) on April 01, 2025, and will last till April 07, 2025. During this phase, an Opening Ceremony featuring a joint Flag Parade and Media interaction was organised onboard Indian Naval Ship (INS) Jalashwa.
- The closing ceremony of the exercise will be held onboard US Navy Ship Comstock at Visakhapatnam.

Key Points:-

- (i) The exercise aims to enhance interoperability for conducting HADR operations and establish Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) to set up a Combined Coordination Center (CCC), facilitating rapid and seamless coordination between Indian and USA Joint Task Forces (JTF) during exercises and crisis situations.
- (ii) Participants from both nations will engage in training visits, subject matter expert exchanges, sports events, and social interactions.
- (iii) Under the Sea Phase, ships with embarked troops will conduct maritime, amphibious, and HADR operations off the coast of Kakinada.

6. MoRD Increases MGNREGA Wage from ₹349 to ₹370 per Day for FY26.

In March 2025, the Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD) issued a notification regarding the revised wages under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) for the

Financial Year 2025-26 (FY26). This notification was issued under sub-section (1) of Section 6 of MGNREGA, 2005.

- As per the notification, the daily wage for workers under MGNREGA has been increased from the existing ₹349 to ₹370 per person.
- The revised rates came into effect from the 1st day of FY26, i.e., April 1, 2025.

Key Points:-

- (i) The wages under MGNREGA have been increased in the range of 2.33%-7.48%, translating to a hike of ₹7 to ₹26.
- (ii) As per MoRD, the National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme (NREGS) wages have been raised by ₹7 in five states: Andhra Pradesh (AP), Arunachal Pradesh (AR), Assam, Nagaland, and Telangana.
- (iii) The wages under MGNREGA are determined based on changes in the Consumer Price Index for Agricultural Labourers (CPI-AL), which reflects inflation trends in rural areas.

7. Dr. Jitendra Singh Delivers Keynote at IIPA's 71st Foundation Day & Launches 'Antyodaya Se Sarvodaya' Book.

In March 2025, Union Minister of State (MoS) (Independent Charge, IC) Dr. Jitendra Singh, Ministry of Science & Technology (MoS&T), delivered the keynote address at the Dr. Rajendra Prasad Annual Memorial Lecture during the 71st Foundation Day of the Indian Institute of Public Administration (IIPA) in New Delhi (Delhi).

- The address, titled "Antyodaya Se Sarvodaya," emphasized the government's commitment to ensuring inclusive governance, uplifting the most disadvantaged sections of society in the true spirit of Antyodaya.

- IIPA and the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI), New Delhi (Delhi), signed an agreement to enhance disaster resilience.
- Union Minister Jitendra Singh also launched the book 'Antyodaya Se Sarvodaya: A Framework of Universal Fulfilment.'

Key Points:-

- (i) Dr. Jitendra Singh emphasized the democratization of civil services with increased female representation, particularly in STEM fields. Governance reforms include facial recognition for pension verification, eliminating physical bank visits, and process simplifications like a single pension form, a centralized education application portal, and the removal of 1,600 outdated rules.
- (ii) The government has introduced multilingual recruitment exams in 13 regional languages, with plans to expand to all 22 scheduled languages, and abolished interviews for certain posts to ensure fair recruitment. Rozgar Melas continue to create employment opportunities and uplift youth aspirations.
- (iii) India has achieved major strides in science and technology, ranking 4th globally in patent filings, with 56% from resident Indians. As of December 2024, nearly 5,400 Indian scientists are among the top 2% best researchers worldwide.

8. Gujarat CM Inaugurates India's Largest Chlorotoluene Manufacturing Plant in Dahej.

In March 2025, Gujarat Chief Minister (CM) Bhupendra Patel virtually inaugurated India's largest Chlorotoluene plant at Dahej (Gujarat) on the foundation day of Vadodara (Gujarat)-based Gujarat Alkalies and Chemicals Limited (GACL).

- Established with an investment of Rs 350 crore, the plant aims to produce value-added chlorine

derivatives, reducing import dependency and boosting exports.

- The newly inaugurated facility has an annual production capacity of 30,000 tonnes and will manufacture critical chemicals like Benzyl Chloride, Benzyl Alcohol, and Benzaldehyde.
- These chemicals are widely used in pharmaceuticals, agrochemicals, and dyes. The plant will utilize chlorine, a by-product of caustic soda manufacturing, ensuring efficient resource utilization.

Key Points:-

- (i) Operational since 1973, GACL is a leading player in the chemical sector with three manufacturing units (two in Dahej, one in Vadodara).
- (ii) It produces over 35 chemical products, including 8 lakh metric tonnes (MT) of caustic soda annually, and holds a monopoly in India for sodium chlorate and hydrazine hydrate.
- (iii) This initiative aligns with India's goal of enhancing self-reliance in specialty chemicals and expanding its global market share.

9. PM Modi announces 'Yoga for One Earth, One Health' as 2025 yoga day theme.

In March 2025, Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi announced 'Yoga for One Earth, One Health' as the theme for the 2025 International Day of Yoga (IDY).

- The first-ever IDY was observed on June 21, 2015, to raise awareness about the benefits of practicing Yoga, a 5,000-year-old ancient practice that originated in India.
- The Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga (MDNIY), under the Ministry of Ayush, has been tasked with organizing large-scale celebrations for International Day of Yoga (IDY) 2025.

- As part of the preparations, MDNIY launched a 100-day countdown to IDY 2025 during the Yogamahotsav event at Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi, on March 13, 2025.

Key Points:-

(i) The 11th edition of IDY will be the most expansive and inclusive yet, featuring 10 unique signature events to promote Yoga worldwide. Yoga Sangama will see a synchronized Yoga demonstration at 10,000 locations, aiming for a world record, while Yoga Bandhan will foster global partnerships by hosting Yoga sessions at iconic landmarks in 10 countries. Yoga Parks will establish 1,000 dedicated Yoga spaces for long-term community engagement.

(ii) Inclusive initiatives include Yoga Samavesh for Divyangjan, seniors, children, and marginalized groups, Yoga Prabhava to assess Yoga's public health impact, Yoga Connect as a global summit with experts, and Harit Yoga promoting sustainability through tree planting and clean-ups.

(iii) To attract youth, Yoga Unplugged will feature engaging sessions tailored for young people. Yoga Maha Kumbh, a week-long festival across 10 locations, will culminate in a central celebration led by the Prime Minister. Lastly, Samyogam, a 100-day initiative, will integrate Yoga with modern healthcare practices to promote holistic wellness.

10. Sagarmala Programme Marks 10 Years of Successful Implementation.

The Sagarmala Programme, a flagship initiative of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), launched in March 2015, has successfully completed 10 years of implementation.

- The programme aims to transform port-led development in the country by leveraging India's

7,500-kilometer (km) long coastline, 14,500 km of potentially navigable waterways, and its strategic location along key international maritime trade routes.

- The Sagarmala Programme is an integral part of the Maritime Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 (MAKV), which envisions India as a global leader in maritime affairs.

- Developed based on the Maritime India Vision 2030, MAKV has set ambitious targets, including achieving 4 million Gross Tonnage (GT) of shipbuilding capacity and handling 10 billion metric tons (MT) of cargo annually. It also aims to position India among the world's top 5 shipbuilding nations by 2047.

Key Points:-

(i) The Sagarmala Programme has identified 839 projects worth Rs 5.79 lakh crore for implementation by central ministries, state governments, and other organizations. As of March 19, 2025, 272 projects have been completed with a total investment of Rs 1.41 lakh crore, while Rs 10,000 crore has been allocated for 119 projects across coastal states and Union Territories (UTs).

(ii) Under the modernization pillar, 103 projects have added 528 MTPA of port capacity. The port-connectivity pillar includes 279 projects worth Rs 2.06 lakh crore, with 92 completed. Additionally, more than 300 projects worth Rs 26,000 crore under Community Development and Inland Waterways have improved coastal infrastructure, benefiting 30,000 fishermen.

(iii) To enhance the programme's impact, the GoI is set to launch Sagarmala 2.0 with a Rs 40,000 crore budget, aiming to attract Rs 12 lakh crore in investments over the next decade. This initiative will focus on infrastructure development, coastal economic growth, and job creation.

11. Assam Unveils 'Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan' to Boost Women Entrepreneurship.

On April 1, 2025, Assam's Chief Minister (CM) Himanta Biswa Sarma launched the 'Mukhya Mantri Mahila Udyamita Abhiyan' (MMMUA) in Behali, Assam. At the inauguration event, 23,375 women beneficiaries were handed their first cheques, officially commencing the implementation of the scheme.

- This initiative, also called the CM Women Entrepreneurship Campaign, aims to foster self-employment and economic empowerment among women. It stands as one of Assam's most extensive women-focused entrepreneurship drives.

Key Points:-

- MMMUA is a structured three-phase financial assistance programme aimed at supporting women in launching and expanding micro-enterprises. In the first year, each eligible woman receives Rs.10,000 as seed capital to start or grow small businesses in sectors like agriculture, livestock, and retail, promoting self-employment and economic empowerment.
- Second Year: After showing effective use of the initial amount, the beneficiary becomes eligible for Rs.25,000 — comprising a Rs.12,500 bank loan and Rs.12,500 in government support. The Assam government will bear the loan interest.
- Third Year: Entrepreneurs who succeed in the first two stages will be eligible to receive Rs.50,000 to further scale their business operations.

12. GI Tag Conferred to Tamil Nadu's 'Kumbakonam Betel Leaf', 'Thovalai Flower Garland' & Gujarat's 'Saudagari Block Print'.

In April 2025, the Geographical Indications (GI) Registry in Chennai, Tamil Nadu (TN), under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I), recently granted the GI Tag to two traditional products from TN — the Kumbakonam Betel Leaf from Thanjavur and the Thovalai Flower Garland (Manikka Malai) from Kanyakumari.

- With this new recognition, Tamil Nadu's GI tally has risen to 62 products, including 11 GI-tagged items from the Thanjavur district. These tags aim to protect the unique identity and cultural heritage of regional goods, ensuring better market value and recognition for local artisans and cultivators.

- The GI Tag is an official certification provided under the Geographical Indications of Goods (Registration and Protection) Act, 1999, recognizing products that possess distinctive qualities, reputation, or characteristics linked to their specific geographical origin.

- The successful GI tag acquisition was made possible through the dedicated efforts of P. Sanjai Gandhi, Intellectual Property (IP) Attorney and Advocate, who serves as the Nodal Officer for Geographical Indication Registration of Products for the Government of Tamil Nadu. He was supported by the Tamil Nadu Agricultural University (TNAU), Coimbatore, and the Thovalai Manikkamaalai Kaivinai Kalaingargal Nalasangam, Kanyakumari.

Key Points:-

- The traditional Saudagari Block Print from Jamalpur, Ahmedabad in Gujarat, renowned for its detailed and intricate hand-printed motifs, has recently been awarded the Geographical Indication (GI) tag.
- This recognition safeguards the distinctive artisanal craftsmanship, ensures the authenticity of origin, and aims to enhance the livelihood of

artisans who have upheld this legacy for generations.

13. Paradip Port Retains Top Position in Cargo Handling Among Major Ports in FY25.

According to provisional estimates released by the Indian Ports Association (IPA), Odisha-based Paradip Port Authority (PPA), formerly known as Paradip Port Trust, has retained its position as the top cargo-handling major port in India for the Financial Year 2024-25 (FY25).

- PPA handled 150.41 Million Metric Tonnes (MMT) of cargo, marking a 3.5% increase compared to 145.4 MMT handled in FY24. With this, it has joined the exclusive 150 MMT club among Indian ports.
- It was closely followed by Deendayal Port (Kandla, Gujarat), which witnessed a 13% increase, handling 150.15 MMT of cargo in FY25, up from 132 MMT in FY24. Meanwhile, Jawaharlal Nehru Port Authority (JNPA), located in Mumbai, Maharashtra, recorded 7.4% growth, reaching 86 MMT cargo volume in FY25.

Key Points:-

(i) Overall, the data shows that most of the 12 major Indian ports recorded cargo traffic growth of 4.35%, reaching a total of 855 MMT in FY25, compared to 819.30 MMT in FY24.

(ii) Mundra Port (Mumbai, Maharashtra), India's largest commercial port operated by Adani Ports and Special Economic Zone Limited (APSEZ), made history by becoming the first Indian port to cross 200 MMT of cargo handling. It recorded 200.7 MMT in FY25, showing an 11.5% rise from 180 MMT in FY24.

(iii) Indian Ports Association (IPA) Established in 1966 under the Societies Registration Act, the Indian Ports Association (IPA) serves as a statutory body dedicated to promoting the

coordinated growth and modernization of India's major ports. It functions under the supervisory authority of the Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways (MoPSW), supporting policy formulation, development strategies, and performance improvement across the sector.

14. MoEFCC Report Reveals Over 13,000 sq km of Forest Encroached Across India as of March 2024 and Madhya Pradesh Tops the List.

In March 2024, the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC) submitted a detailed report to the National Green Tribunal (NGT), revealing that a total of 13,056 square kilometers (sq km) or 13,05,668.1 hectares of forest land across 25 States and Union Territories (UTs) in India was under encroachment.

- This reflects a significant rise from the 7,506.48 sq km reported as encroached forest area in April 2023.
- Madhya Pradesh (MP) topped the list with the highest forest encroachment, amounting to 5,460.9 sq km, followed by Assam at 3,620.9 sq km.
- Other significantly affected states include Arunachal Pradesh (AR) with 534.9 sq km, Odisha with 405.07 sq km, Uttar Pradesh (UP) with 264.97 sq km, Mizoram with 247.72 sq km, Jharkhand with 200.40 sq km, and Chhattisgarh with 168.91 sq km.

Key Points:-

(i) Additional states impacted are Tamil Nadu (TN) with 157.68 sq km, Andhra Pradesh (AP) with 133.18 sq km, Gujarat with 130.08 sq km, Punjab with 75.67 sq km, Uttarakhand with 49.92 sq km, Kerala with 49.75 sq km, Tripura with 42.42 sq km, Andaman & Nicobar (A&N) Islands with 37.42 sq km, and Manipur with 32.7 sq km.

(ii) Data from 10 States and UTs is still pending. These include Bihar, Haryana, Himachal Pradesh

(HP), Rajasthan, Telangana, West Bengal (WB), Nagaland, Delhi, Jammu and Kashmir (J&K), and Ladakh.

