

# CURRENT AFFAIRS BOOSTER

**INCLUDING** 

## GA ESI FINANCE SCHEMES REPORTS RBI NOTIFICATIONS

FEBRUARY 2025 - 1st to 7th









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## 1. GAINNEWS

## **PIB IN NEWS**

## **FIRST IN NEWS**

S.No	News	Key Facts
1.	India's First Fully Industry- Made Polar Satellite Launch Vehicle (PSLV)	<ul> <li>To be launched by NewSpace India Limited (NSIL) in Q2 2025.</li> <li>NSIL signed a contract with HAL-L&amp;T consortium, with HAL as the lead partner, for the end-to-end production of five Polar Satellite Launch Vehicles (PSLVs).</li> </ul>
2.	India's first Ferret Research Facility	<ul> <li>Established at the Translational Health Science and Technology Institute (THSTI) in Faridabad, Haryana.</li> <li>Aims to enhance research on infectious and non-communicable diseases, aiding vaccine development and pandemic preparedness.</li> </ul>

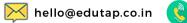
## **GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES**

S.No	Initiative	Key Facts
1.	SwaRail SuperApp	<ul> <li>Launched by: Ministry of Railways.</li> <li>Developed by the Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS).</li> <li>A one-stop solution for comprehensive railway services.</li> </ul>
2.	<u>'Rajmargyatra' App &amp; 'NHAI</u> <u>One' App</u>	<ul> <li>Initiatives of National Highways Authority of India (NHAI).</li> <li>Rajmargyatra App: Provides real-time information on highways, toll plazas, petrol pumps, hospitals, charging stations, weather updates, etc.</li> <li>'NHAI One' App: Internal highway project management tool, monitors the progress of highway projects.</li> </ul>

## **DEFENCE EXERCISES/ INITIATIVES/ TECHNOLOGY**

S.No	Exercise/Technology	Key Facts
1.	Very Short-Range Air  Defence System  (VSHORADS)	<ul> <li>Defence Research &amp; Development Organisation (DRDO) successfully conducted three successive flight trials.</li> <li>a Man Portable Air Defence System (MANPADS).</li> <li>Developed indigenously by Research Center Imarat in collaboration with other DRDO laboratories and industry partners.</li> </ul>





	Theatre Level Operational
2.	Readiness Exercise-2025
	(TROPEX-25)

- Indian Navy's largest biennial maritime exercise.
- Participants: Indian Army, Air Force, and Coast Guard.
- Venue: Indian Ocean.

## **DAYS IN NEWS**

S.No	Day in News	Key Facts
1.	75th Anniversary of the National Sample Survey (NSS) (February 7)	<ul> <li>National Sample Survey (NSS) was started in 1950 under the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation (MoSPI).</li> <li>Established to collect large-scale sample data on various socioeconomic indicators</li> </ul>

## **OTHER NEWS**

## **FIRST IN NEWS**

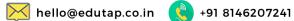
S.No	News	Key Facts
1.	India's First Hydrogen Transportation Pipes	<ul> <li>Developed by Tata Steel.</li> <li>This milestone supports India's National Hydrogen Mission, which aims to produce at least 5 million metric tonnes of Green Hydrogen annually by 2030.</li> </ul>
		Additional Information     Tata Steel became the first Indian steel company to manufacture hotrolled steel for gaseous hydrogen transportation in 2024.
2.	India's first astronaut to travel to the International Space Station (ISS) on a private mission	<ul> <li>Name: Group Captain Shubhanshu Shukla.</li> <li>Part of Axiom Mission 4 (Ax-4).</li> <li>One of the four astronaut-designates of Gaganyaan Mission</li> <li>About Axiom Mission 4</li> <li>Fourth commercial astronaut mission to the International Space Station.</li> </ul>
		<ul> <li>To be launched by Axiom Space in collaboration with NASA.</li> <li>Spacecraft: SpaceX Dragon spacecraft.</li> </ul>
3.	First African Country to Eliminate Onchocerciasis (River Blindness)	<ul> <li>Niger has been officially verified by the World Health Organization (WHO) to eliminate the transmission of this disease.</li> <li>The disease is caused by the Onchocerca volvulus worm, transmitted through the bites of infected black flies.</li> </ul>