(iii) Recorded Forest Area (RFA) refers to land officially classified as forest by the Government of India under the Indian Forest Act, 1927, irrespective of actual tree cover. RFA is categorized into Reserved Forests (RF) with full protection and restricted activities; Protected Forests (PF) where certain activities are permitted unless restricted; and Unclassed Forests, which are not designated as reserved or protected.

Works (CLW) led the output with 700 locomotives. It was followed by Uttar Pradesh-based Banaras Locomotive Works (BLW) with 477 locomotives, Punjab's Patiala Locomotive Works (PLW) with 304 units, and Bihar's Madhepura and Marhowrah units, each contributing 100 locomotives.

(iii) The WAG-9/9H freight locomotive topped production with 1,047 units in FY25. It was followed by WAP-7 (272 units), WAG-9 Twin (148 units), WAG-12B (100 units), WDG-4G/6G (100 units), WAG-9HH (7 units), NRC (5 units), and WAP-5 (2 units).

15. According to MoR Report Indian Railways Produces 1,681 Locomotives in FY25 and Surpasses USA and Europe.

According to the Ministry of Railways (MoR), India has emerged as a global leader in railway locomotive manufacturing by producing a record 1,681 locomotives in the financial year 2024-25 (FY25).

- This marks a 19% increase over the 1,472 locomotives produced in FY24, with an addition of 209 locomotives.
- With this feat, India has surpassed the total locomotive production of regions such as the United States of America (USA), Europe, South America, Africa and Australia.

Key Points:-

(i) Driven by the 'Make in India' initiative, locomotive manufacturing has seen remarkable growth. Between 2014 and 2024, India produced 9,168 locomotives, averaging nearly 917 annually. In comparison, only 4,695 locomotives were produced between 2004 and 2014, with an annual average of 470.

(ii) West Bengal-based Chittaranjan Locomotive

16. EPFO Launches Two Key Reforms to Streamline Claim Settlement Process.

In April 2025, the Employees' Provident Fund Organisation (EPFO) introduced two major reforms to streamline its claim settlement process. These reforms are focused on improving the Ease of Living for EPF members and enhancing the Ease of Doing Business (EoDB) for employers. They are expected to significantly ease the claim process and reduce grievances related to claim rejections.

- EPFO has recently removed the requirement to upload an image of a cheque leaf or attested bank passbook when filing claims online. Initially introduced as a pilot for KYC-compliant members, this change has already benefitted around 1.7 crore EPF members since its launch on May 28, 2024.

- Since the member's name is verified during bank account seeding with the Universal Account Number (UAN), EPFO found the additional documentation redundant. This reform is expected to benefit nearly 6 crore members by reducing claim rejections due to poor-quality uploads and cutting down grievances.

- The requirement for employer approval after bank verification has been removed. EPFO has eliminated the employer's role in approving the verification of

bank account details during the seeding process with UAN.

Key Points:-

- (i) Members can now independently register or update their bank account details with UAN using Aadhaar OTP authentication. This is especially beneficial for those wishing to change their existing bank account linked to UAN.
- (ii) Even those members who have not yet seeded their bank accounts or want to update their details can now easily do so through the simplified online process. This reform enhances autonomy and speeds up the claim settlement mechanism.
- (iii) Currently, bank account seeding with UAN is mandatory for Provident Fund (PF) withdrawals. During FY25 alone, around 1.3 crore members submitted their requests to seed their bank accounts, reflecting the importance and impact of this process.

17. MoWCD Recently Releases Report Highlighting Women and Children as Most Vulnerable to Climate Change.

In April 2025, the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MoWCD), Government of India (GoI), recently released a scoping study titled "How Does Climate Change Impact Women and Children Across Agroecological Zones in India."

- The report highlights that women, particularly those in poor and rural communities, face greater climate-related challenges due to their daily responsibilities and social roles, while children remain highly exposed to climate threats.
- The impacts of climate change on women and children vary across India's 20 agroecological zones, revealing region-specific vulnerabilities.

Key Points:-

- (i) The complexity of the situation increases as states like Jharkhand, Gujarat, Maharashtra, and Andhra Pradesh (AP) have five agroecosystems each. Additionally, zones like the North Eastern Hills and Western Coastal Plains span multiple states, necessitating inter-state coordination.
- (ii) Heatwaves have surged in India, increasing nearly 30 times by 2022, posing critical threats. Among the most vulnerable are pregnant women, elderly women, outdoor workers, and economically disadvantaged women.
- (iii) Young children, especially those under 5 years of age, are at serious risk during extreme weather events such as heatwaves. Between 2000 and 2016, India reported over 17,000 child deaths due to natural disasters.

18. 6 More Products from Tamil Nadu Recently Receive GI Tag, Raising State's Total to 69.

In April 2025, the Geographical Indication (GI) Registry, based in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, and operating under the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I), recently granted GI tags to six additional products from Tamil Nadu.

- These include the well-known Puliyanakudi Acid Lime, Panruti Cashew, and Virudhunagar Samba Vathal (dried red chillies), among others.
- With this recognition, the total number of GI-tagged products from Tamil Nadu has increased to 69, further strengthening its position as the second-highest Indian state in terms of Geographical Indication-certified products.
- Tamil Nadu now follows Uttar Pradesh (UP), which currently holds the top spot with 79 GI-certified products.

Key Points:-

(i) The GI Registry has also recently awarded GI certificates to 8 additional traditional products from Jammu & Kashmir (J&K), along with one product each from Telangana, Assam, and Kerala.

(ii) With these additions, the total number of GI-registered crafts from the Kashmir region has risen to 15, out of which 7 crafts have already received official GI certification.

19. Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya Recently Inaugurates Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament 2025 in New Delhi.

In April 2025, Union Minister Dr. Mansukh Mandaviya, who heads the Ministry of Labour and Employment (MoL&E) and the Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports (MYAS), recently inaugurated the National Round of the 2-day Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament Festival 2025 held in New Delhi.

- The event concluded with the presentation of the National Youth Awards and the Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament Awards, celebrating the voices and contributions of the youth towards building a developed India.

Key Points:-

(i) The festival began with the District Youth Parliament sessions, which were organized from March 16 to 27, 2025, followed by the State Youth Parliament sessions, held across various State Legislative Assemblies from March 23 to 31, 2025.

(ii) The key agenda of the Viksit Bharat Youth Parliament 2025 was to deliberate on the proposal to refer the 'One Nation, One Election (ONOE)' Bill to the Joint Parliamentary Committee (JPC) for further examination.

(iii) A total of 24 National Youth Awards were recently presented across individual and organization categories. For the year 2021-22, 11

awards were given in the individual category, while 13 awards were presented for 2022-23, including 12 in the individual category and 1 in the organization category.

20. DoT & RPF Collaborate to Strengthen Mobile Phone Security for Train Passengers.

On 3 April 2025, the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), under the Ministry of Communications (MoC), recently partnered with the Railway Protection Force (RPF) under the Ministry of Railways (MoR) to strengthen the mechanisms for blocking, tracing, and recovering lost or stolen mobile phones of train passengers.

- This initiative connects the Rail Madad application with the Sanchar Saathi platform developed by the DoT, aiming to enhance passenger safety and curb the misuse of lost devices.

- Rail Madad, developed by Indian Railways (IR), is a passenger-centric app that helps address grievances and issues during train travel.

- With this integration, passengers can now report stolen or lost phones via Rail Madad, and these complaints will be automatically redirected to Sanchar Saathi for immediate action such as device blocking and tracking.

Key Points:-

(i) As of now, the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) feature under Sanchar Saathi has blocked over 30 lakh devices, traced about 18 lakh, and successfully recovered 3.87 lakh handsets.

(ii) Established in 1957, the RPF has played a vital role in railway security and will now be further empowered with cutting-edge digital tools to assist passengers more effectively.

21. Union Cabinet Approves VVP-II with ₹6,839 Cr Outlay & ₹18,658 Cr Rail Multi-Tracking Projects Across 3 States.

On April 04, 2025, the Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, has approved the following proposals/schemes:

- Approved 2nd phase of Vibrant Villages Programme (VVP-II) with a total budget outlay of Rs 6,839 crore, for the comprehensive development of the villages located in the blocks along all International Land Borders (ILBs), other than the Northern border already covered under VVP-I.
- The newly approved programme reaffirms the Government of India (GoI)'s commitment to the vision of **Viksit Bharat@2047** for 'Safe, Secured & Vibrant land borders'.
- VVP-II will be a Central Sector Scheme (CSS), which means that GoI will provide 100% funding for the programme.

Key Points:-

- (i) Approved 4 multi-tracking projects for Indian Railways (IR), aimed at enhancing line capacity and improving both passenger and freight transportation across key routes.
- (ii) The total estimated cost of the projects is Rs 18,658 crore, and the projects are expected to be completed by 2030-31.
- (iii) These 4 projects will cover 15 districts across 3 states – Maharashtra, Odisha, and Chhattisgarh, and will increase the existing IR network by 1,247 kilometers (km).

22. Stand-Up India Completes 9 Years Empowering SC/ST and Women Entrepreneurs with Over ₹61,000 Crore in Sanctions.

On April 5, 2025, the Stand-Up India Scheme, a transformative initiative of the Government of India (GoI), has completed 9 years of successful implementation.

- It was launched on April 05, 2016, to promote entrepreneurship at the grassroots level, focusing on economic empowerment and job creation.
- The scheme is being implemented by the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance (MoF), and the Lucknow (Uttar Pradesh, UP)-based Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI) is the nodal agency for the scheme.

Key Points:-

- (i) The scheme is specifically designed to address the challenges faced by Scheduled Caste (SC) / Scheduled Tribe (ST) or women entrepreneurs in establishing enterprises, accessing loans, and obtaining other necessary business support.
- (ii) It offers bank loans ranging from Rs 10 lakh to Rs 100 lakh to a minimum of one SC/ST borrower and one woman borrower per bank branch of Scheduled Commercial Banks (SCBs).
- (iii) Over the past 9 years, the scheme has witnessed significant growth, with the total amount sanctioned increasing from Rs 14,431.14 crore (as of October 31, 2018) to Rs 61,020.41 crore (by March 17, 2025) since its inception.

23. India Initiates 'Operation Brahma' to Provide Relief to Earthquake-Stricken Myanmar.

In response to the catastrophic 7.7 magnitude earthquake that struck Myanmar on March 28, India launched Operation Brahma to provide immediate humanitarian assistance. Within 24 hours, the Indian Air Force (IAF) deployed its first relief flight, a C-130J aircraft, to Yangon, Myanmar.

- The flight carried 15 metric tons of essential supplies, including medical equipment, shelter materials, and ready-to-eat food, to aid those impacted by the disaster.

- Additionally, India dispatched two naval ships, INS Satpura and INS Savitri, which are carrying 40 tonnes of humanitarian aid to Yangon.

Key Points:-

(i) Additionally, on March 30, 2025, INS Karmuk and LCU 52 from the Andaman and Nicobar Command set sail with 52 tonnes of relief material, including food, water, clothing, medicines, and emergency supplies.

(ii) The Indian Navy remains committed to its role as the region's First Responder in humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) efforts.

(iii) The Ministry of External Affairs (MEA) spearheaded the mission, reinforcing India's "neighbourhood first" policy and its dedication to promptly assisting neighbouring countries.

- Spanning 150 acres with a built-up area of 101 acres, the Chikhli facility highlights Waaree's commitment to a sustainable energy future for India. The plant also produces Mono PERC solar power cells, with trial production beginning in January 2025.

Key Points:-

(i) Waaree Energies invested \$350 million (₹3,000 crore) in its Chikhli campus, reinforcing its commitment to solar technology. This facility is one of four in India, alongside plants in Surat (Gujarat), Nandigram (West Bengal), and Noida (Uttar Pradesh).

(ii) The facility can manufacture 20 solar cells per second with 25% efficiency, boosting India's energy independence and reinforcing Waaree Energies as a leader in solar technology.

(iii) The TOPCon solar cells in the new facility feature a thin oxide and poly-crystalline silicon layer, enhancing energy conversion rates. Note: India's solar power capacity has grown from 2.82 GW in 2014 to 104 GW in March 2025, a remarkable 3,580% increase.

24. Waaree Energies Inaugurates India's Largest Solar Cell Manufacturing Plant in Gujarat.

In March 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based clean energy player Waaree Energies Limited (WEL) launched India's largest solar cell manufacturing facility in Chikhli, Gujarat, with a 5.4 Gigawatt (GW) capacity and an investment of ₹2,500 crore.

- The plant features advanced Tunnel Oxide Passivated Contact (TOPCon) technology, known for its high efficiency and improved energy conversion rates.

- The inauguration event was attended by Union Minister Pralhad Joshi (Ministry of New and Renewable Energy - MNRE) and Gujarat Chief Minister (CM) Bhupendra Patel, along with other senior government officials.

25. President Droupadi Murmu Unveils Commemorative Stamp Marking RBI's 90th Anniversary.

- On April 1, 2025, President of India, Droupadi Murmu, unveiled a special postage stamp of Rs.5 denomination to commemorate the 90th anniversary of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) at the National Centre for the Performing Arts (NCPA) in Mumbai, Maharashtra.

- The 90th anniversary of RBI marks a significant milestone, reinforcing its commitment to economic stability, financial growth, and strengthening trust in India's financial system.

- The event was attended by Union Minister Jyotiraditya M. Scindia (Ministry of Communications & MDONER), Maharashtra Chief Minister Devendra Fadnavis, and other distinguished dignitaries.

- The stamp symbolizes RBI's evolution, featuring its original headquarters in Kolkata (West Bengal) and current headquarters in Mumbai. It also includes the 90th-anniversary emblem with the motto "Stability. Trust. Growth," reflecting RBI's foundational principles.

Key Points:-

(i) Established under the RBI Act, 1934, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) initially operated from Kolkata before shifting its headquarters to Mumbai in 1937. It plays a crucial role in monetary policy implementation, currency management, government debt oversight, and financial regulation.

(ii) The RBI actively promotes financial inclusion, consumer protection, and digital literacy through various initiatives, including the Post Office Savings Bank (POSB). It ensures a stable financial ecosystem while fostering economic growth.

(iii) Sir Osborne Smith was the first Governor of the RBI, followed by Sir C.D. Deshmukh, the first Indian to hold the position. The RBI issues currency notes in denominations of Rs 10, Rs 20, Rs 50, Rs 100, Rs 200, and Rs 500, while coins in Rs 1, Rs 2, Rs 5, and Rs 10 denominations are overseen by the Ministry of Finance (MoF).

26. MNRE Records Historic 25 GW Renewable Energy Addition in FY25, Led by Solar Power Growth.

In April 2025, the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) announced a record-breaking addition of 25 gigawatts (GW) of Renewable Energy (RE) capacity in the Fiscal Year 2024–25

(FY25), reflecting a nearly 35% increase from the 18.57 GW added in FY24. This achievement marks the highest-ever annual increase in India's renewable capacity.

- As of March 2025, India's total installed power generation capacity reached 483.26 GW. By February 28, 2025, the country had installed a total of 222.86 GW of non-fossil fuel-based power, comprising 102.57 GW of solar power, 48.59 GW of wind power, 11.45 GW of bio-power, 52.07 GW of hydro power, and 8.18 GW of nuclear power.

- In FY25, solar power contributed to 80% of India's renewable energy capacity addition, increasing from 15 GW in FY24 to 21 GW, a 38% rise. India also surpassed 100 GW of cumulative solar power capacity, becoming the 4th largest solar energy producer in the world, reflecting its growing focus on clean and sustainable energy.

- India's domestic solar manufacturing sector saw major progress. Solar module capacity doubled from 38 GW (March 2024) to 74 GW (March 2025), while solar PV cell capacity tripled from 9 GW to 25 GW. This expansion was driven by MNRE's Production Linked Incentive (PLI) Scheme, attracting Rs. 41,000 crore investments. Gujarat also launched India's first 2 GW ingot-wafer facility.

Key Points:-

(i) As of March 31, 2025, over 11.01 lakh households benefited under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana. A total of Rs. 5,437.20 crore was disbursed as Central Financial Assistance (CFA) to 6.98 lakh beneficiaries, promoting solar adoption at household level and significantly reducing electricity expenses for lower and middle-income families.

(ii) Under the National Green Hydrogen Mission (NGHM), the government allocated Rs. 2,220 crore for manufacturing electrolyzers (1,500 MW

capacity/year) and Rs. 2,239 crore for producing 4.5 lakh tons per annum of green hydrogen. Pilot projects in the steel sector received Rs. 454 crore, while transport projects received Rs. 208 crore to deploy 37 hydrogen vehicles and 9 refueling stations.

(iii) In FY25, under PM-KUSUM, 4.4 lakh solar pumps were installed (4.2 times more than FY24) and 2.6 lakh pumps were solarized under Component C (25 times more than FY24). Total installations crossed 10 lakh with Rs. 2,680 crore spent. IREDA sanctioned Rs. 47,453 crore in loans and disbursed Rs. 30,168 crore, showing strong renewable energy financing growth.

27. Indian Navy Signs ₹270 Crore Agreement with Kirloskar for Indigenous Marine Diesel Engine Development.

On April 2, 2025, the Indian Navy (IN) signed a Project Sanction Order under the Make-I category with Kirloskar Oil Engines Limited (KOEL), based in Pune, Maharashtra, for the design and development of a 6-megawatt (MW) medium-speed marine diesel engine.

- The agreement was finalized in New Delhi in the presence of Sanjeev Kumar, Secretary of Defence Production (DP), Ministry of Defence (MoD), and Vice Admiral Krishna Swaminathan, Vice Chief of the Naval Staff (VCNS).

- The initiative aims to reduce India's dependency on imports in marine propulsion systems.

Key Points:-

- (i) The project is valued at ₹270 crore and is 70% government-funded, focusing on creating a prototype engine with over 50% indigenous content.
- (ii) The project includes the development of

detailed designs for diesel engines ranging from 3 to 10 MW, intended for use in the main propulsion and power generation of Indian Navy and Coast Guard vessels.

(iii) The primary objective is to replace the current dependence on high-capacity engines sourced from foreign Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) with domestically developed alternatives.

INTERNATIONAL

1. UNESCO Releases 'Education and Nutrition: Learn to Eat Well' Report at Nutrition for Growth 2025 Event in Paris.

In March 2025, the Paris (France)-based United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) released its latest report titled 'Education and Nutrition: Learn to Eat Well', which highlights the quality of meals served in schools globally.

- The report was unveiled during the 'Nutrition for Growth (N4G)' event, hosted by France from March 27 to 28, 2025, in Paris. It was developed by UNESCO in collaboration with the Research Consortium for School Health and Nutrition.

- The report calls on governments to not only expand access to school meals but also enhance their nutritional value, ensuring better health and learning outcomes for students worldwide.

- The UNESCO report found that 50% of primary school pupils received meals in 2024, but 27% lacked nutritionist input (2022). Only 93 of 187 countries had school food regulations, raising concerns about meal quality.

Key Points:-

- (i) Among these 93 countries, only 65% had regulations covering foods sold in cafeterias and

vending machines, pointing to gaps in ensuring healthy meal options. The report emphasized the positive impact of nutritious school meals on education, with data showing that school meals increased enrolment by 9% and attendance by 8%, while also improving learning outcomes.

(ii) The report also addressed the rising concern of childhood obesity, which has more than doubled in most countries since 1990, even as food insecurity continues to escalate. Despite this, 418 million children now benefit from school meals globally, an increase of 30 million since early 2020, showcasing efforts to expand school feeding programs post-pandemic.

(iii) However, nutritional deficiencies remain a major issue, as over half of school meal programs lack adequate fruits and vegetables, while one-third continue to provide sugary drinks, highlighting the urgent need for improved food quality in schools.

2. IAF Joins Multinational Air Exercise 'INIOCHOS-25' in Greece.

In March 2025, the Indian Air Force (IAF) took part in the 12-day biennial multinational air exercise INIOCHOS-25, conducted from March 31 to April 11, 2025, at Andravida Air Base, Greece. Hosted by the Hellenic Air Force, the exercise was held in the historic region of Elis.

- This biennial exercise serves as a platform to enhance skills in planning and executing Combined Air Operations, refine tactics in complex air warfare scenarios, and facilitate the exchange of operational best practices.

- The INIOCHOS exercise, meaning "charioteer" in ancient Greek, is an annual multinational air training event with air and ground assets from 15 nations. It started as a small tactical drill in the 1980s and has

become one of Europe's most realistic air combat training platforms.

- The exercise sharpens combat skills, fosters tactical knowledge exchange, and strengthens military ties. The previous edition was held in Greece from April 8 to April 18, 2024.

Key Points:-

(i) The IAF participated in INIOCHOS-25 with Su-30 MKI fighter jets, IL-78, and C-17 combat support aircraft, enhancing its operational preparedness and strengthening India's strategic ties with friendly nations. The exercise features the largest number of fighter jets and helicopters from various countries, including France, Israel, Italy, Poland, Qatar, Spain, UAE, and the USA.

(ii) INIOCHOS-25 is divided into three phases: Phase 1 (March 24-30, 2025) involved the deployment of forces, Phase 2 (March 31-April 11, 2025) is the main exercise where air operations take place, and Phase 3 (April 11-13, 2025) focuses on redeployment.

(iii) During the main phase, participating air forces will conduct various air operations, including Offensive and Defensive Counter Air Operations, Strategic Air Operations, Air Support for land and maritime missions, Reconnaissance, Combat Search and Rescue, Time-Sensitive Targeting, and protection of high-value airborne assets.

3. Elon Musk, Mark Zuckerberg Lead Forbes' List of World's Richest People in 2025.

On April 02, 2025, Forbes released its '39th Annual World's Billionaires List,' the definitive ranking of the world's richest people. Elon Musk, CEO of Tesla Motors, topped the list with a net worth of USD 342 billion (bn).

- He is followed by Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Meta, with a net worth of USD 216 bn, and at the 3rd place is Jeff Bezos, chairman and founder of Amazon.
- The 2025 list features 3,028 billionaires, the most since the list's inception in 1987. The world's wealthiest people are collectively worth a record-breaking \$16.1 trillion.
- Mukesh Ambani remains India's richest person and Asia's wealthiest, ranking 18th globally with a fortune of \$92.5 billion from Reliance Industries.

Key Points:-

(i) Gautam Adani, chairman of the Adani Group, follows at 28th place with \$56.3 billion. He is the fourth richest Asian, behind TikTok's Zhang Yiming (23rd, \$65.5 billion) and Nongfu Spring's Zhong Shanshan (26th, \$57.7 billion).

(ii) Jensen Huang, the CEO and co-founder of Nvidia, presently positioned at the 10th rank, has entered the ranks of the top 10 richest people for the first time and US topped the list with a record of 902 billionaires, followed by China with 516 billionaires and India at the 3rd position with 205 billionaires.

(iii) The richest woman of all is Walmart heir Alice Walton, whose fortune stands at an estimated \$101 billion. She reclaims the title from French L'Oréal heiress Françoise Bettencourt Meyers, who now ranks second, at \$81.6 billion.

4. India & Nepal Recently Sign MoUs for 10 HICDPs in Nepal Under NRs. 625 Million Grant.

On April 1, 2025, the Embassy of India in Kathmandu (Nepal), in collaboration with the Ministry of Federal Affairs and General Administration, Government of Nepal, and other Project Implementing Agencies, recently signed Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) for

undertaking 10 High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) in Nepal.

- These projects, supported under the grant assistance of the Government of India (GoI), focus on Education, Health, and Culture sectors, with a total estimated cost of Nepalese Rupees (NRs) 625 million.
- This initiative is part of India's ongoing commitment to enhancing infrastructure and community development in Nepal at the grassroots level.
- New schools will be built in Taplejung (Koshi), Gulmi & Rupandehi (Lumbini), and Kailali & Bajhang (Sudurpashchim). These projects aim to improve educational infrastructure, ensuring better learning opportunities for students in remote regions and enhancing access to quality education across Nepal.

Key Points:-

(i) Health posts will be established in Sindhupalchowk (Bagmati), and the Nepal-Bharat Maitri Hospital will be built in Humla (Karnali) to enhance medical accessibility in rural areas. Cultural projects include the Ngagyur Nyngma Palyul Dhongag Chholing Monastery (Solukhumbu, Koshi) and the Nepal-Bharat Maitri E-Library (Chitwan, Bagmati), promoting heritage and education.

(ii) The projects will be implemented through Nepalese local authorities, including Metropolitan Cities, Sub-Metropolitan Cities, Municipalities, and Rural Municipalities. This ensures efficient administration, smooth execution, and direct community benefits while strengthening India-Nepal bilateral cooperation.

(iii) Since 2003, India has supported 573 High Impact Community Development Projects (HICDPs) in Nepal, completing 495. These initiatives span education, healthcare, roads, irrigation, and electrification, contributing to grassroots infrastructure development across all

seven provinces and improving the quality of life for local communities.

5. 11th BRICS Environment Ministers' Meeting Held in Brazil.

In April 2025, under the presidency of Brazil, the 11th BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) Environment Ministers' Meeting was recently held in Brasília, Brazil, from April 3 to 4, 2025. The meeting aimed to strengthen collaboration among Global South nations to foster inclusive and sustainable environmental governance.

- The Indian delegation was led by Amandeep Garg, Additional Secretary, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEFCC), Government of India (GoI).
- During the session, India highlighted the importance of collective leadership among BRICS member nations to drive progress on the 2030 Climate Agenda.
- India urged BRICS nations to collectively support the 'Baku to Belem Roadmap,' an initiative launched at COP29 in Baku, Azerbaijan in 2024, which aims to mobilize USD 1.3 trillion annually in climate finance to help developing countries achieve their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).

Key Points:-

(i) India reaffirmed the 2021 New Delhi Statement, highlighting integrated climate action via adaptation, mitigation, and implementation. With BRICS expanding to 11 nations, India urged joint action on desertification, biodiversity loss, and marine plastic pollution, while stressing energy diversification and promoting the Green Grids Initiative under ISA for sustainable energy transition.

(ii) India advocated for adherence to Common but

Differentiated Responsibilities (CBDR-RC) in global forums such as UNFCCC, UNCCD, CBD, and UNEA. It emphasized the urgent need to scale up climate finance, noting that the proposed USD 300 billion per year by 2035 falls short of the USD 1.3 trillion needed.

(iii) India urged BRICS nations to actively engage in global sustainability initiatives such as the International Solar Alliance (ISA), Leadership Group for Industry Transition (LeadIT) co-led by India and Sweden, and the Global Biofuel Alliance (GBA) initiated by India, to collectively accelerate climate action and sustainable development efforts.

BANKING & FINANCE

1. RBI Data Shows Net Claims of Non-Residents on India Increase by USD 11 Billion in Q3FY25.

The data indicated a decrease in foreign assets of Indian residents by USD 40.1 billion, along with a decrease in claims of non-residents in India by USD 29.1 billion. This resulted in an increase in India's total foreign liabilities.

- RBI mentioned that the decrease in foreign assets of Indian residents during Q3FY25 was primarily due to a decline of USD 70.1 billion in reserve assets.
- However, reserve assets saw an increase of USD 13.2 billion compared to December 2023.

Key Points:-

(i) According to the latest data from RBI, India's Current Account Deficit (CAD) slightly increased to USD 11.5 billion, accounting for 1.1% of the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) during Q3FY25, compared to USD 10.4 billion (1.1% of GDP) in Q3FY24, largely due to a rise in service exports.

(ii) The data further revealed that India's foreign

exchange reserves (FER) declined by USD 37.7 billion on a Balance of Payments (BoP) basis in Q3FY25, compared to an increase of USD 6.0 billion in Q3FY24.

2. RBI Raises Liquidity Facility Limit for Standalone Primary Dealers to Rs 15,000 Crore.

In March 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), based in Mumbai (Maharashtra), announced an increase in the aggregate limit available to Standalone Primary Dealers (SPDs) under the Standing Liquidity Facility at the existing repo rate. The limit will rise from Rs 10,000 crore to Rs 15,000 crore, effective from April 02, 2025. This decision was based on the assessment of prevailing and evolving liquidity conditions.