		WHO aims to eliminate the transmission of onchocerciasis by 2030 as part of its broader neglected tropical diseases (NTD) roadmap.
4.	India's First Drone City	<ul> <li>Garuda Aerospace, a Chennai-based drone manufacturer, has committed to an investment of ₹100 crore for the development of India's first 'Drone City' in Andhra Pradesh.</li> </ul>
5.	First Digital Wallet of X	<ul> <li>Name: X Money.</li> <li>A real-time payment system.</li> <li>To be launched by X (formerly Twitter) in partnership with Visa.</li> <li>Visa is the first partner for X's "X Money Account" service.</li> </ul>
6.	First Black woman to win Album of the Year in the 21st century at Grammy Awards	<ul> <li>Winner: Beyoncé for Cowboy Carter.</li> <li>Other Winners at 2025 Grammy</li> <li>Best New Age, Ambient or Chant Album: Chandrika Tandon for Triveni.</li> <li>Chandrika Tandon is an Indian American Businesswoman.</li> </ul>
7.	India's first Artificial Intelligence (AI) university	To be set up at <b>Maharashtra.</b>
8.	India's first MSCI India Exchange-Traded Fund (ETF)	<ul> <li>Launched by Kotak Mahindra Asset Management Company.</li> <li>Tracks MSCI India Index.</li> <li>About ETF</li> <li>A marketable security that tracks an index, commodity, bonds, or a basket of assets and is traded on stock exchanges like a regular stock.</li> </ul>
9.	First country to outlaw Al tools used to generate Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM)	<ul> <li>Name: United Kingdom (UK).</li> <li>Three-year prison term for possessing Al manuals that guide users on generating CSAM.</li> </ul>
10.	India's first White Tiger Breeding Centre	To be set up at Govindgarh, Rewa district, Madhya Pradesh.

## **SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES**

S.No	Summit/Conference	Key Outcomes
1.	Global Justice, Love & Peace Summit 2025	<ul> <li>To be held in Dubai, UAE.</li> <li>Organizer: I am Peacekeeper Movement</li> <li>Theme: 'One Planet, One Voice: Global Justice, Love &amp; Peace'.</li> <li>Aim: To be the world's largest Private Summit on Justice, Love &amp; Peace with 2800 Delegates (Peacekeepers).</li> </ul>





## **MOUS AND AGREEMENTS**

S.No	Signing Entities	Key Facts
1.	Avaada Group and Casale	Objective: To develop India's largest green ammonia plant in Gopalpur, Odisha.

## **BANKING AND FINANCE**

S.No	Program/Initiative	Key Facts
1.	Knowledgeable AI (KAI)	<ul> <li>Al-powered Virtual Home Loan Advisor.</li> <li>Launched by L&amp;T Finance Ltd.</li> </ul>
2.	<u>Jumpp</u>	<ul> <li>Al-powered financial app.</li> <li>Developed by Finvasia, in partnership with YES Bank.</li> <li>Integrates banking, savings, payments, investing, and borrowing into a single platform.</li> </ul>

## **SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY**

S.No	Technology in News	Key Facts
1.	India's upcoming space & deep-sea missions	<ul> <li>Chandrayaan-4 Lunar Sample Return Mission</li> <li>India's first attempt to bring back lunar samples from the Moon to Earth.</li> <li>Target Launch Year: 2027.</li> <li>Gaganyaan (2026): India's first crewed spaceflight mission to send astronauts to low-Earth orbit.</li> <li>Samudrayaan (2026): India's first deep-sea exploration mission, sending three scientists in a submersible 6,000m underwater to study minerals and marine biodiversity.</li> </ul>
2.	Qwen 2.5	A new Al Model released by Alibaba, a Chinese tech company.
3.	Michibiki 6 navigation satellite  OmniHuman-1	<ul> <li>Launched by Japan on its new flagship H3 rocket.</li> <li>Michibiki 6 is the fifth satellite in Japan's Quasi-Zenith Satellite System (QZSS).</li> </ul>
4.		<ul> <li>Al-Driven Video Generation Model.</li> <li>Developed by: ByteDance (Parent Company of TikTok).</li> <li>Generates lifelike human motion and speech from just an image and an audio sample.</li> </ul>







## DEFENCE EXERCISES/ INITIATIVES/ TECHNOLOGY

S.No	Exercise/Technology	Key Facts
1.	Exercise Ekuverin 2024-25 (13th Edition)	<ul> <li>India-Maldives Joint Military Exercise.</li> <li>Venue: Maldives.</li> <li>Conducted alternately in India &amp; Maldives.</li> <li>Previous edition held in Chaubatia, Uttarakhand.</li> </ul>
2.	<u>Vijay Durg</u>	<ul> <li>New Name of Eastern Army HQ.</li> <li>Named after a historic Maratha naval fort along the Sindhudurg coast, Maharashtra, which was a naval base for Chhatrapati Shivaji.</li> <li>Previous Name: Fort William, named after King William III of England.</li> </ul>

## **ENVIRONMENT**

S.No	News	Key Facts
	<u>United Nations Global</u> <u>Compact (UNGC)</u>	GMR Airports Ltd has become a member of the United Nations Global Compact (UNGC), a corporate sustainability initiative.
		About UNGC
1.		• Founded in <b>2000</b> .
		The world's largest corporate sustainability initiative.
		Encourages businesses worldwide to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies.

## **SPORTS**

S.No	Sport Event and Venue	Key Facts
1.	ICC U19 Women's T20 World Cup 2025 Venue: Malaysia	<ul> <li>India successfully defended their title by defeating South Africa.</li> <li>India's second consecutive victory in the tournament, having won the inaugural edition in 2023.</li> <li>Player of the Series: Gongadi Trisha.</li> </ul>
2.	23rd National Para Athletics Championship Venue: Chennai, Tamil Nadu	<ul> <li>The official logo and mascot unveiled recently.</li> <li>Mascot: GAJAVEERAN.</li> </ul>
3.	ICC Men's Champions Trophy 2025	<ul> <li>To be held at Pakistan &amp; UAE.</li> <li>Official Song: Jeeto Baazi Khel Ke</li> </ul>





		•	To be implemented by <b>Badminton World Federation (BWF).</b>
4.	3x15 Scoring System	•	Objective: Shorten match durations compared to the current 3x21 format.

## **AWARDS**

S.No	Award/Milestone	Key Facts
	BCCI Awards 2025	Best International Cricketer (Men) for 2023-24 (Polly Umrigar Award):     Jasprit Bumrah; receiving the award for third time.
		Best International Cricketer (Women): Smriti Mandhana; receiving the award for third time.
1.		Col. C.K. Nayudu Lifetime Achievement Award: Sachin Tendulkar.
		Best International Debut: Sarfaraz Khan (Men) and Asha Sobhana (Women).
		BCCI Special Award: Ravichandran Ashwin.

## **APPOINTMENT**

S.No	Person in News	Key Facts
1.	Hisashi Takeuchi	Re-appointed as the Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Maruti Suzuki India Ltd for an additional three years.
2.	Bart De Wever	<ul> <li>New Prime Minister of Belgium.</li> <li>Predecessor: Alexander De Croo.</li> </ul>

## **PERSONS IN NEWS**

S.No	Person in News	Key Facts
1.	<u>Dinesh Karthik</u>	<ul> <li>Surpassed MS Dhoni to become the Indian wicket-keeper with the most runs in T20 cricket.</li> <li>Milestone achieved during a match between Paarl Royals and Durban Super Giants in the SA20 league.</li> </ul>
2.	Steven Smith	<ul> <li>Fourth Australian to reach the milestone of 10,000 Test runs.</li> <li>Milestone achieved against Sri Lanka.</li> </ul>
3.	Sunita Williams	<ul> <li>Set the record for the longest total spacewalking time by a woman astronaut, logging 62 hours and 6 minutes in spacewalks.</li> <li>Surpassed former astronaut Peggy Whitson's record of 60 hours and 21 minutes.</li> </ul>