- RBI also clarified that the limit for individual SPDs would be communicated separately, with all other terms and conditions remaining unchanged.
- Previously, SPDs were permitted to participate only in all overnight liquidity management operations, except for the Marginal Standing Facility (MSF).
- SPDs were also allowed to participate in other operations, such as long-term Variable Rate Repo (VRR) operations and daily VRRs, on a case-by-case basis.

Key Points:-

(i) A Primary Dealer (PD) refers to an RBI-registered Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) authorized to buy and sell Government Securities (G-Secs), as per the 'Guidelines for Primary Dealer in Government Securities Market' dated March 29, 1995.

(ii) PDs in India are classified into two categories: Standalone Primary Dealers (SPDs) and Bank PDs. SPDs are entities either incorporated abroad, subsidiaries of Scheduled Commercial

Banks (SCBs), or registered under the Companies Act as NBFCs.

(iii) The Standing Liquidity Facility is a window that allows SPDs to borrow money from RBI at the repo rate. Variable Rate Repo (VRR) is used to infuse short-term liquidity into the banking system, allowing banks to borrow at a rate lower than the repo rate for up to 14 days.

3. Axis Bank and J.P. Morgan Introduce Blockchain-Based 24/7 Cross-Border Payment System.

In March 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Axis Bank Limited, one of India's largest private sector banks, collaborated with New York (United States of America, USA)-based J.P. Morgan Chase & Co., a leading global financial services firm, to introduce real-time, 24/7 programmable USD clearing capabilities for its commercial clients.

- The initiative is powered by Kinexys Digital Payments (KDP), the blockchain and digital assets unit of J.P. Morgan, enabling seamless cross-border payment solutions from Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City), an International Financial Services Centre (IFSC) in Gujarat, India.
- Axis Bank becomes the first Indian financial institution to offer near-real-time USD clearing for cross-border payments, allowing businesses to make or receive dollar payments anytime.
- The platform leverages blockchain technology to enable multi-currency, 24/7 payment movements with programmable payments, reducing liquidity costs and enhancing cash management efficiency.

Key Points:-

(i) The round-the-clock USD clearing facility will be managed from Gujarat International Finance Tec-City (GIFT City), reinforcing India's position as a

global financial hub.

(ii) The integration of Kinexys Digital Payments (KDP) enables Axis Bank's clients to streamline payments, unlock liquidity, and execute cross-border transactions seamlessly, while automated cash management and no-deduction payment rails further optimize payments and liquidity.

4. Federal Bank Increases Stake in Ageas Federal Life Insurance by 4%.

In March 2025, Aluva (Kerala)-based Federal Bank Limited signed a binding Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Belgium-based Ageas Insurance International NV and Ageas Federal Life Insurance Company Limited (AFLIC) to acquire an additional 4% stake in AFLIC from Ageas Insurance International NV.

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has approved Federal Bank's plan to increase its stake in AFLIC from 26% to 30% for up to Rs. 105 crore.

Key Points:-

(i) The acquisition is subject to signing a Share Purchase Agreement (SPA), fulfilling conditions outlined in the SPA, and obtaining necessary regulatory approvals.

(ii) AFLIC is a joint venture between Ageas Insurance International NV and Federal Bank Limited, offering life insurance products and services across India.

5. NABARD and SBI Ink MoU to Promote Sustainable Development in Rural Assam.

In March 2025, the National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD), headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, and the State Bank of India (SBI), also based in Mumbai, signed a

Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) to boost rural development in Assam.

- The collaboration aims to enhance rural livelihoods and strengthen the credit ecosystem through targeted financial support.

- The partnership between NABARD and SBI is designed to promote economic growth in rural areas by improving access to credit and supporting livelihood initiatives.

- Under this collaboration, NABARD and SBI have set a financing target of Rs. 500 crores for the Financial Year 2025-26 (FY26), with plans to increase it to Rs. 1,000 crores annually in the future.

Key Points:-

(i) The initiative will focus on providing financial assistance to the agricultural and rural sectors, ensuring better access to credit, infrastructure, and sustainable livelihood opportunities.

(ii) This partnership is expected to play a crucial role in empowering rural Assam and fostering long-term economic growth.

(iii) NABARD also signed an MoU with Digital Bharat Nidhi (DBN), under the Department of Telecommunications (DoT), Ministry of Communications (MoC), for Digital Rural Empowerment across the country.

6. IndusInd Bank Shifts ₹10,000 Crore Loans to ICICI, Federal Bank Under IBPC.

In March 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based IndusInd Bank Limited recently transferred corporate loans worth over ₹10,000 crore to ICICI Bank Limited (Mumbai-based) and Federal Bank Limited (Kochi, Kerala-based) through Inter-Bank Participation Certificates (IBPC) to bolster liquidity amid concerns over potential deposit outflows linked to an ongoing accounting probe.

- The IBPC is a money market instrument used by banks to share loans and meet year-end lending targets.
- In these transactions, the selling bank receives 40% of the loan amount, which helps in managing liquidity and retiring deposits.

Key Points:-

- (i) Loans were transferred via the IBPC market, a short-term instrument (typically 6 months) allowing banks to borrow/lend against loan collateral.
- (ii) Acquired loans carry an interest rate of 7.5-8%.
- (iii) IndusInd Bank aims to secure liquidity to offset risks from a ₹2,000 crore net worth erosion linked to accounting irregularities.

7. GoI to Acquire 48.99% Stake in Vodafone Idea Through ₹36,950 Crore Equity Conversion.

In March 2025, the Government of India (GoI) recently approved a proposal to raise its stake in Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Vodafone Idea Limited (VIL) to 48.99% by converting outstanding spectrum auction dues worth ₹36,950 crore into equity.

- This move, part of the September 2021 Reforms and Support Package for the Telecom Sector, aims to alleviate financial stress on the debt-laden telecom operator.
- Under Section 62(4) of the Companies Act, 2013, VIL will issue 3,695 crore equity shares (face value: ₹10 each) to the GoI.
- The shares will be issued within 30 days after securing approvals from regulators, including the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

Key Points:-

- (i) Post-conversion, the GoI will become the single-largest shareholder, surpassing current promoters Aditya Birla Group (14.76%) and Vodafone Group (22.56%).
- (ii) The conversion addresses VIL's deferred spectrum liabilities, including dues for the Financial Year 2025-26 (FY26) amounting to ₹32,723.5 crore (covering 2015 spectrum auction shortfalls and adjusted gross revenue (AGR) obligations).
- (iii) The GoI's enhanced stake reflects its commitment to sustaining competition in India's telecom sector.

8. Federal Bank, NPCI & Visa Unveil Fed StarBiz Credit Card for Business Customers.

On April 1, 2025, Aluva (Kerala)-based Federal Bank Limited (FBL), formerly known as Travancore Federal Bank Limited, a leading private sector bank (PVB) in India, in partnership with the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) and United States of America (USA)-based Visa Inc., introduced the Fed StarBiz Credit Card, an exclusive financial product for business customers.

- The credit card is designed to optimize business transactions and provide greater financial flexibility for Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs).

Key Points:-

- (i) The card integrates directly with Overdraft (OD) or Cash Credit (CC) accounts, offering limits up to Rs. 50 lakh. It enables transactions up to Rs. 3 lakh per day or up to the available OD/CC limit, ensuring seamless financial management for businesses.
- (ii) Equipped with advanced security features, it utilizes tokenization and encryption technologies for safe digital transactions. All transactions are

automatically recorded in the OD/CC account, eliminating the need for separate statements and simplifying financial tracking.

(iii) With a validity of five years, the card is globally accepted via Visa and RuPay networks, allowing business customers to make secure transactions across India and internationally.

9. CCI Recently Approved Acquisition Proposals of API Holdings by 360 ONE & Claypond Capital, and Voting Rights Changes in Groww.

On April 1, 2025, the Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved multiple acquisition proposals, including the joint acquisition of stakes in API Holdings Limited by 360 ONE and Claypond Capital Partners Private Limited and the acquisition of additional voting rights by certain shareholders of Billionbrains Garage Ventures Private Limited (Groww).

- CCI approved the proposal of wealth management firm 360 ONE and Bengaluru-based Claypond Capital to jointly acquire Class B compulsorily convertible preference shares (CCPS B) of Mumbai-based API Holdings Limited.

- API Holdings operates healthcare services through subsidiaries like Aknamed, Pharameasy, Docon, Thyrocare, and Retailio. The shares will be acquired from MEMG Family Office LLP (MEMG LLP).

- Additionally, CCI approved Groww's proposal involving the issuance of bonus shares and the relinquishment of extra voting rights by its founders. This restructuring includes eliminating differential voting rights and issuing bonus compulsorily convertible shares to its existing shareholders.

Key Points:-

(i) Groww's shareholders benefiting from this proposal include Peak XV Partners, Ribbit Capital,

YC Holdings, Tiger Global, and ICONIQ Strategic Partners. These entities primarily invest in early-stage companies and startups across India, Southeast Asia, and the United States.

(ii) 360 ONE Large Value Fund (LVF), which is registered with SEBI as a Category-II Alternative Investment Fund (AIF), will manage its investment in API Holdings through its investment manager, 360 ONE Alternates Asset Management Limited (AAML).

(iii) With these approvals, CCI has facilitated key investments and strategic acquisitions in India's healthcare and fintech sectors, supporting the growth of API Holdings and Groww while streamlining their corporate structures.

10. Aditya Birla Capital Successfully Merges Aditya Birla Finance to Establish a Unified NBFC.

On 31st March 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Aditya Birla Capital Limited (ABCL), a non-banking finance company (NBFC), announced the successful amalgamation of its wholly-owned subsidiary, Aditya Birla Finance Limited (ABFL), effective from 1st April 2025.

- The merger received approvals from the National Company Law Tribunal (NCLT), Ahmedabad Bench, and regulatory bodies such as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI).

- The proposed amalgamation aims to rationalize and simplify the group structure, enhance financial stability, improve stakeholder value, and increase operational efficiency.

Key Points:-

(i) Vishakha Mulye has been appointed as Managing Director (MD) & Chief Executive Officer

(CEO) of ABCL.

(ii) Rakesh Singh has been appointed as Executive Director (ED) and CEO of ABCL.

(iii) Nagesh Pingre and Sunil Srivastava have been appointed as Independent Directors of ABCL.

11. SBI Research Report Finds Increased Mudra Loan Availment by MSMEs in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and North-Eastern States.

Recently in April 2025, the State Bank of India (SBI) released a report titled "The PMMY: A Decade of Audacious Dreams: Bolder Bigger and Indeed Beautiful" to mark ten years of the Pradhan Mantri Mudra Yojana (PMMY). The report revealed that the share of MUDRA (Micro Units Development and Refinancing Agency) loans in Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Odisha and the North-East has grown significantly, reflecting a more inclusive and balanced credit distribution pattern across India.

- Out of the total 52 crore MUDRA accounts opened over the past decade, Shishu loans account for 78%, Kishor for 20%, and Tarun/Tarun Plus for 2%.

- The share of Shishu loans has decreased from 93% in FY16 to 51.7% in FY25, while Kishor loans have grown from 5.9% in FY16 to 44.7% in FY25, indicating the expansion and formalization of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises (MSMEs).

- Bihar leads in the number of women entrepreneurs under PMMY with 4.2 crore beneficiaries, followed by Tamil Nadu with 4.0 crore and West Bengal with 3.7 crore. Maharashtra has the highest share of women account holders at 79%, followed by Jharkhand (75%) and West Bengal (73%).

Key Points:-

(i) Overall, women constitute 68% of all PMMY

account holders, showcasing the scheme's strong impact on women's empowerment at the grassroots level.

(ii) The share of PMMY loans has also grown significantly in states like Bihar (from 5.67% in FY16 to 10.97% in FY25), Uttar Pradesh (from 9.27% to 11.30%), and Odisha (from 4.24% to 4.51%).

(iii) Under PMMY, collateral-free loans of up to ₹20 lakh are provided through Member Lending Institutions in four categories—Shishu (up to ₹50,000), Kishor (₹50,000–₹5 lakh), Tarun (₹5–10 lakh), and Tarun Plus (₹10–20 lakh).

12. SBI and Citibank Collaborate on USD 295 Million Social Loan to Boost Support for Indian Farmers.

On April 3, 2025, the State Bank of India (SBI), headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, in collaboration with Citibank (Citi), headquartered in New York, USA, announced a social loan facility worth USD 295 million.

- This initiative is aimed at uplifting small and marginal farmers across India by improving their access to credit and enhancing agricultural productivity.

- The social loan will be deployed by SBI to finance its Kisan Credit Card (KCC) loan portfolio, ensuring crucial credit flow to smallholder farmers.

- It aims to boost agricultural output by facilitating better access to financial resources and promoting sustainable rural livelihoods.

Key Points:-

(i) The initiative supports broader goals of financial inclusion and economic empowerment of underserved farming communities.

(ii) This collaboration is part of Citi's global

commitment to invest USD 1 trillion in sustainable finance by 2030, which includes support for 15 million low-income households globally.

13. Bank of Maharashtra Collaborates with Customer Capital to Launch 'Tripstacc' Digital Travel Platform.

On April 2, 2025, Pune (Maharashtra)-based Bank of Maharashtra (BoM) partnered with Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Customer Capital (registered in India as Custcap Solutions Private Limited), a captive commerce solutions provider, to launch Tripstacc, a white-label travel platform exclusively for BoM cardholders.

- The platform integrates Artificial Intelligence (AI)-powered loyalty rewards, allowing seamless hotel and ticket bookings through BoM's card website and mobile application.
- Developed by Customer Capital, Tripstacc allows banks to personalize travel-related services for their customers.

Key Points:-

- (i) The platform offers advanced insights into Travel and Expenses (T&E), which are typically unavailable through conventional promotional travel partnerships.
- (ii) India's loyalty market is expected to grow and reach USD 7.92 billion by 2025.

14. SEBI Postpones Retail Algo Trading Implementation Deadline to August 1, 2025.

In April 2025, the Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI), headquartered in Mumbai, Maharashtra, extended the deadline for implementing retail algorithmic (algo) trading regulations from April 1, 2025, to August 1, 2025.

- This extension follows requests from stock exchanges seeking more time to finalize technical standards in coordination with the Brokers' Industry Standards Forum (ISF).

Key Points:-

- (i) The new algo trading norms were announced on February 4, 2025, targeting retail investors using automated software to place trading orders.
- (ii) The framework clearly defines the roles of brokers (as principals) and algo providers (as agents), where the latter operate using broker-authorized Application Programming Interfaces (APIs).
- (iii) Every algo order must include a unique identifier for improved auditability and tracking.

15. IDFC FIRST Bank Authorized by CPAO to Disburse Pensions.

In April 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra) based IDFC FIRST Bank (Formerly Infrastructure Development Finance Company) received authorization from the New Delhi (Delhi) based Central Pension Accounting Office (CPAO) under the Department of Expenditure (DoE), Ministry of Finance (MoF), to disburse pensions to central government pensioners.

- Pensioners can now receive their pensions directly into their IDFC FIRST Bank Savings Account.
- This authorization enables IDFC FIRST Bank to provide pension disbursement services to various categories of pensioners, including All India Service Officers, Former Members of Parliament (MPs), Retired Judges of High Courts and the Supreme Court, Former Presidents and Vice Presidents of India, and officials of Civil Ministries and Departments (excluding Railways, Posts, Telecom, and Defence).

- Pensioners have the option to open a joint savings account with their spouse to ensure uninterrupted family pension payments.

Key Points:-

- (i) The bank offers a range of benefits under its Savings Account for pensioners, including zero-fee banking on 36 services such as debit card issuance, IMPS, NEFT, RTGS, chequebooks, and ATM withdrawals.
- (ii) Senior citizens also receive ₹2 lakh cyber insurance, unlimited online health consultations, and free doorstep banking.
- (iii) Additionally, the bank provides favourable fixed deposit terms with no penalty on premature withdrawals and an extra 0.5% interest on Fixed Deposits (FDs) for senior citizens.

16. Securis Finance Receives RBI's NBFC Licence to Provide Education Loans.

In April 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) granted a Non-Banking Financial Company (NBFC) licence to Securis Finance Private Limited, a Bengaluru (Karnataka)-based subsidiary of FirstPay Technologies. This regulatory approval enables Securis Finance to cater to the credit needs of teenagers, by offering education loans ranging from ₹50,000 to ₹5 lakh.

- Securis Finance will pilot operations in key educational hubs across India, specifically targeting students in need of financial support for higher education.
- The company aims to disburse ₹100 crore in loans during its first year of operations, with a target of expanding its loan book to ₹1,000 crore by 2030.
- An AI-powered credit assessment model will be used to evaluate applicants based on academic

performance and financial indicators, ensuring responsible and inclusive lending.

Key Points:-

- (i) The initiative is designed to bridge the credit access gap for teenagers, especially from underserved and financially weaker sections, supporting their educational aspirations and career development.
- (ii) To obtain the NBFC licence, Securis Finance fulfilled key regulatory requirements, including registration under the Companies Act, 2013, maintaining a minimum Net Owned Fund (NOF) of ₹2 crore, and demonstrating financial stability through a robust business plan and a clean CIBIL (Credit Information Bureau India Limited) history.

17. India Post & Nippon India Mutual Fund Join Hands to Launch Doorstep KYC Services.

In April 2025, India Post, functioning under the Department of Posts (DoP), entered into a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Nippon Life India Asset Management Limited (Nippon India Mutual Fund) to provide door-to-door Know Your Customer (KYC) verification services.

- This collaboration is designed to streamline the mutual fund onboarding process, particularly benefiting investors in remote and underserved areas.
- The MoU was signed between Manisha Bansal Badal, General Manager (GM) of the Business Development Directorate at DoP, and Sundeep Sikka, Executive Director (ED) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Nippon India MF.

Key Points:-

- (i) The initiative utilizes India Post's vast network of over 1.5 lakh post offices to offer accessible

and seamless KYC services, especially aiding senior citizens and individuals with mobility challenges.

(ii) India Post has previously completed over 5 lakh KYC verifications for institutions like Unit Trust of India (UTI) and Specified Undertaking of UTI (SUUTI).

(iii) This initiative supports the Government of India's Jan Nivesh campaign, which focuses on promoting financial inclusion and bridging the gap between the financially underserved population and formal financial systems.

18. RBI Keeps FPI Investment Limits Unchanged for Government and Corporate Bonds in FY26.

In April 2025, the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) recently announced that the Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPI) investment limits in Government Securities (G-Secs), State Development Loans (SDLs), and corporate bonds will remain unchanged for the Financial Year 2025-26 (FY26). This decision reflects RBI's strategy to maintain financial stability while encouraging steady foreign capital inflows.

- The continuation of existing FPI investment limits highlights RBI's commitment to ensuring a balanced and secure investment climate for global investors.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recently retained the Foreign Portfolio Investment (FPI) caps as follows — 6% for central government securities, 2% for state government securities, and 15% for corporate bonds, ensuring continuity in policy to support market stability and investor confidence.

Key Points:-

(i) The general investment limit for Government Securities (G-Secs) has been recently set at Rs 2.79 trillion (USD 32.71 billion) for the period April

to September 2025, and Rs 2.89 trillion for October 2025 to March 2026.

(ii) For corporate bonds, the investment ceiling stands at Rs 8.22 trillion for April to September 2025, and Rs 8.80 trillion for October 2025 to March 2026.

(iii) As of April 2025, Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) have utilized only 22.3% of the G-Sec limit and 15.7% of the corporate bond limit, reflecting significant untapped potential for foreign capital inflows into Indian debt markets.

19. Hyderabad Industries Limited Rebrands Itself as BirlaNu Ltd.

In March 2025, Hyderabad (Telangana)-based HIL Limited, formerly known as Hyderabad Industries Limited and part of the C.K. Birla Group, has been rebranded as BirlaNu Limited as part of its strategic transformation.

- The rebranding aims to create a unified brand architecture that enables consistent communication across its product segments.
- With 32 manufacturing units spread across India—including Telangana and Andhra Pradesh—and Europe, BirlaNu currently caters to customers in over 80 countries.

Key Points:-

(i) The company has committed to investing ₹1,200 crore over the next three years to scale operations in high-priority segments such as pipes, construction chemicals, and designer boards.

(ii) To expand its global presence, BirlaNu will leverage Parador, the German flooring company it acquired in 2018, alongside exporting its India-made products.

(iii) In a pioneering move for the Indian market, BirlaNu has adopted Organic Based Stabilizers (OBS) in the manufacturing of Unplasticized Polyvinyl Chloride (UPVC) pipes, eliminating the use of heavy metals in the process.

20. India's External Debt Reaches USD 717.9 Billion by December 2024.

At the end of December 2024, India's external debt reached USD 717.9 billion (bn), reflecting a 10.7% increase from USD 648.7 billion in December 2023, according to "India's Quarterly External Debt Report" released by the Ministry of Finance (MoF).

- The external debt rose by 0.7% on a quarterly basis, from USD 712.7 billion in September 2024. By December 2024, the external debt-to-Gross Domestic Product (GDP) ratio stood at 19.1%, slightly higher than 19% in the previous quarter.

- The valuation effect, due to the appreciation of the US dollar against the rupee and other major currencies like the yen, euro, and Special Drawing Rights (SDR), accounted for USD 12.7 bn during the quarter ended December 2024.

- While the central government's external debt declined, the non-government sector saw an increase.

Key Points:-

(i) Among non-government sectors, non-financial corporations held the largest share at 36.5%, followed by deposit-taking corporations (excluding the central bank) at 27.8%.

(ii) The central government held 22.1%, and other financial corporations accounted for 8.7%.

21. Axis Bank Becomes the First Indian Bank to Launch B2B Collections Solution for Businesses.

In April 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Axis Bank Limited, one of the largest Private Sector Banks (PVB) in India, partnered with a Fortune 500 company in India to introduce a B2B (Business to Business) collections solution using Bharat Connect, formerly known as the Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS), developed by NPCI Bharat BillPay Limited (NBBL).

- This makes Axis Bank the first bank to implement this innovative payment solution, leveraging its advanced Application Programming Interface (API) banking stack.

- It aims to streamline B2B payments, automate processes in supply chains, and improve digital payment efficiency for corporate clients.

Key Points:-

(i) The platform integrates with multiple ordering applications across sectors like Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), Pharma, Automotives, and Healthcare.

(ii) It enables wholesale distributors and retailers to make invoice payments directly from their applications.

(iii) Axis Bank acts as a Biller Operating Unit (BOU), offering a customizable and scalable solution.

ECONOMY & BUSINESS

1. Moody's Forecasts India's GDP Growth at 6.5% for FY26, Highest Among G-20 Nations.

In April 2025, the global credit rating agency, Moody's Ratings, released its latest report on Emerging Markets, projecting India's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth at 6.5% for Financial Year 2025-26 (FY26), down from 6.7% in FY25. Despite this slowdown, India will continue to

have the highest growth rate among both advanced and emerging Group-20 (G-20) nations.

- This growth projection for India in FY26 is driven by tax measures and continued monetary easing, supporting economic stability and expansion.

- The report also highlighted that while India's growth will remain the highest in the Asia-Pacific region, its deep integration with international trade makes it vulnerable to global uncertainties, including potential economic impacts from United States of America (USA) tariffs.

Key Points:-

(i) Moody's emphasized that large emerging markets like India and Brazil will continue to attract and retain global capital, even in risk-averse conditions. Their economic resilience is attributed to strong, domestically-driven economies, robust capital markets, moderate policy credibility, and substantial Foreign Exchange Reserves (FER).

(ii) India's growth projection is backed by its low External Vulnerability Indicator (EVI) of 61%, indicating reduced susceptibility to external financial shocks. This is further supported by a modest external debt-to-GDP ratio of 19% and minimal dependency on the United States (USA), accounting for just 2% of GDP.

(iii) The report forecasted India's inflation to average 4.5% in FY26, down from 4.9% in FY25. Additionally, the Government of India (GoI) significantly raised the income tax exemption limit from Rs 7 lakh to Rs 12 lakh in the Union Budget for FY26, aiming to boost consumption and economic demand.

2. Maharashtra Government Partners with Google to Establish AI CoEs in Mumbai, Pune, and Nagpur.

In April 2025, the Government of Maharashtra signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Google India Private Limited, based in Mumbai, Maharashtra, to establish three Artificial Intelligence (AI) Centres of Excellence (CoE) in Mumbai, Pune, and Nagpur.

- The agreement was formalized in Mumbai by Chief Secretary of Maharashtra, Sujata Saunik, and Google India's Rajan Anandan, in the presence of Chief Minister (CM) of Maharashtra, Devendra Fadnavis, along with Deputy (Dy) CMs Eknath Shinde and Ajit Pawar.

- The Mumbai Centre for Geospatial Analytics will be established in the Chief Secretary's office of Maharashtra. This centre will leverage satellite imagery and spatial data to enhance governance decisions, enabling better geographic information management and critical data analysis for improved planning and administration.

- The Pune Centre for Forensic AI will integrate artificial intelligence with forensic science to strengthen criminal investigations. It will enhance forensic data analysis, streamline evidence management, and improve overall crime-solving capabilities, contributing to a more efficient justice system.

Key Points:-

(i) The Nagpur-based Maharashtra Advanced Research and Vigilance for Enforcement of Reformed Laws Limited (MARVEL) will focus on AI-driven solutions for government functions. Its key areas will include enforcement, monitoring, and governance reforms. The Indian Institute of Management (IIM) Nagpur in Dahegaon, Maharashtra, will collaborate with MARVEL to provide specialized training and capacity-building programs.

(ii) As part of the AI CoE initiative, Microsoft will

offer government employees AI training and certification through the Microsoft Learn platform to enhance their technological skills.

(iii) The Government of Maharashtra will leverage Microsoft's advanced Copilot technology to boost productivity, streamline administrative operations, automate document processing, and improve citizen services. This initiative aims to enhance service delivery at the grassroots level, ensuring efficient governance and better responsiveness to public needs.

MOUs and Agreement

1. CAG and NIUA Sign MoU for Strengthening Capacity Building in Urban Development.

The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Institute of Urban Affairs (NIUA) based in New Delhi, aimed at enhancing audit planning, processes, and capacity building in the field of urban development.

- The MoU was signed in the presence of K. Sanjay Murthy, CAG of India, along with senior officials from both organizations.

- The MoU focuses on jointly developing content and course materials on urban sectors from an audit perspective.

Key Points:-

(i) The collaboration is designed to boost capacity-building efforts, equipping professionals with specialized skills in urban development, and improving the audit capabilities of the Indian Audit and Accounts Department (IA&AD) officers and staff.

(ii) The partnership will focus on the creation of urban auditing tools, case studies, and methodologies, which will be shared with CAG

officials for further enhancement.

(iii) Additionally, another MoU was signed with the Competitiveness Mindset Institute (CMI) in the presence of CAG K. Sanjay Murthy, aimed at enhancing non-cognitive skills that influence auditing effectiveness.

2. Chhattisgarh Partners with NASSCOM to Enhance Skill Development and IT Ecosystem.

In March 2025, the Government of Chhattisgarh signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) based in Noida, Uttar Pradesh, to enhance skill development, generate employment, and strengthen the state's IT ecosystem.

- The MoU was formalized between the Chhattisgarh Government and NASSCOM, with Chief Minister Vishnu Deo Sai engaging with NASSCOM Vice-President Srikant Srinivasan during the Investors Connect meet in Bengaluru.

Key Points:-

(i) The MoU aims to improve job opportunities and foster technological advancements in the state through institutions like IIT Raipur, NIT Raipur, and AIIMS Raipur.

(ii) As part of the new industrial policy, proposals worth Rs. 4.4 lakh crore have been received, with Naya Raipur being developed as an IT hub.

(iii) Key sectors such as engineering, textiles, electronics, IT/ITES, food processing, and green fuel have attracted proposals worth Rs. 3,700 crore.

3. Telangana and Himachal Pradesh Sign MoU for 520 MW Hydropower Project.

In March 2025, Telangana State Power Generation Corporation Limited (TSGENCO), based in Hyderabad (Telangana), signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Government of Himachal Pradesh (HP) for the development of two hydropower projects—Seli (400 Megawatt, MW) and Miar (Meyar) (120 MW)—to boost Telangana's renewable energy capacity.