She is now 4th on NASA's all-time list for total spacewalking time.
<ul> <li>Additional Information</li> <li>In 2012, she became the first person to complete a triathlon in space, using a weight-lifting machine, treadmill, and a harness to prevent floating.</li> </ul>

## **MISCELLANEOUS**

S.No	News	Key Facts
	Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)	Mali, Burkina Faso, and Niger officially withdrew from the ECOWAS and have instead formed their own bloc, the Alliance of Sahel States (AES).
1.		About ECOWAS
		A regional political and economic union established in 1975, through the Treaty of Lagos.
		Present Members: 12; Chair: Nigeria.
	2. Creation of South Coast Railway Zone	Approved by the Union Cabinet.
2.		South Coast Railway will consist of part of the Visakhapatnam division (Previously Waltair division).
3.	U.S. Withdrawal from UN Bodies	The President of the United States signed an executive order withdrawing the U.S. from the UN Human Rights Council.

## 2. GA + ESI

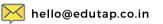
## **PIB IN NEWS**

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

## 2.1 Ramsar Wetlands

- India added four new wetlands to its Ramsar Sites, bringing the total to **89**, with **Sikkim** and **Jharkhand** securing their first Ramsar sites.
- The newly designated sites are **Sakkarakottai Bird Sanctuary** and **Therthangal Bird Sanctuary** in **Tamil Nadu**, **Khecheopalri Wetland** in **Sikkim**, and **Udhwa Lake** in **Jharkhand**.







- India now leads Asia with the most Ramsar sites and is ranked the third-highest globally after the UK (176) and Mexico (144).
- Tamil Nadu now leads the country with 20 Ramsar Sites, followed by Uttar Pradesh (10 sites).
- A Ramsar site is a wetland recognized under the Ramsar Convention, an international treaty established in 1971 in Ramsar, Iran, to promote wetland conservation and sustainable use.
- World Wetlands Day is observed annually on 2nd February, commemorating the signing of the Ramsar Convention in 1971; India has been a member since 1982.
  - o In 2025, the theme for World Wetlands Day was 'Protecting Wetlands for Our Common Future'.

## 2.2 International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA)

## Why in News

- The International Big Cat Alliance (IBCA) has officially become a treaty-based intergovernmental organization following the enforcement of its Framework Agreement.
- The IBCA was formally announced in 2023 during the 50th anniversary of Project Tiger.
- India is one of the 27 member countries that have agreed to join the IBCA.
- The IBCA aims to conserve seven big cat species: Tiger, Lion, Leopard, Snow Leopard,
   Cheetah, Jaguar, and Puma.

## 2.3 Solar Power Capacity

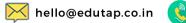
## Why in News

- India has surpassed 100 GW of solar power capacity as of January 31, 2025, accounting for 47% of the total installed renewable energy capacity.
- This achievement is part of India's target to reach **500 GW** of non-fossil fuel-based energy capacity by **2030**.
- India aims to reach 100 GW of solar module production capacity by 2030.
- Top-performing states are Rajasthan, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Maharashtra, and Madhya Pradesh.

## **EMPLOYMENT GENERATION IN INDIA**

## 2.4 Employment in India

- India's employment sector saw a 36% increase between 2016-17 and 2023-24, with 170 million jobs added.
- The National Career Service (NCS), launched in 2015 by the Ministry of Labour and Employment, connects job seekers with employers through a central digital platform and a network of Model Career Centers across India.





## 2.5 Swavalambini

## Why in News

- The Swavalambini Women Entrepreneurship Programme, launched in February 2025, aims to nurture the entrepreneurial aspirations of women.
- Implemented by: Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship (MSDE) and Indian Institute of Entrepreneurship (IIE) in collaboration with NITI Aayog.

## **SOCIAL JUSTICE**

## 2.6 National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK)

## Why in News

- The Union Cabinet approved a three-year extension for the National Commission for Safai Karamcharis (NCSK).
- The NCSK, constituted in 1994, works under the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment to eliminate inequalities and monitor the Manual Scavengers Rehabilitation Act, 2013.