- The projects will be developed in the Lahaul-Spiti district of HP at an estimated cost of Rs. 6,200 crore.
- The MoU was signed by Rakesh Kanwar, Secretary of Power, HP, on behalf of the HP Government, and Sandeep Kumar Sultania, Principal Secretary of Power, Telangana, on behalf of the Telangana Government.
- The signing ceremony was attended by Chief Minister of HP Sukhvinder Singh Sukhu, Deputy CM Bhatti Vikramarka Mallu, and Telangana's Energy Minister.

Key Points:-

- (i) The hydropower projects, located on the Chenab River, will create 5,000 direct and indirect employment opportunities in Himachal Pradesh. Telangana has paid an upfront premium of Rs. 26 crore and will provide free power to Himachal Pradesh at varying percentages over the next 40 years, after which both projects will be transferred to Himachal Pradesh.
- (ii) Telangana will also contribute 1.5% of the project costs to the Local Area Development Fund (LADF) and offer an additional 1% of free power for LADF after commissioning. Affected families will receive benefits equivalent to 100 units per month for 10 years.
- (iii) The projects will harness the perennial waters of Himachal Pradesh's Himalayan rivers, which provide hydropower generation for 9-10 months annually, aligning with Telangana's Clean & Green Energy Policy 2025 for sustainable energy

development.

4. India Assist Signs MoU to Launch Operations in UAE.

In April 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based India Assist, a real-time travel assistance service platform, recently signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the authorities of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) to launch its international arm, 'UAE Assist'.

- Through this initiative, the company will provide complimentary travel assistance to every UAE visa applicant upon arrival, offering real-time support, emergency advice, and on-ground help.

Key Points:-

- (i) The initiative targets coverage of over 40 million inbound visitors to the UAE annually.
- (ii) With this launch, India Assist enters the international travel assistance domain for the first time.
- (iii) Previously, India Assist supported major events like the 2025 Mahakumbh in Uttar Pradesh (UP) and served as the official assistance partner for MotoGP.

APPOINTMENTS & RESIGNATIONS

1. Shirley Botchwey Becomes First African Woman Appointed as Commonwealth Secretary-General.

On April 1, 2025, Shirley Ayorkor Botchwey, from Ghana, recently assumed office as the 7th Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations.

- With this, she has become the first woman from Africa to hold this office. Also, she is the second woman to take on the position.

- She recently succeeded Baroness Patricia Janet Scotland of Dominica, who was appointed as the 6th Secretary-General of the Commonwealth of Nations in November 2015, becoming the first woman to hold this position.

- She was recently appointed by the Commonwealth Heads of Government during their biennial meeting in Apia, Samoa, in 2024.

Key Points:-

(i) The Secretary-General is nominated by Commonwealth leaders and can serve up to two terms, each lasting four years.

(ii) The position involves promoting and protecting the Commonwealth's values, representing the Commonwealth in public, and overseeing the management of the Commonwealth Secretariat.

2. Subhash Chander (SC) Ralhan Recently Appointed as President of FIEO Until 2027.

On April 1, 2025, Subhash Chander (SC) Ralhan was appointed as the President of the Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO), headquartered in New Delhi (Delhi), under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I).

- He succeeds Ashwani Kumar and will serve in this role until March 31, 2027.

- Along with him, Ravikant Shyamsunder Kapur has assumed the position of Vice-President (VP) of FIEO. He replaced Israr Ahmed.

- The Federation of Indian Export Organisations (FIEO) is the apex body for export promotion councils, commodity boards, and export development authorities in India. It is ISO 9001:2015 certified and works to promote Indian exports, facilitate international trade, provide services, advocate for

favorable policies, and address challenges faced by exporters.

Key Points:-

(i) SC Ralhan is a veteran in the export sector with over 50 years of experience, particularly in the engineering and hand tools industry.

(ii) He is also the Managing Director (MD) of Sri Tools Industries Private Limited, based in Ludhiana (Punjab).

(iii) As President of FIEO, he addresses tariff barriers, promotes export diversification, and advocates for technology-driven exports.

3. ACC Recently Appointed Sivasubramanian Ramann as PFRDA Chairman for 5 Years.

In April 2025, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC), chaired by Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi, approved the appointment of Sivasubramanian Ramann as the Chairman of the Pension Fund Regulatory and Development Authority (PFRDA) for a period of 5 years, effective from the date he assumes charge of the post, or until he attains the age of 65 years, or until further orders, whichever is the earliest.

- He will succeed Deepak Mohanty, who has been serving as the Chairman of PFRDA since 2023.

- At present, Ramann is serving as the Deputy Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India and the Chief Technology Officer (CTO) at the CAG of India.

- Sivasubramanian Ramann is a 1991 batch Indian Audit & Accounts Service (IA&AS) officer. He previously served as Chief General Manager (CGM) and Executive Director (ED) of SEBI between 2007 and 2013. In 2015-16, he was appointed as the Principal Accountant General (Audit) in Ranchi, Jharkhand.

Key Points:-

(i) From 2016 to 2021, Sivasubramanian Ramann was the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of National E-Governance Services Limited (NeSL), India's first information utility. In April 2021, he joined as Chairman & MD (CMD) of Small Industries Development Bank of India (SIDBI).

(ii) He has held key positions under the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) of India in various states and also worked as Executive Secretary to the CAG of India.

(iii) PFRDA was initially established as a regulatory body to promote, develop, and regulate the pension sector in India. It gained statutory status through the PFRDA Act, 2013, which was passed in September 2013 and officially notified on February 1, 2014. PFRDA operates under the Department of Financial Services (DFS), Ministry of Finance (MoF).

4. Economist Poonam Gupta Appointed as Deputy Governor of RBI.

On April 2, 2025, the Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) appointed Poonam Gupta, Director General of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi, as the Deputy Governor of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) for a term of three years, effective from her date of joining.

- Poonam Gupta is the first woman to hold this position in over a decade. She succeeds Michael Debabrata (MD) Patra, whose tenure ended in January 2025.

- The Deputy Governor of the RBI is the second most senior executive after the Governor. The RBI has four Deputy Governors, and the other three are M Rajeshwar Rao, T Rabi Sankar, and Swaminathan Janakiraman.

- Poonam Gupta is an accomplished economist with nearly two decades of experience at the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). She has also served as a government adviser in India, providing key insights on economic policies.

Key Points:-

(i) Poonam Gupta has held prestigious academic positions, including RBI Chair Professor at the National Institute of Public Finance and Policy (NIPFP) and Professor at the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER).

(ii) Currently, she is the Director General (DG) of the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), New Delhi, India's leading economic policy think tank. She joined NCAER in 2021 after serving in senior positions at the IMF and the World Bank for nearly two decades.

(iii) Poonam Gupta is a member of the Economic Advisory Council to the Prime Minister (EAC-PM) and serves as the Convener of the Advisory Council to the 16th Finance Commission (FC). In recognition of her academic excellence, she received the 1998 Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) Award for her PhD thesis on international economics.

5. Debmalya Sen Recently Appointed as President of IESA.

Pune (Maharashtra) based India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA), a leading industry body in India for energy storage, green hydrogen, and e-mobility (electro mobility), recently appointed Debmalya Sen as its President effective from April 01, 2025. He succeeds Dr. Rahul Walawalkar, who served as the President of IESA from 2019 to 2024.

- Debmalya Sen has over 15 years of experience in conventional power, renewables, energy storage, and

green hydrogen. Since 2021, he has worked with the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy (MNRE) and the Solar Energy Corporation of India (SECI) under the Government of India (GoI).

- His career also includes significant roles at Customized Energy Solutions in Mumbai (Maharashtra) and Apraava Energy Private Limited (formerly CLP India) in Mumbai.
- Prior to joining IESA, he served as India Lead – Advanced Energy Solutions at the World Economic Forum (WEF) from June 2023 to March 2025.

Key Points:-

- (i) The India Energy Storage Alliance (IESA) was founded by the United States of America (USA)-based Customized Energy Solutions (CES). It aims to establish India as a global leader in clean energy technologies by promoting advancements in energy storage, green hydrogen, and related sectors.
- (ii) IESA has a strong network of members comprising over 180 companies, including those involved in Electric Vehicle (EV) manufacturing, microgrids, cleantech startups, and research institutes.
- (iii) Its core mission is to accelerate India's net-zero emissions target by 2070 through innovation in battery storage, grid modernization, and green hydrogen technologies.

6. CCI Chairperson Ravneet Kaur Assigned Additional Charge as NFRA Chairperson for 3 Months.

In April 2025, the Government of India (GoI) appointed Ravneet Kaur, the 5th Chairperson of the New Delhi (Delhi)-based Competition Commission of India (CCI), with additional charge as Chairperson of the New Delhi-based National

Financial Reporting Authority (NFRA) under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs (MoCA).

- The Appointments Committee of the Cabinet (ACC) approved the appointment for a period of three months starting from 1 April 2025, or until a regular appointment is made.
- The position became vacant after Ajay Bhushan Pandey completed his three-year term on 31 March 2025.

Key Points:-

- (i) Ravneet Kaur served as Joint Secretary in the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) under the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MoC&I).
- (ii) She has served as Chairperson and Managing Director (CMD) of India Tourism Development Corporation Limited (ITDC), Exim Bank (Export-Import Bank of India), and India Infrastructure Finance Company Limited (IIFCL).
- (iii) She was a consultant at the International Food Policy Research Institute, Washington D.C., United States of America (USA), and a Hubert H. Humphrey Fellow at Cornell University, USA.

7. Chandrasekaran Appointed to IMF's Advisory Council on Entrepreneurship and Growth.

In March 2025, Natarajan Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Tata Sons Limited, was appointed to the International Monetary Fund's (IMF) Advisory Council on Entrepreneurship and Growth.

- Natarajan Chandrasekaran, an Indian businessman, was born in 1963 in Namakkal, Tamil Nadu (TN). He served as Chief Operating Officer (COO) and Executive Director of Tata Consultancy Services (TCS) before becoming its Chief Executive Officer (CEO) in 2009.

- In 2017, Chandrasekaran was appointed Chairman of Tata Sons and later became the Chairman of Tata Motors and Tata Global Beverages (TGB). He also assumed the chair of G20 India in 2022, leading the business agenda during India's G20 presidency. Additionally, he served on the Board of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) in 2016.

- The International Monetary Fund (IMF) established the Advisory Council on Entrepreneurship and Growth in March 2025 to address global economic challenges, particularly declining productivity and sluggish growth. The council plays a vital role in developing strategies for economic growth.

Key Points:-

(i) The council is led by IMF Managing Director (MD) Kristalina Georgieva and focuses on shaping macroeconomic and financial policies that foster productivity, innovation, and sustainable economic growth worldwide.

(ii) This advisory council comprises experts from business, finance, academia, and policymaking who collaborate to support innovation, entrepreneurship, and productivity globally, ensuring sustainable economic development.

(iii) The IMF's Advisory Council on Entrepreneurship and Growth includes prominent global leaders such as Professor Ufuk Akcigit (University of Chicago), HRH Ambassador Reema Bandar Al-Saud (Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to the USA), Marc Benioff (CEO of Salesforce), Ana Botin (Executive Chair of Banco Santander), Natarajan Chandrasekaran (Chairman of Tata Group), Margherita Della Valle (CEO of Vodafone Group), Tony O. Elumelu (Founder of Heirs Holdings), Robert Smith (CEO of Vista Equity Partners), and Federico Sturzenegger (Argentina's Minister of Deregulation and State Transformation).

8. Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi Appointed as President of Asian Cricket Council (ACC).

In April 2025, Syed Mohsin Raza Naqvi, Chairman of the Lahore (Pakistan)-based Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB), was recently appointed as the new Chairman of the Asian Cricket Council (ACC) during its Annual General Meeting (AGM), held virtually.

- He will serve a two-year term beginning on April 3, 2025.

- He succeeded Shammi Silva of Sri Lanka Cricket (SLC), who had taken over the ACC presidency in December 2024 following Jay Shah from India.

Key Points:-

(i) Naqvi's first major assignment as ACC Chairman will be overseeing the Asia Cup 2025, scheduled for September 2025.

(ii) In addition to his cricketing role, he currently serves as Pakistan's Interior Minister and has been heading the PCB since February 2024.

SPORTS

1. India Won 10 Medals at 2025 Asian Wrestling Championships, Manisha Bhanwala Clinches Gold.

The Indian freestyle wrestling team concluded the 2025 Senior Asian Wrestling Championship held in Amman, Jordan, from March 25 to 30, 2025, with a total of 10 medals, including 1 Gold, 3 Silver, and 6 Bronze. This was the 21st edition of the championship, organized by United World Wrestling (UWW), Switzerland.

- **Manisha Bhanwala (Women's Wrestling - 62 kg) won India's first and only Gold medal at the championship, defeating North Korea's Ok J. Kim with a hard-fought 8-7 victory.**

- The 2025 Asian Wrestling Championships saw participation from over 370 wrestlers across Asia. Iran dominated the event, with multiple wrestlers reaching the finals. This was the first time Amman, Jordan, hosted the championship.

Key Points:-

- (i) Udit (Freestyle - 61 kg) secured his 2nd consecutive silver medal, after winning silver in the 57 kg category in 2024.
- (ii) Olympian Deepak Punia (Freestyle - 92 kg) clinched silver, losing to Iran's Amir Hossein Firouzpour (10-0) via technical superiority in the final. This was his 5th medal and 3rd silver at the continental championships.
- (iii) Sunil Kumar (Greco-Roman - 87 kg) won bronze, marking his 5th senior medal and 3rd bronze at the Asian Wrestling Championships, having also won bronze in 2022 and 2023.

2. Gurindervir Singh Breaks Men's 100m National Record at Indian Grand Prix 1.

In March 2025, Gurindervir Singh, a 24-year-old sprinter from Patial village, Jalandhar, Punjab, set a new national record in the men's 100m event at the Indian Grand Prix 1 held at the SAI South Centre in Bengaluru, Karnataka. Representing the Reliance Foundation High Performance Centre, Gurindervir Singh clocked 10.20 seconds, surpassing the previous national record of 10.23 seconds set by Manikanta Hoblidhar in October 2023.

- Gurindervir Singh clinched the Gold with a time of 10.20 seconds, setting a new national record.
- Manikanta Hoblidhar secured the Silver with a personal best of 10.22 seconds, while Amlan Borgohain won the Bronze with a time of 10.43 seconds.