## INDIAN POLITICAL SYSTEM

## 2.7 India's Digital Infrastructure

## Why in News

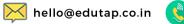
- India's digital economy contributed 11.74% to its GDP in 2022-23 (₹31.64 lakh crore) and is projected to reach 20% of GVA by 2029-30.
- India leads globally in **digital payments**, accounting for **49%** of real-time transactions (ACI Worldwide Report 2024).
- UPI is now operational in 7 countries including UAE, Singapore, Bhutan, Nepal, Sri Lanka, France and Mauritius.

## **GLOBALIZATION**

## 2.8 <u>BIMSTEC (Bay of Bengal Initiative for Multi-Sectoral Technical and Economic Cooperation)</u>

- The first BIMSTEC Youth Summit was held in Gandhinagar, Gujarat, with the theme "Youth as a Bridge for Intra-BIMSTEC Exchange", aiming to facilitate youth-led initiatives and experiences among member countries.
- Jointly Organized by: Ministry of Youth Affairs & Sports and Ministry of External Affairs along with the CII YI as the knowledge partner.







## **EXPORT-IMPORT POLICY**

## 2.9 India's Exports Reach Historic Heights

## Why in News

- India's exports reached a record USD 778.21 billion in 2023-24.
- Top 5 export destinations include the USA, UAE, Netherlands, China, and Singapore, with top 5 regions being North America, European Union, North-East Asia, West Asia – Gulf Cooperation Council and ASEAN.

## **INDIAN AGRICULTURE**

## 2.10 <u>Project VISTAAR (Virtually Integrated System to Access Agricultural Resources)</u>

## Why in News

 Project VISTAAR aims to develop a unified digital ecosystem for agriculture, with MoUs signed with states like Odisha, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh for technical and content review support.

## **OTHER NEWS**

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

## 2.11 Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF)

## Why in News

- Indian Overseas Bank (IOB) has joined the Partnership for Carbon Accounting Financials (PCAF) to measure and disclose greenhouse gas emissions linked to its financed activities.
- PCAF, launched in 2015, aims to standardize the measurement and disclosure of carbon emissions by financial institutions, with Union Bank of India being the first Indian bank to join.

## **INDIAN AGRICULTURE**

## 2.12 National Agriculture Market (e-NAM)

- The e-NAM platform is being upgraded to address logistic challenges in inter-state and inter-mandi trade by onboarding logistic service providers.
- e-NAM, launched in 2016 by the Ministry of Agriculture and Farmer's Welfare, connects APMCs and regulated markets across India to improve price discovery and enable online payments for farmers.







## **INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIA**

## 2.13 MSME Trade Enablement and Marketing (TEAM) Initiative

## Why in News

- The MSME TEAM Initiative has been launched by the Ministry of Micro, Small, and Medium Enterprises (MoMSME) in partnership with ONDC (Open Network for Digital Commerce) to help micro and small enterprises embrace digital commerce and expand market reach.
- The initiative has a budget allocation of ₹277.35 crore over 3 years, aiming to onboard 5 lakh MSMEs, with 50% being women-led businesses.

## 3. GA + FINANCE

## **PIB IN NEWS**

## PRIMARY AND SECONDARY MARKET

## 3.1 Investor Education and Protection Fund Authority (IEPFA)

## Why in News

- IEPFA signed an MoU with Strategic Educational Professionals Pvt. Ltd. (a subsidiary of Association of Chartered Certified Accountants) to develop a digital program aimed at promoting financial literacy among school children.
- IEPFA, established in 2016 under the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, manages the Investor Education and Protection Fund (IPEF) to safeguard investor interests.
- The **IPEF** handles unclaimed dividends (for 7 years or more), matured deposits, and other related amounts, focusing on **investor protection**, **education**, and **distributions** of disgorged funds.

## **BANKING SYSTEM IN INDIA**

## 3.2 India Post Payments Bank

- India Post Payments Bank (IPPB) has implemented measures to link Post Office Savings Accounts (POSA) with its accounts for improved banking services.
- IPPB, launched in 2018, is 100% government-owned and operates under the Ministry of Communications, providing accessible and affordable banking through post offices.
- As per RBI guidelines, account holders can only hold a maximum of Rs. 2 lakh and transfer funds exceeding ₹2 lakh from their regular savings accounts to linked POSA.



## **OTHER NEWS**

## PRIMARY AND SECONDARY MARKET

## 3.3 iSPOT (Integrated Sebi Portal for Technical Glitches) Portal

## Why in News

SEBI launched iSPOT, a web-based portal for reporting and tracking technical glitches
across Market Infrastructure Institutions (MIIs), replacing the previous email reporting
system.

## **FUNCTIONS OF RESERVE BANK OF INDIA**

## 3.4 Economic Capital Framework of RBI

## Why in News

- The RBI is reviewing its Economic Capital Framework (ECF), focusing on the contingency risk buffer (CRB), as per the Bimal Jalan Committee's recommendations.
- **Bimal Jalan Committee**, constituted in **2018**, aimed to ensure appropriate **risk provisions** and **sustainable profit distribution** for RBI.
  - The committee recommended maintaining a CRB of 5.5-6.5% of RBI's balance sheet;
     6.5% was maintained as of March 31, 2024.
  - ECF review is recommended every five years by the committee.
  - RBI transferred Rs 2.1 trillion in surplus (highest-ever) to the government for the financial year 2023-24, even after maintaining the CRB to 6.5%.

## 3.5 Exclusive Internet Domains for Banks and Non-Banks

## Why in News

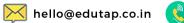
- **RBI** is introducing **exclusive internet domains**: **'bank.in'** for banks and **'fin.in'** for non-bank financial entities to enhance **cyber security**.
- The Institute for Development and Research in Banking Technology (IDRBT) will act as the registrar for these domains.

## 4. RBI NOTIFICATIONS

## Export-Import Bank of India's GOI-supported Line of Credit of USD 300 mn to Vietnam

Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) signed a Line of Credit (LoC) agreement with the
 Government of Vietnam in 2024, effective from January 20, 2025.





• The LoC, valued at USD 300 million, supports the procurement of High-Speed Guard Boats and Offshore Patrol Vessels in Vietnam, promoting exports of eligible goods and services under India's Foreign Trade Policy.

## Supersession of Board of Directors of New India Cooperative Bank Ltd

- RBI has superseded the Board of Directors of New India Cooperative Bank Ltd., Mumbai, for 12 months due to poor governance standards.
- Shri Shreekant, former SBI Chief General Manager, has been appointed as the Administrator, assisted by a Committee of Advisors including Ravindra Sapra and Abhijeet Deshmukh.
  - The action was taken under Section 36AAA and Section 56 of the Banking Regulation Act, 1949.

## 5. GOVERNMENT SCHEMES

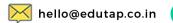
## Prime Minister Early Career Research Grant (PMECRG) Scheme

- PMECRG Scheme is a flagship initiative under the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF), aimed at nurturing young researchers in India. It provides financial support to early-career researchers to pursue innovative projects and advance research excellence.
- Objective:
  - o To support **early-career researchers** in undertaking cutting-edge research across disciplines.
  - o To promote innovation and develop a robust **research ecosystem** in India.
  - To empower young scientists and researchers to address national and global challenges.
- Eligibility:
  - o Open to **Indian citizens** within the specified age bracket (typically under 35-40 years).
  - o Candidates must hold a **Ph.D. degree** or equivalent in their respective fields.
  - Applicants should have demonstrated research capabilities through publications or prior projects.

### **Key Features:**

- **Grant Amount**: supports researchers to initiate their research with a **support of up to Rs. 60 lakh** along with overhead charges for a **period of three years**.
- Research Domains: Covers a wide range of disciplines, including science, technology, engineering, medicine, social sciences, and humanities.
- Focus Areas:







- o Innovative and high-impact research aligned with national priorities.
- o Interdisciplinary projects addressing societal or technological challenges.
- Implementation: Administered by the Anusandhan National Research Foundation (ANRF) under the guidance of the Government of India.