Key Points:-

- (i) Gurindervir Singh's previous personal best was 10.27 seconds, set in 2021. He made a strong comeback by winning gold at the 2024 Federation Cup with a wind-assisted 10.33 seconds and later clocked 10.32 seconds at the National Inter-State Championships in June 2024.
- (ii) His record-breaking performance not only establishes him as India's fastest man but also meets the entry standard of 10.25 seconds for the 26th Asian Athletics Championships, scheduled for May 2025 in Gumi, South Korea.

3. Anahat Singh Wins Indian Open Squash Women's Championship Title.

In March 2025, Anahat Singh, India's top-ranked women's squash player, clinched the JSW Indian Open women's singles title at the Bombay Gymkhana in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The 17-year-old secured victory by defeating Helen Tang from Hong Kong, China, in a straight-game win of 11-9, 11-5, 11-8.

- This triumph marks Anahat's sixth consecutive title and her 11th Professional Squash Association (PSA) title overall, showcasing her dominance in the sport.
- The win awarded Anahat 300 ranking points, further strengthening her position at the top of Indian women's squash.
- Anahat Singh has made remarkable progress in her squash career, gaining recognition as the youngest Indian athlete at the 2022 Commonwealth Games. She later won the senior national championship in November 2023 and secured her third British Junior Open title in January 2025.

Key Points:-

- (i) The Indian Open 2025, a PSA Copper event with a prize pool of USD 53,500, was held at the historic Bombay Gymkhana from March 24 to 28,

2025.

(ii) The tournament featured both men's and women's categories, with quarterfinals onwards played on a full-glass outdoor court.

(iii) In the men's singles final, Kareem El Torkey of Egypt defeated India's Abhay Singh with a score of 12-10, 11-4, 7-11, 12-10, securing his sixth PSA title and earning 500 ranking points.

4. Indian Chess GM Nihal Sarin Wins 2025 Tashkent Open Agzamov Memorial Title.

In March 2025, 20-year-old Indian Chess Grandmaster (GM) Nihal Sarin triumphed at the 18th edition of the 2025 Tashkent Open Agzamov Memorial in Tashkent, Uzbekistan. He clinched the title with an unbeaten score of 8 out of 10, finishing half a point ahead of the second-place finisher, Russian GM Sanan Sjugirov.

- Nihal Sarin was awarded a prize of USD 20,000 (approximately Rs. 17 lakh), with a total prize fund of USD 75,000, and gained 7.1 Elo rating points, bringing his live rating to 2694, nearing the prestigious 2700 mark.

- This achievement marks Nihal's first classical rating tournament win in 2025, following his major classical victory at the 2024 President Cup.

- Nihal Sarin, who was ranked World No. 2 in Rapid Chess in 2022, continues to demonstrate exceptional skill and consistency.

Key Points:-

(i) Indian GM Abhimanyu Puranik claimed third place after tie-breaks, while Indian GM Aditya Mittal showcased impressive skills with a top-ten finish.

(ii) Women FIDE Master (WFM) Shubhi Gupta (India) emerged as the top female performer,

securing 44th place overall with a score of 6/10.

5. Rajgir, Bihar to Host Men's Asia Cup Hockey 2025.

In March 2025, the historic city of Rajgir in Bihar was designated as the host city for the Hero Asia Cup 2025. This decision follows the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between New Delhi (Delhi)-based Hockey India (HI) and the Bihar State Sports Authority (BSSA) in Patna, Bihar.

- The MoU was signed by Bholanath Singh, Secretary General of HI, and B. Rajender, Additional Chief Secretary (CS) of the Bihar Sports Department, in the presence of Dilip Tirkey, President of HI, and Harmanpreet Singh, captain of the Indian Men's Hockey team.

- The tournament is scheduled to take place from August 29 to September 7, 2025, at the Rajgir Hockey Stadium in Rajgir, Bihar.

Key Points:-

(i) The Hero Asia Cup 2025 will be the 12th edition of the Men's Asia Cup Hockey Tournament. It will feature eight teams, including India, Pakistan, Japan, Korea, China, and Malaysia, with the remaining two teams qualifying through the Asian Hockey Federation (AHF) Cup.

(ii) This tournament is crucial as it serves as a qualifier for the 2026 FIH (International Hockey Federation) Men's World Cup, which will be jointly hosted by Belgium and the Netherlands.

(iii) The winner of the Asia Cup 2025 will secure a direct spot in the 2026 FIH Men's World Cup, making it a high-stakes competition.

6. Vandana Katariya Recently Announces Retirement from International Hockey Career.

In April 2025, Vandana Katariya, a legendary figure in Indian women's hockey, announced her retirement from international hockey, concluding an illustrious 15-year journey with the Indian national team.

- With a career beginning in 2009, Katariya became the most-capped player in Indian women's hockey history, recording 320 international appearances and scoring 158 goals.
- She played a crucial role in India's historic fourth-place finish at the Tokyo Olympics 2020, where she etched her name in the record books as the first Indian woman to score a hat-trick in Olympic hockey.
- Her retirement marks the end of an era, leaving behind a lasting legacy as one of the most accomplished and inspiring figures in Indian hockey.

Key Points:-

- (i) Vandana Katariya represented India at the Olympics in Rio 2016 and Tokyo 2020. She played in the FIH Hockey Women's World Cups in 2018 and 2022. She also participated in three Commonwealth Games – 2014, 2018, and 2022 – where she helped secure a Bronze medal in 2022.
- (ii) Katariya was instrumental in India's success at the Asian Games, winning a Silver medal in 2018 and Bronze medals in 2014 and 2022. She also clinched Gold in the Women's Asian Champions Trophy in 2016 and 2023, and won the FIH Nations Cup in 2022.

AWARDS

1. Japanese Mathematician Masaki Kashiwara Wins the 2025 Abel Prize.

In March 2025, the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters announced renowned Japanese mathematician Masaki Kashiwara (78 years old) as the winner of the 2025 Abel Prize in Oslo, Norway.

- He received this award for his fundamental contributions to algebraic analysis and representation theory, specifically for the development of the theory of D-modules and the discovery of crystal bases.
- With this, Masaki Kashiwara becomes the first Japanese person to be awarded the Abel Prize, also known as the "Nobel Prize for Mathematics," and the 28th recipient of this prestigious honor in the field of mathematics.

Key Points:-

- (i) Norway's King Harald V will officially present the Abel Prize to Masaki Kashiwara during an award ceremony scheduled to be held on May 20, 2025, in Oslo, Norway.
- (ii) The recipient of the award receives a cash prize of 7.5 million Norwegian Krone (NoK), equivalent to USD 710,000, along with a glass plaque designed by Norwegian artist Henrik Haugan.
- (iii) The prize is awarded annually by the Norwegian Academy of Science and Letters on behalf of the Ministry of Education (Norway).

2. Dalai Lama Honored with Gold Mercury Award for Peace and Sustainability.

In March 2025, the renowned Tibetan spiritual leader, His Holiness Tenzin Gyatso, the 14th Dalai Lama, was conferred with the Gold Mercury Award for Peace and Visionary Governance 2025 by London (United Kingdom, UK)-based Gold Mercury International, a global governance think tank and historic award organization, at his residence in Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh (HP).

- He received this honor in recognition of his lifelong commitment to peace, compassion, education, and human rights.

- The Gold Mercury Awards are presented by Nicolas De Santis, President and Secretary General of Gold Mercury International, which was established in 1961 and is dedicated to promoting visionary governance, sustainable decision-making, peace, and international cooperation.

- The 14th Dalai Lama has received several prestigious awards, including the Nobel Peace Prize (1989) for his nonviolent struggle, the Ramon Magsaysay Award (1959) for Community Leadership, and the PV Narasimha Rao Memorial Award (2024) for his contributions to peace and leadership.

Key Points:-

(i) Gold Mercury International recognizes global leaders, individuals, companies, and organizations across eight award categories, including Global Health, Global Science & Technology, Global Culture, Global Resources, Global Economic & Social Policy, Global Peace & Security, Global Environment, and International Law & Humanitarian Affairs.

(ii) Notable recipients of the Gold Mercury Award include former U.S. Presidents Ronald Reagan and Gerald Ford for their diplomatic efforts in nuclear disarmament, as well as Prof. Robert Gallo, the American biomedical researcher who discovered the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) as the cause of AIDS.

(iii) Other prominent awardees include global organizations like the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF) and the Red Cross for their humanitarian contributions worldwide.

3. MSRDC Bags SKOCH Award 2025 for Samruddhi Mahamarg Project Excellence.

In April 2025, the Maharashtra State Road Development Corporation Limited (MSRDC) was honoured with the prestigious SKOCH 2025 Award

in the Gold category under the 'Infrastructure' segment. The award was presented in recognition of MSRDC's successful implementation of its flagship project, the Hindu Hrudaysamrat Balasaheb Thackeray Maharashtra Samruddhi Mahamarg.

- Dr. Anil Kumar Gaikwad, Vice-Chairman and Managing Director (MD) of MSRDC, accepted the award at the 100th SKOCH Summit held at the India Habitat Centre in New Delhi, Delhi.

- The expressway is a high-speed greenfield corridor that connects 392 villages across 26 talukas in 10 districts of Maharashtra.

- The project has significantly reduced travel time between Nagpur and Mumbai, cutting it down from 16–18 hours to just 7–8 hours.

Key Points:-

(i) Instituted in 2003, the SKOCH Awards recognize outstanding achievements in governance, inclusive growth, technology excellence, corporate leadership, citizen service delivery, and capacity building.

(ii) The awards are conferred annually by the SKOCH Group, a Gurgaon (Haryana)-based full-service consulting firm established in 1997.

IMPORTANT DAYS

1. International Transgender Day of Visibility Observed on 31 March 2025.

International Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV) is celebrated annually on March 31 to honor the courage, resilience, and achievements of transgender, nonbinary, and gender non-conforming individuals. The day highlights their contributions across cultures and countries worldwide. It also aims to raise awareness about the challenges faced by the transgender

community, including poverty, discrimination, and violence, while advocating for their rights and protection.

- **The day encourages visibility for transgender people, offering a platform to acknowledge their struggles and progress. It emphasizes the need for societal acceptance and legal protection for transgender individuals.**

- **The transgender pride flag, designed by American activist Monica Helms in 1999, symbolizes transgender diversity and rights. The flag consists of five horizontal stripes, with pink and blue representing traditional colors for girls and boys, and a white stripe in the middle symbolizing people who are intersex, transitioning, or without a defined gender.**

- **The observance of TDOV serves as a reminder to continue advocating for equality and fairness for the transgender community globally.**

Key Points:-

(i) The International Transgender Day of Visibility was founded in 2009 by Rachel Crandall Crocker, an American transgender activist and licensed psychotherapist specializing in transgender issues.

(ii) She is the Executive Director and Co-founder of TransGender Michigan, based in the USA, and operates the first transgender helpline in the country.

(iii) The inaugural observance of the International Transgender Day of Visibility took place on 31 March 2009.

2. World Autism Awareness Day Observed on 2 April 2025 to Promote Inclusion and Rights of Autistic Individuals.

The United Nations (UN)'s World Autism Awareness Day (WAAD) is observed annually on April 2 to raise awareness about Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and promote the rights, dignity, and inclusion of autistic individuals.

- **On April 2, 2025, the world marked the 18th observance of WAAD.**

- **The theme for WAAD 2025 is "Advancing Neurodiversity and the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)".**

- **The Institute of Neurodiversity (ION), a neuro minority-founded organisation based in Switzerland and active in 40 countries, is leading the 2025 event in collaboration with the UN Department of Global Communications (DGC).**

Key Points:-

(i) On December 18, 2007, the UN General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/62/139, officially declaring April 2 as World Autism Awareness Day.

(ii) The first observance of WAAD took place on April 2, 2008.

3. International Children's Book Day Celebrated on 2 April 2025.

International Children's Book Day (ICBD) is celebrated globally on 2 April every year to commemorate the birth anniversary of Hans Christian Andersen, the renowned Danish author widely regarded as the "father of modern fantasy." The day highlights the pivotal role of children's literature in fostering creativity, empathy, and a lifelong passion for reading.

- **The International Board on Books for Young People (IBBY) – Netherlands is the official sponsor for ICBD**

2025, observed under the theme: "The freedom of imagination to inspire young readers."

- The observance is supported by The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) Body Mind and Wellness (BMW) Club.

Key Points:-

ICBD was first celebrated in 1967, initiated by IBBY, a global non-profit organization dedicated to promoting quality children's literature and reading.

4. Army Medical Corps Raising Day Observed on 3 April 2025.

Every year, the Indian Army (IA) observes the Raising Day of the Army Medical Corps (AMC) on April 3 to honor the founding of the AMC in 1764 and commemorate the sacrifices made by medical professionals in the line of duty.

- April 3, 2025, marked the 261st Raising Day of the AMC, a specialized corps dedicated to providing comprehensive healthcare services to active personnel, veterans, and their families.
- The AMC's motto, "Sarve Santu Niramaya" (Sanskrit for "Let all be free from disease and disability"), reflects its commitment to holistic health and preventive care.

Key Points:-

- (i) The origins of the AMC trace back to the Indian Medical Service (IMS), established in 1612 during the British East India Company's rule, with John Woodall as the first Surgeon General.
- (ii) In 1764, medical services were formalized under the Company's armies.
- (iii) The administrative headquarters of the Indian Army Medical Corps (IAMC) was established in Pune, Maharashtra, in May 1943. Post-

independence, the IAMC was renamed as Army Medical Corps (AMC) on 26 January 1950 (Republic Day).

5. International Day for Mine Awareness & Mine Action Assistance 2025 Observed on April 4.

The United Nations (UN)'s International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action is observed annually on April 4 to raise awareness about the threats posed by landmines and explosive remnants of war (ERW), and to promote efforts toward their elimination.

- The day also supports the development of national mine-action capacities in conflict-affected regions, in alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).
- April 4, 2025, marks the 20th observance of the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.
- The theme for 2025 is "Safe Futures Start Here", highlighting the importance of mine clearance in building safer, more secure communities.

Key Points:-

- (i) On December 8, 2005, the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) adopted Resolution A/RES/60/97, officially designating April 4 as the International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action.
- (ii) The first-ever observance of this day took place on April 4, 2006.