## Enhancement of Competitiveness in the Indian Capital Goods Sector- Phase II

- Launch: 2022
- Nodal Ministry: Ministry of Heavy Industries (MHI)
- Objective: Provide assistance for developing Common Technology Development and Services Infrastructure.
- Financial Outlay: Rs. 1207 crores

Government Support: Rs. 975 crore
 Industry Contribution: Rs. 232 crore

 This pan-India, demand-driven scheme enables industry collaboration with educational and R&D institutes to skill the workforce and develop niche technologies, fostering a sustainable ecosystem for India's technical needs.

## **Unified Pension Scheme (UPS)**

- Union Cabinet has approved the Unified Pension Scheme (UPS).
- This new scheme will take effect from April 1, 2025. NPS subscribers now have the option to switch to UPS, which provides this assured pension starting from the next financial year.
- Salient features of the UPS are:
  - Assured pension: 50% of the average basic pay drawn over the last 12 months prior to superannuation for a minimum qualifying service of 25 years.
    - for those who joined the service after January 1, 2004, under the NPS.
    - To be proportionate for lesser service period upto a minimum of 10 years of service.
  - Assured family pension: @60% of pension of the employee immediately before her/his demise.
  - o **Assured minimum pension**: **@10,000 per month** on superannuation (minimum 10-year service).
  - o Inflation indexation: on assured pension, on assured family pension and assured minimum pension
  - Dearness Relief based on All India Consumer Price Index for Industrial Workers (AICPI-IW) as in case of service employees.
  - Lump sum payment at superannuation in addition to gratuity: 1/10<sup>th</sup> of monthly emoluments (pay + DA) as on the date of superannuation for every completed six months of service.







This payment will not reduce the quantum of assured pension

## 6. REPORTS

## 1. Corruption Perceptions Index 2024

• Released by: Transparency International

• Coverage: 180 countries

• Parameter: Scale of 0 to 100, where "0" is highly corrupt and "100" is very clean.

## **Key Findings:**

- Global Ranking:
  - **Denmark (score: 90) topped** the list as the least-corrupt nation, followed by Finland (2<sup>nd</sup>), Singapore(3<sup>rd</sup>), New Zealand (4<sup>th</sup>) and Luxembourg (5<sup>th</sup>).
  - Most Corrupt: South Sudan (180th), Somalia (179th), and Venezuela (178th).
- India's Rank:
  - India ranked 96th with a score of 38, a decline from the previous year's score of 39.
  - India's rank in 2023 was 93.
- Neighboring Countries of India:

o China: 76<sup>th</sup>

o Pakistan: 135th

Sri Lanka: 121st

Bangladesh: 149th

## • Global Trends:

- While 32 countries showed progress in reducing corruption, most nations have either stagnated or worsened.
- The global average remains at 43, with over two-thirds of countries scoring below 50.

## 2. <u>Most powerful countries in the world in 2025</u>

 Released by: Forbes (Compiled by US News in association with BAV Group and the Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania) • **Methodology:** The rankings are based on an 'equally weighted average of scores' from 5 attributes: leadership, economic influence, political influence, strong international alliances, and **a** strong military.

## Important Ranking - most powerful:

- 1. United States
- 2. China
- 3. Russia
- 4. United Kingdom
- 5. Germany
- 12. India India ranks at 5 in world GDP rankings after the US, China, Germany and Japan.

## 3. Asia's 20 Richest Families of 2025

Released by: Bloomberg

## Important Ranking - Richest:

- 1. Ambani Family (India)
  - 2. Chearavanont Family (Thailand)
  - 3. Hartono Family (Indonesia)
  - 4. Mistry Family (India)
  - 5. Kwok Family (Hong Kong)
  - Other notable Indian families in the top 20 include the **Jindal Family (Rank 7)**, **the Birla Family (Rank 9)**, the Bajaj Family (Rank 13), and the Hinduja Family (Rank 18).

## 4. 50 Over 50 Global: 2025

Released by: Forbes

• Publication: First Time

### **Key Findings:**

**4.** The list includes the names of **3 Indian women:** Urmila Asher, Kiran Mazumdar-Shaw, and Sheela Patel.

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