DEFENCE

1. MoD Grants In-Principle Approval for Establishing Adilabad Airport in Telangana.

In April 2025, the Ministry of Defence (MoD) has recently granted in-principle approval for civil aircraft operations at the Adilabad airfield in Telangana. Originally established during the Nizam era, this airfield is set to be developed into a joint-use facility catering to both military and civilian purposes.

- This approval marks the second airport sanctioned by the Government of India (GoI) since 2023, aiming to boost regional air connectivity and support defence training needs.
- The Indian Air Force (IAF) intends to set up a training establishment at the Adilabad airfield in the future.

Key Points:-

- (i) The IAF has proposed that the Airports Authority of India (AAI) acquire adjacent land for the construction of a civil terminal, aircraft parking apron, and associated infrastructure.
- (ii) The AAI is likely required to submit a detailed proposal to obtain a No Objection Certificate (NOC) from the IAF for the civil development plans.
- (iii) In February 2025, the GoI had granted approval for the development and operationalization of the Mamnoor Airport in Warangal, Telangana.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

1. SpaceX Launched 'Fram2' Mission, 1st Human Spaceflight Over Earth's Polar Regions.

On April 1, 2025, Space Exploration Technologies Corporation (SpaceX) successfully launched the 'Fram2' mission, marking the 1st human spaceflight over Earth's polar regions. The mission lifted off aboard a Falcon 9 rocket and Crew Dragon capsule 'Resilience' from Launch Complex-39A at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration

(NASA)'s Kennedy Space Center in Florida, United States of America (USA).

- The mission is named after the Norwegian 'Fram' ship, which explored both poles in the early 20th century.
- The privately funded mission carried 4 astronauts on a 3-5 day orbital journey.
- Fram2 marks SpaceX's 17th human spaceflight overall, its sixth mission for private clients, and carried the 681st people to travel above the Kármán line, with 626th entering Earth's orbit.

Key Points:-

- (i) During their 5-day journey in orbit, the crew will conduct 22 research studies, primarily focusing on how spaceflight and zero gravity affect the human body.
- (ii) The crew will perform the 1st X-ray imaging in space, providing new insights into medical imaging in microgravity. The crew will study exercise regimens to mitigate muscle atrophy and bone density loss in microgravity.
- (iii) The crew will conduct experiments to grow mushrooms, assessing fungal behavior and potential food sustainability in space.

2. Paras Defence Collaborates with MicroCon Vision to Supply Drone Cameras for India.

In April 2025, Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Paras Defence and Space Technologies Limited signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Israel-based MicroCon Vision Limited (MicroCon), a subsidiary of Controp and Rafael Group, to introduce advanced drone camera technologies in India.

- Paras Defence becomes the exclusive partner for MicroCon's Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance (ISR) operations in India.

- MicroCon will serve as the sole supplier of ISR payloads and Electro-Optical/Infrared (EO/IR) seekers to Paras Defence.

Key Points:-

(i) Integration of AI-powered analytics, thermal vision, and high-resolution imaging systems is set to enhance India's surveillance and reconnaissance capabilities.

(ii) Two drone camera models, typically priced at Rs 20 lakh and Rs 40 lakh per unit when imported, will now be 50-60% cheaper due to local supply—benefiting both the Indian Armed Forces and commercial sectors.

(iii) The Indian drone market is projected to grow by 17% by 2029, driven by rising demand in sectors like defence, agriculture, infrastructure, and surveillance.

3. South Korea's Hanwha Aerospace Signs USD 253.6 Million Deal with L&T to Supply K9 Howitzers to Indian Army.

In April 2025, Chagwon (South Korea)-based defence manufacturing company Hanwha Aerospace Co., Ltd. signed a USD 253.6 million (KRW 371.4 billion) agreement with Mumbai (Maharashtra)-based Larsen & Toubro Limited (L&T) to export components of the K9 Vajra-T, a 155 millimeter (mm), 52-caliber tracked self-propelled howitzer, to the Indian Army (IA).

- The agreement was signed at the Embassy of the Republic of Korea in New Delhi, Delhi, marking a significant milestone in the defence partnership between India and South Korea.

- As per the agreement, Hanwha Aerospace will supply 100 K9 Vajra-T howitzers to the Indian Army by September 2030.

Key Points:-

(i) This deal follows the successful delivery of the first batch of 100 K9 Vajra-T units ordered in 2017, under a procurement agreement valued at USD 310 million.

(ii) Out of these, 10 units were manufactured in South Korea, while the remaining 90 units were assembled in India by L&T.

(iii) The new batch of K9 Vajra-T howitzers will be manufactured in partnership with Hanwha Aerospace at L&T's Armoured Systems Complex (ASC) located in Hazira near Surat, Gujarat.

4. Russia Unveils 'Zircon' Hypersonic Missile to Enhance Naval Supremacy.

In March 2025, Russia unveiled the 'Zircon' Hypersonic Missile, a cutting-edge weapon capable of reaching speeds of Mach 9 (over 10,000 kilometers per hour, km/h) at altitudes of 20 km. Zircon is described as a "strategic asset," marking a significant leap in military technology with the ability to strike land, sea, and airborne targets with unmatched precision and speed.

- The Zircon, also known as the 3M22 Zircon, is a Supersonic Combustion Ramjet (Scramjet)-powered, nuclear-capable hypersonic cruise missile.

- It utilizes the 3S-14 launch platforms on frigates and submarines and was first used during Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2024.

Key Points:-

(i) The Zircon hypersonic missile was initially developed as an anti-ship missile but is versatile

enough to strike ground targets as well.

(ii) Its maximum strike distance is estimated to be around 1,500 km (932 miles), enabling long-range strikes and significantly extending Russia's strike capabilities.

(iii) In March 2025, Russia officially launched "Perm," a 4th-generation nuclear-powered attack submarine and the first Russian submarine designed to carry and launch hypersonic Zircon missiles.

5. Druva Space Partners with Infostellar to Advance Satellite Communication Capabilities.

In March 2025, Hyderabad (Telangana)-based Druva Space Private Limited partnered with Tokyo (Japan)-based Infostellar to integrate Druva Space's 3.8-meter (m) S&X-band ground station antenna in Hyderabad into Infostellar's StellarStation platform. This collaboration aims to expand Infostellar's global ground station network and improve satellite communications interoperability.

- This integration enhances support for Low Earth Orbit (LEO) satellites in inclined orbits, optimizing data downlink efficiency for critical missions.
- The Hyderabad-based antenna utilizes X/Y mount systems for full hemispherical coverage, establishing Druva Space as India's only commercial ground station solutions provider.
- Druva Space plans to deploy 7.4m antennas with S, X, and Ka-band capabilities to support Lunar and Deep Space Missions in collaboration with global partners.

Key Points:-

(i) The agreement was signed in Tokyo (Japan) during the Third India-Japan Space Dialogue, organized by the Bopal, Ahmedabad (Gujarat)-

based Indian National Space Promotion and Authorization Center (IN-SPACe), Ministry of External Affairs (MEA), Government of India (GoI), and the Cabinet Office of Japan.

(ii) This collaboration enables Druva Space to provide end-to-end satellite solutions, while Infostellar offers its platform to satellite operators worldwide.

(iii) This partnership strengthens the existing India-Japan cooperation in space initiatives, including the Chandrayaan series, the Sentinel Asia initiative, and the forthcoming Lunar Polar Exploration (LUPEX) mission.

BOOKS & AUTHORS

1. Sanjeev Chopra's Book "The Great Conciliator: Lal Bahadur Shastri and the Transformation of India" Recently Released.

In March 2025, a new biography titled "The Great Conciliator: Lal Bahadur Shastri and the Transformation of India", authored by historian and former Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer Sanjeev Chopra, has been recently released. It offers an in-depth look at India's second Prime Minister (PM), Lal Bahadur Shastri.

- Published by New Delhi-based Bloomsbury Publishing India Private Limited, the book highlights Shastri's contributions to India's growth.

Key Points:-

(i) In this meticulously researched biography, Sanjeev Chopra delves into Shastri's political and administrative journey.

(ii) The narrative sheds light on his pivotal role in establishing key national institutions such as the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Central Bureau of Investigation (CBI).

(iii) Additionally, the book revisits Shastri's iconic

slogan, "Jai Jawan, Jai Kisan," which encapsulated his vision for India's defense and agricultural sectors.

OBITUARY

1. Padma Shri Awardee & Veteran Actor-Director Manoj Kumar Passes Away.

On April 3, 2025, veteran Indian actor and filmmaker Manoj Kumar passed away at the age of 87 in Mumbai, Maharashtra. He was born on July 24, 1937, in Abbottabad, then part of British India (now in Pakistan).

- Fondly known as 'Bharat Kumar', he was celebrated for his contribution to Indian cinema through films with strong patriotic themes.
- In 1992, he was honored with the Padma Shri, India's fourth-highest civilian award, for his outstanding contribution to the field of Arts.
- Born as Harikrishna Giri Goswami, Manoj Kumar began his film career with minor roles in movies such as Fashion (1957), Sahara (1958), and Chand (1959). He earned his first lead role in Kaanch Ki Gudiya (1961), but it was Hariyali Aur Rasta (1962) that brought him initial recognition. His role in Shaheed (1965), based on the life of freedom fighter Bhagat Singh, firmly established him in the Indian film industry.

Key Points:-

- (i) Manoj Kumar made his directorial debut with Upkar (1967), highlighting the life of a soldier and a farmer. He continued to create patriotic films like Purab Aur Paschim (1970) and Kranti (1981), earning him the title 'Bharat Kumar'.
- (ii) He won the National Film Award for Upkar in 1968 and received seven Filmfare Awards, including Best Actor (Be-Imaan), Best Editing (Shor), Best Director (Roti Kapda Aur Makaan),

and a Lifetime Achievement Award in 1999.

- (iii) In recognition of his cinematic legacy, he received the Kishore Kumar Award (2008), Raj Kapoor Award (2010), and the prestigious Dadasaheb Phalke Award in 2016.

2. Sahitya Akademi Awardee & Eminent Malayalam Linguist Venugopala Panikkar Passes Away.

On April 3, 2025, eminent Malayalam linguist and writer Venugopala Panikkar passed away at the age of 80 in Kozhikode, Kerala. He was born on August 2, 1945, in Ernakulam, Kerala. In 2005, he was honored with the Sahitya Akademi Award for translating the Tamil novel Koonanthoppu by Thoppil Mohammed Meeran into Malayalam.

- Venugopala Panikkar began his career as a research assistant at the University of Madras (Tamil Nadu) in 1971.
- He joined the Malayalam Department at the University of Calicut (Kerala) as a faculty member in 1973.
- He served as the Head of the Malayalam Department at Kannur University (Kerala) from 2003 to 2005 and retired in 2006.

Key Points:-

- (i) In 2015, Venugopala Panikkar received the Kerala Sahitya Akademi Award for Lifetime Achievement.
- (ii) He presented papers at over 100 national and international seminars and authored notable books such as Swanamandalam, Noam Chomsky, Bhashartham, and Bhashalokam.

ENVIRONMENT

1. New Snakehead Fish Species 'Channa nachi' Identified in Meghalaya.

In March 2025, a newly discovered species of snakehead fish, *Channa nachi*, was identified in a remote stream in South Garo Hills, Meghalaya, a biodiversity hotspot in Northeast India.

- It was first collected in 2021 by local fish enthusiast Farham Sangma from a shallow, slow-flowing tributary of the Simsang River system.
- The species was officially recognized and described in the scientific journal *Zootaxa*.

Key Points:-

- (i) The species is named *nachi* in honor of Farham Sangma, acknowledging his contribution to the discovery. The term *nachi* is derived from the Garo language, reflecting the indigenous culture's connection to local biodiversity.
- (ii) *Channa nachi* is a newly identified species of snakehead fish, distinguished by its slender body and striking bicolor appearance.
- (iii) Its coloration transitions from a creamish-yellow front to a deep blue back, complemented by 10-12 pale brown saddles on its dorsal half and pale-blue marbling along its sides.

2. ICAR-CTCRI Unveils New Biofortified Sweet Potato Variety to Enhance Tribal Nutritional Security.

In March 2025, the Indian Council of Agricultural Research – Central Tuber Crops Research Institute (ICAR-CTCRI), headquartered in Thiruvananthapuram (Kerala), developed a new orange-fleshed sweet potato variety named SP-95/4 to support food security initiatives in tribal regions of India.

- The new sweet potato variety SP-95/4 contains a high beta-carotene content of 8 mg per 100 grams, which helps effectively combat Vitamin A deficiency, especially common in tribal populations. Its average tuber weight is 300 grams, and its fusiform shape makes it suitable for food processing purposes.

- SP-95/4 has shown strong adaptability across multiple states. It has been successfully tested in Odisha, West Bengal, Karnataka, and Kerala, demonstrating its suitability for cultivation in diverse ecological conditions.

Key Points:-

- (i) The 'Rainbow Diet' programme, initiated in 2023 in Attappady, focuses on combating malnutrition through biofortified crops and was expanded under the 'Punarjeevanam' programme in 2024.
- (ii) The variety is currently cultivated across 10–15 acres, with expansion plans to reach 100 acres by December 2025.
- (iii) A processing unit, funded through Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) support, is being proposed to improve farmer incomes and ensure commercial viability of the crop.

3. New Damselfly Species 'Euphaea wayanadensis' Recently Discovered in Kerala.

In April 2025, a group of scientists have discovered a new species of damselfly named *Euphaea wayanadensis* in the Wayanad landscape of the Western Ghats, Kerala. The discovery of the new species was published in the peer-reviewed journal *ENTOMON*.

- This species marks the 191st recorded odonate species (including dragonflies and damselflies) found in Kerala and the 223rd one to be documented from the Western Ghats.

- The newly discovered species belongs to the Euphaeidae family and was identified using integrated taxonomy methods.
- Initially, the new species' features had been misidentified as *Euphaea pseudodispar*, a species described from Maharashtra. But later, the study found that the new species exhibits various morphological differences from *Euphaea pseudodispar* like: longer black hind wing patch, wider and uninterrupted humeral and antehumeral stripes in males, among others.

Key Points:-

- (i) The new species is observed throughout the year, except during the months of March and April.
- (ii) In 2013, a group of researchers first observed the distinct morphotype of *Euphaea wayanadensis* at the Kalindi River, Thirunelli in Wayanad district (Kerala).